



Re-Socializing Civil Servants: The Transformative Powers of EU Institutions

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This article studies the mechanisms of socialization and re-socialization among national civil servants embedded in EU institutions. Applying a cognitive organizational theory approach, it is argued that national civil servants attending EU committees supplement pre-existing role perceptions with supranational roles under particular conditions. EU committees are seen as transformative institutions that accompany a partial re-socialization of the committee participants. The empirical data demonstrate that domestic civil servants become re-socialized due to their intensity of participation on EU committees. Based on survey and interview data on Danish and Swedish government officials who attend Council working parties (CWPs), the analysis reveals that the intensity of attendance on CWPs accompanies the enactment of supranational roles among the participants. Contrary to neo-functional assumptions, however, the length of participation on CWPs does *not* contribute to re-socialize the committee participants. The empirical analysis also demonstrates that supranational roles are indeed secondary to pre-existing national and sectoral roles. Hence, contrary to neo-functional arguments, the emergence of supranational roles does not replace pre-established roles.

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Introduction¹

Processes of European integration have attracted major scholarly attention from within several disciplines in the post-World War II period (Bulmer and Lequesne, 2002). One central research question has been how supranational the European Union (EU) really is (Sandholtz and Stone Sweet, 1998). A related question, which is put to the fore in this study, is to what extent EU decision-makers develop supranational loyalties (Haas, 1958). This article studies the mechanisms of socialization and re-socialization among national policymakers who participate in the decision-making processes of EU institutions.



Some scholars assume that EU decision-makers become re-socialized as far as their role perceptions are concerned (e.g. Franklin and Scharrow, 1999; Hayes-Renshaw and Wallace, 1997, 235; Joerges, 1999, 320; Laffan *et al.*, 1999, 87; Scully, 2002; Weiler, 1999, 342). A common assertion among these scholars is that an '*esprit de corps*' emerges within EU committees (Laffan, 1998; Pag, 1987), especially if the committee participants interact fairly frequently and intensively (e.g. Eriksen, 2000, 61; Haas, 1958; Lewis, 2000). Contrary to this, Wessels (1998, 227) argues that no loyalty transfers take place at the EU level. Few empirical observations, however, are available to confirm or reject these assertions. This lack of empirical scholarship partly reflects the methodological problems that have plagued neo-functional scholar (Pollack, 1998). This article demonstrates empirically that both the above observations are partly correct, however, under different institutional conditions.

The study of European integration has developed from a study of EU institutions towards a study of the EU through institutional lenses.² This article applies a cognitive organizational theory approach arguing that national civil servants attending EU committees tend to supplement pre-existing roles with supranational role perceptions. A cognitive perspective emphasizes that actors' role perceptions are endogenous and possible to construct and reconstruct. According to this approach, EU committees are *transformative* institutions with respect to the roles of the committee participants. I argue that the *length and intensity* of attendance on EU committees accompanies the enactment of supranational role perceptions among the participants.

This article studies individual agent socialization as cognitive role enactment. Socialization of EU committee participants means that they enact supranational roles. A supranational role is seen as a role inducing bureaucrats into a shared community of norms, rules and practices rather distinct from national norms, rules and practices. In operational terms, a supranational role denotes identifying with EU institutions. That is, civil servants identify with the EU committees attended or with the EU as a whole; they become increasingly EU minded and loyal to EU policies and politics. Hence, identification with EU institutions is arguably fostered by intensive and protracted participation within them, contributing to a 'gulf between the public and elites' (Hooghe, 2003, 283). Evoking a supranational role, however, does not render national and sectoral roles obsolete. Domestic 'Eurocrats' have multiple repertoires of roles that are evoked and endorsed in different situations and at different points in time (March and Olsen, 1989).

Past studies demonstrate 'the importance of national context and the capacity of national administrative traditions to modify, accommodate, internalize and, perhaps, even neutralize European pressures' (Goetz, 2000, 216).



Processes of europeanization do not seem to replace or reject national administrative structures, cultures, rules and norms (Cowles *et al.*, 2001; Featherstone and Radaelli, 2003). Owing to the multiple institutional embeddedness of EU committee participants, their enactment of supranational roles is not likely to replace pre-established national and sectoral roles (Beyers and Trondal 2003; Risse, 2001). The main *emphasis* of our study, however, is to explain what fosters the emergence of supranational roles among EU committee participants. Based on the principle of analytical parsimony, preferring a smaller number of variables for a given amount of variance reduction, several plausible independent variables are left out of the analysis (Radaelli, 2003, 28). The following two independent variables are analyzed here:

- the length of attendance on EU committees and
- the intensity of attendance on EU committees.

Operational measures of these variables are outlined below.

The next section proposes an operational conceptualization of supranational roles. Next, I present an organizational theory approach to explain why national civil servants attending EU committees sometimes evoke supranational roles. The empirical analysis is based on survey and interview data on Danish and Swedish government officials who attend Council working parties (CWPs). CWPs are organized below the Council of Ministers and the COREPER. CWPs prepare dossiers for decision at the Minister level and consist of different mixes of attaché's from the permanent representations, national bureaucrats, Commission representatives and chaired by the Presidency of the EU. CWPs are basically intergovernmental organizations established to pursue the preferences of the member-states in EU decision-making. Assumably, the emergence of supranational roles among CWP participants is likely to transcend intergovernmentalism as *modus operandi* of the CWPs, thus smoothening the decision-making of the working groups and making it easier to upgrade 'common interests'.

This study compares CWP participants from national ministries and agencies, and officials at the Permanent Representations in Brussels. Our core assumption is that the latter tend to develop stronger supranational roles than the former due to more intensive and extensive participation within the CWPs. Moreover, Danish officials are expected to evoke supranational roles more strongly than their Swedish counterparts. This assumption derives from the fact that Danish officials have participated for longer periods of time in the CWPs than their Swedish colleagues. Together, Figure 1 summarizes our empirical expectations and our two explanatory variables.

The empirical analysis demonstrates that EU committees indeed are sites of socialization and re-socialization of national civil servants. The analysis

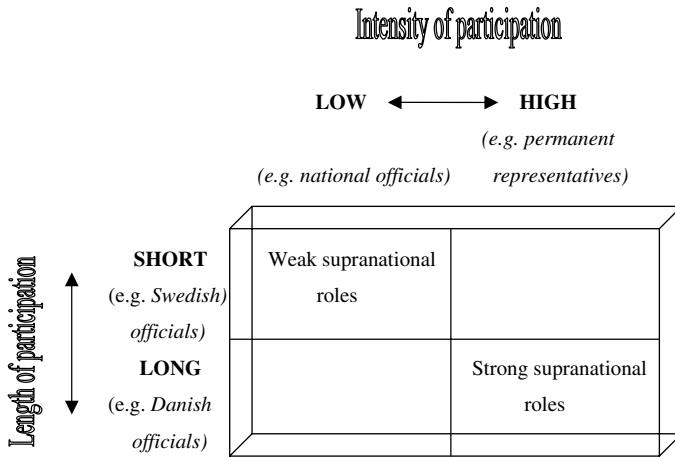


Figure 1 A two-dimensional plot of empirical expectations.

demonstrates that the transformative power of CWPs accompanies the evocation of supranational roles among those attending, especially among the permanent representatives. Secondly, the transformative power of CWPs is shown to be secondary to the influence generated by domestic government institutions. The effects fostered by the intensity of attendance on CWPs are mediated by and filtered through the primary institutional affiliations embedding the committee participants. Contrary to the assumption of Ernst Haas (1958), supranational loyalties do not replace pre-existing national loyalties. They supplement them.

Civil servants are Janus faced with multiple and complex roles, identities and action modes. CWP participants are multiply embedded decision-makers. This study argues that particular organizational variables activate a certain set of roles within a repertoire of roles and deactivate others. Supranational roles are activated particularly among senior CWP participants who attend these committees with a high level of intensity. ‘Going supranational’ in EU committees, however, does not imply ‘staying supranational’ when the officials return to their national ministries and agencies. After their stay in Brussels, these officials may re-activate national and sectoral roles and allegiances. The current study, however, emphasizes that officials attending CWP intensively are more likely to ‘stay supranational’ than officials having only occasional trips to Brussels.

Conceptualizing supranational roles

We discern at least three conceptualizations of supranationalism in the literature — neo-functional, intergovernmental and institutional. Early neo-



functional approaches emphasized European integration as the horizontal integration in width and depth at the EU level of governance (Haas, 1958). According to neo-functionalists, supranationalism resembles a steadily increasing spill-over process across policy sectors as well as loyalty transfers from purely national institutions towards supranational institutions (Haas, 1958; Saeter, 1998). According to the either/or neo-functionalist perspective, supranational loyalties are detrimental to national allegiances.

Second, intergovernmental accounts of European integration have mainly studied this phenomenon as the horizontal co-operation and conflict between sovereign nation-states. Applying a two-level game approach, the EU integration process is perceived as the aggregate effect of bilateral negotiations among utility maximizing member-states (e.g. Milward, 1992; Moravcsik, 1998; Putnam, 1988). According to this perspective, EU committee participants have clear, written and mandatory instructions from their national principals. Consequently, national allegiances tend to exceed supranational loyalties among EU committee participants.

This paper advocates a third concept of supranationalism, focusing on the *vertical linkages* between multiple levels of governance. European integration is seen as resulting from blurring of these levels (e.g. Aspinwall and Schneider, 2001; Bulmer, 1997; Cowles *et al.*, 2001; Egeberg and Trondal, 1999; Hanf and Soetendorp, 1998; Held, 1999:57; Lewis, 2000; Rometsch and Wessels, 1996). Accordingly, supranationalism denotes the emergence of supranational role perceptions among national decision-makers. This concept of supranationalism partially parallels the notion of loyalty transfers addressed by the neo-functionalist perspective. However, this organizational theory approach also pays attention to EU decision-makers as multiple selves with several partly conflicting and partly complementary roles to play. In the following sections, an organizational theory approach to supranationalism is outlined and empirically illuminated.

National officials have their primary institutional affiliations and allegiances within domestic ministries and agencies. Participation on EU committees, however, can add new supranational roles to pre-existing ones (cf. the next section). The organizational theory perspective offered in the next section resembles a middle ground between the neo-functional and the intergovernmental approaches with respect to the empirical predictions generated (cf. Figure 1).

EU committees are located at the very intersection of the national bureaucracy and the EU decision-making apparatus. EU committees represent the very 'transmission belt' through which supranational roles are constructed (Christiansen and Kirchner, 2000, 22). However, different empirical yardsticks can measure supranationalism. We measure socialization among national civil servants by assessing the extent to which they evoke:



- allegiances towards the CWPs attended and/or
- allegiances towards the EU as a whole.

Two different conceptions of socialization underpin the current study. That is, the concept of cognitive role-play and the concept of role internalization. Whereas role-playing represents an intermediate level of socialization at the cognitive level, role internalization is a more complete form of socialization based on the mechanism of normative suasion (Johnston, 2003; Zürn, 2003). This article is closer to the role-play end of the socialization spectrum, thus largely applying an intermediate account of socialization.

According to the concept of role-play and the concept of role internalization, role perceptions are defined in institutional terms. Evoking roles means acquiring an ‘organizational personality’ rather distinct from his personality as an individual’ (Simon, 1957, 278). A supranational role denotes individual officials identifying with EU committees and/or with the EU as a whole. Moreover, by ‘role’ we usually mean a set of expectations (norms or rules) that more or less specify the desired behavior of the actor (March and Olsen, 1989). Roles prescribe how one should act. However, roles are also closely linked to feelings of belongingness to organized communities. ‘To the extent that organization members identify with their organization, they are willing to act spontaneously in its interest, without being told exactly what to do’ (Mayntz, 1999, 83). According to a more complete concept of socialization suggested above, role perceptions reflect processes of *internalization* of the values and goals prescribed by the role (Barnett, 1993, 274). Internalizing the role, however, does not require that deviant desires or behavioral preferences be absent, only that internal (rather than external) sanctioning mechanisms are sufficiently effective to prevent deviant preferences from being brought into action.

According to the role-play concept, roles rest on an analogy of the theatre where the actor is expected to perform according to a particular script (Stryker and Statham, 1985, 330). The actors are consciously aware of their roles and in which situations different roles should be put into play. Hence, the actors have ‘social knowledge’ about the rules and roles that should be activated. Accordingly, ‘[m]any roles are learned through playing the roles...’ (Stryker, 1980, 63). ‘[The theatre] consists of socially constructed players endowed with different capacities for action and parts to play’ (Scott, 1995, 42). CWP participants act at two different theatres: domestic (ministries, agencies and permanent representations) and European (the CWPs). These officials are multiple selves with different roles to enact (Barnett, 1993; Elster, 1986). The question thus becomes as to which script (role) should they enact in different plays? In addition, do the officials manage to separate different roles in different plays?



In accordance with the notion of role-play and role internalization, roles are conceived as fairly stable features and relatively robust characteristics of actors embedded in organized communities (Heidar, 1997, 93; March and Olsen, 1989). Moreover, in resonance with the role-play concept, actors can shift the attention towards different roles when changing organizational contexts, albeit not always constructing qualitatively new roles for each new context. Different contexts often have points of resemblance triggering actors to evoke fairly similar role perceptions. For example, national ministries and agencies have several institutional matches with CWPs (Egeberg and Trondal, 1999). Institutional fit can strengthen pre-existing role perceptions. Institutional mis-fit, however, is assumed to challenge pre-existing roles. This argument derives from the organizational theory approach to supranationalism outlined below emphasizing the multiple institutional embeddedness of CWP participants.

Why study the roles activated by individual decision-makers? First, they provide cognitive, moral and normative systems of orientation and self-reference. This study emphasizes role perceptions, as perceived by the officials themselves. We study role perceptions of civil servants, as they more or less consciously 'exist in the minds of [civil servants]' (Saalfeld and Müller, 1997, 9). Second, they provide the actors with shared systems of meaning. Third, they influence the framing of action: 'What [people] do and how they do it depends upon how they see themselves and their world, and this in turn depends upon the concepts through which they see' (Pitkin, 1972, 1). Hence, role perceptions provide 'conceptions of reality, standards of assessment, affective ties, and endowments, and thereby with a capacity for purposeful action' (March and Olsen, 1995, 30). Subsequently, studying the roles of EU committee participants is important for understanding European integration through the transformative processes happening at the level of individual decision-makers (Christiansen *et al.*, 2001).

Mechanisms of socialization

The former section has briefly sketched the neo-functional and intergovernmental approaches as well as suggested an organizational theory perspective as a middle ground between these. This middle ground does not rest solely only on theoretical mechanisms but also on empirical predictions (cf. Figure 1). Moreover, this middle ground moves away from *either/or* towards *both/and* theorizing. According to an organizational theory perspective, EU committee participants may evoke a mix of supranational and national roles. This section develops a generic organizational theory of face-to-face interaction highlighting two conditions under which elites are likely to evoke supranational roles.



This article applies a cognitive organization theory perspective, developed within social psychology and introduced to organizational theory largely by Simon (1957), March and Simon (1958) and Cyert and March (1963). Hence, information- and knowledge-based models in the explanation of political dynamics are not new. The current interest in the cognitive dimension of politics has been characterized as more of a rediscovery than of absolute novelty (Radaelli, 1999, 757). The ontology of methodological individualism underlying the cognitive perspective downplays the role of social interaction and puts primary emphasis on the organizational arrangements in which such interaction occurs. Hence, our focus is directed to the organizational embeddedness of social interaction among CWP participants.

A cognitive perspective emphasizes that actors' role perceptions are endogenous and thus possible to construct and reconstruct. The underlying assumption is that of bounded rationality. The possibility for individuals to attend everything simultaneously is impossible. Attention is a scarce resource. The cognitive perspective pictures organizational structures as mechanisms for coupling and decoupling actors, problems, solutions, consequences, roles and institutional allegiances. Organizations are mechanisms of simplification with respect to information exposure and processing (Simon, 1957). Organizational borders are buffers to attention, thereby biasing the information exposed to each decision-maker (March and Olsen, 1995; Tenbrunsel *et al.*, 1996).

For organizational designers, one way of reducing information-overload is to carve up organizations horizontally and vertically to create buffers against actors, information, considerations and stimuli (Gulick, 1937; Schattschneider, 1960). 'Cognitive structures simplify when there is too much, and they thus allow the perceiver to reduce an enormously complex environment to a manageable number of meaningful categories' (Markus and Zajonc, 1985, 143). According to a cognitive approach organizational structures are cognitive buffers to attention and information. 'Because of the limits of human intellectual capacities in comparison with the complexities of the problems that individuals and organizations face, rational behavior calls for simplified models that capture the main features of a problem without capturing all its complexities' (March and Simon, 1981, 148). Organizational structures render it possible to decompose complex tasks into sub-tasks that can be carried out within relatively independent units of government. Organizational structures contribute to the development of 'cognitive short cuts' for individual decision-makers (Johnson, 1987, 45). These shortcuts contribute to the creation of cognitive categories and simplified representations of world phenomena to these individuals. According to cognitive psychology the evocation of roles is ultimately governed by the individual need for uncertainty reduction as regards their 'perceptions, attitudes, feelings, and behaviors...' (Hogg and Terry, 2000, 124). Organizational boundaries affect role perceptions because these proper-



ties simplify cognitive search processes and reduce cognitive uncertainty (Johnson, 1987; March, 1994; Scott, 1995, 44; Simon, 1957, 288). This argument is agnostic on the question of role internalization *vs* role-play.

The role of agency is not ruled out of the cognitive perspective. Which role that is evoked is ultimately a matter of choice, however, largely biased by cognitive limitations and mental maps. Rational choice is conditioned by institutional contexts that provide cues for selecting certain roles and modes of acting above others (Sen, 1999). Hence, agency is contextualized and embedded within organization structures.

Organizational members are collections of identities, roles and modes of behavior. They are multiple selves (Elster, 1986). Studies demonstrate that national and supranational roles correlate positively (Licata, 2000; Risse, 2001). However, some roles (i.e. supranational roles) may be secondary to other roles (i.e. national roles). Moreover, the evocation of multiple roles may subsequently blur the distinctiveness of each. I basically argue, however, that officials play different roles in different situations and manage to separate one role from the other, thus keeping each role basically intact and distinct.

Departing from this simplistic assumption, our argument is that, when 'members of one polity serve as participants in the political processes of another' (Rosenau, 1969, 46), as when domestic officials participate on CWP, *the length and intensity of participation on CWPs* affects the extent to which supranational role perceptions are evoked among the participants (e.g. Hooghe, 1999). Apart from being formal members of CWPs, protracted and intensive interaction and participation within these committees is conducive to the evocation of supranational role perceptions among the committee members. Parallel to this argument, Haas (1958) assumed that participants become 'locked in' and socialized by the sheer intensity of interaction. 'The interactive character of decision making extends over time so that the development of beliefs, rules and expectations in one organization is intertwined with their development in others' (March, 1999, 29). Our argument emphasizes a positive relationship between the intensity of participation within a collective group and the extent to which the members of this group acquire 'social knowledge' about appropriate rules and norms, internalize local roles, take the world for granted (Meyer and Rowan, 1991), become victims of 'group think' (Janis, 1982; t'Hart *et al.*, 1997) or develop particular 'community methods' (Lewis, 2000; Smith, 1998).

Socialization processes are interactive and dynamic between 'socializers' and 'socializees'. Moreover, socialization processes are uni-directional in the sense that the 'socializer' educates, indoctrinates, teaches, persuades and diffuses his norms, beliefs and rules to the 'socializee' (Berger and Luckmann, 1966, 150; Kerr, 1973; Pendergast, 1976; Smith, 1992, 58). Hence, protracted and intensive exposure towards CWPs (the 'socializers') increases the likelihood



that the participants (the ‘socializees’) enact supranational roles. Similar to neo-functional analyses, the cognitive approach views the evocation of supranational roles as ‘a function of the *duration* of the socialization impact’ (Niemann, 1998, 437 — emphasis added; McDonald, 1998, 51; Pettigrew, 1998).³ According to contact theory, the length and intensity of contacts between actors ultimately affects the attitudes of the actors (Pettigrew, 1998). According to the above arguments, national civil servants are likely to identify with EU institutions as a result of ‘daily reinforcement’ and intensive exposure towards the EU level (Lodge, 1978, 241; Kerr, 1973).⁴ Consequently, officials devoting much time and energy attending CWPs are likely to take on supranational roles.

Intensive and prolonged participation on CWPs represents the two explanatory variables suggested in this study. The following four operational proxies of these variables are applied in the empirical analysis below:

- Prolonged and sustained participation on CWPs.
- Attendance on many CWPs and many committee meetings.
- Being an active member of the CWPs by giving frequent oral presentations and interventions during committee meetings.
- Having frequent and varied informal contacts outside the formal CWP meetings.

The first of the above empirical proxies measures the length of participation on CWPs — that is, the time span from their first EU committee meeting up to 1999 when our empirical study was conducted (see the next section). The next three variables measure the intensity of attendance on CWPs — that is, the degree of participation at any point in time, both past and present. For example, some of the Danish officials studied made their first appearance in the CWPs in the 1970s, but seldom attended these committees with any degree of intensity thereafter. Other officials, both Swedish and Danish, attended their first CWP meeting in the 1990s and have participated in a whole lot of meetings since then.

The empirical record

Our units of analysis are Danish and Swedish civil servants who participate on CWPs. The choice of individual civil servants as our research units is based on two rationales. First, officials are those who attend CWPs, who are exposed to role expectations and role prescriptions and who ultimately act. Second, many domestic officials are exposed to impulses from different social and societal contexts. They are ‘full-timers’ within domestic government institutions while at the same time being ‘part-timers’ within the CWPs.⁵ Their primary institutional affiliations are the domestic ministries, agencies and the



permanent representations in Brussels. The CWP are only secondary institutional affiliations to these officials. In order to control for the potential effects of different EU committees only the CWPs are selected in this study.⁶ The CWPs enable us to compare officials from domestic ministries and agencies, and officials at the permanent representations to the EU. Few permanent representatives attend the Commission expert committees and the comitology committees (Trondal, 2001).

Our cases represent hard cases. Denmark and Sweden are both unitary states and among the most Euro-skeptic countries in the EU. Hence, compared to officials from pro-integrationist and federal EU member-states (like Belgium), the Danish and Swedish government officials are less likely to 'go supranational' (Beyers and Trondal, 2003).

To test the relationships between the length and intensity of participation on CWPs and supranational allegiances, research units have been selected that allow for sufficient variation in these variables. Two samples of respondents were systematically selected that included national civil servants who had attended CWPs for different lengths of time and with different levels of intensity. Based on these samples, one survey was conducted from summer 1998 to spring 1999 among Danish and Swedish civil servants. This survey was based on a standardized questionnaire, which was sent to each civil servant by mail. The response rate is 73 per cent, giving 116 respondents. In addition, a triangulation strategy was adopted to increase the validity of the analysis. In all, 22 face-to-face interviews were conducted among the Danish and Swedish officials. The interviews were used to follow up the empirical findings in the survey. A semi-structured interview-guide laid the basis for the interviews. In order to control for the potential effects of policy sector, CWPs from two policy sectors are selected, that is, from the environment sector and the field of health and safety at the workplace. However, no efforts are made in this article to analyze the potential effects of policy sector affiliations among the officials.

The above interview and survey data on Swedish and Danish officials allow for testing the extent to which the length of attendance on CWPs among individual civil servants affects their enactment of supranational roles (cf. Figure 1). Most Swedish civil servants have participated on CWPs for relatively short periods of time because Sweden became an EEA member⁷ in 1994 and a full-fledged EU member in 1995. Danish government officials, on the contrary, have had access to the CWPs since the beginning of the 1970s.

To account for the intensity variable, officials from national ministries and agencies are compared with officials at the Permanent Missions to the EU (cf. Figure 1). Based semi-permanently in Brussels, permanent representatives participate more intensively on the CWPs than domestic ministry and agency personnel. Accordingly, supranational allegiances are likely to be evoked more extensively among the former than among the latter. A survey was conducted



at the Swedish and the Danish Permanent Representations (PR) to the EU from fall 1998 to spring 1999. A similar questionnaire as presented to the ministry and agency officials was used at the PR. The response rate in this survey is 55 per cent, giving 41 respondents. The study of PR is not sectorally limited to the environmental sector and the field of health and safety at the workplace. Selecting permanent representatives from different policy fields as well as officials from the diplomatic realm of the PR increase the sheer number of observations in our study (N). By increasing N, the robustness of the statistical analyses is enhanced.

The survey and interview data are based on systematic selection procedures. This procedure does not allow for empirical generalizations. Still, '[s]mall Ns can yield big conclusions' (Andersen, 2003, 3 — original emphasis). One road to empirical generalizations is by reference to other empirical studies that support or reject our findings. In addition, our empirical results are generalized by reference to the theoretical universe outlined above. Our empirical observations are guided by generic theoretical arguments that warrant an empirical testing of them.

The salience of supranational roles

CWPs are collegial arrangements of a non-permanent nature. CWPs are composed largely of 'part-timers', whose primary institutional affiliations lie elsewhere. The socialization potential is assumed to be, and is also empirically shown to be, weaker within non-permanent collegial organizations than within permanent hierarchical organizations. This is empirically revealed within the European Parliament (Bowler and Farrell, 1995; Katz, 1997; Scully, 1999), within the American Congress (Fenno, 1962) and within EU committees (Egeberg, 1999; Trondal, 2001; Trondal and Veggeland, 2003). Collegial organizations are composed of members who are pre-socialized and 'pre-packed' before attending the collegium. The re-socialization potential of the collegium is assumed to be strengthened if they attend the committee often, if he or she is a senior participant, if the same participants meet regularly and if each colleague generally devotes a major amount of time participating within the collegial setting (Checkel, 2001; Dierickx and Beyers, 1999; Lewis, 2000; Trondal and Veggeland, 2003). Thus, senior EU committee participants are likely to take on supranational allegiances more extensively than officials who are newcomers at the EU arena (Beyers, 1998). The length and intensity of attendance is generally assumed to blur the organizational borders between the collegium and the 'core-organization'; in this study blurring the borderlines between the EU level and the domestic central administrative apparatus.



However, civil servants are complex selves. They have several institutional affiliations, representational roles and cues for action. National civil servants attending EU committees have their primary institutional affiliations at the national level of government. They are employed in domestic ministries, agencies and permanent missions abroad, they have sectoralized portfolio and they have various educational backgrounds. Moreover, the CWP are mainly organized according to a territorial principle of organization, and the participants are often guided by national instructions indicating the positions to be pursued during committee meetings (Egeberg, Schaefer, and Trondal, 2003; Trondal, 2004). Hence, national officials attending the CWPs are likely to put strong emphasis on national roles. As such, our research design resembles a least likely design. However, even under these conditions this section demonstrates that supranational roles supplement pre-established national and sectoral roles among senior CWP participants.

By operationalizing role perceptions as institutional identification (see above), Table 1 reveals the mix of institutional allegiances evoked by national officials attending CWPs. This table makes a distinction between officials coming from national ministries and agencies, and officials at the PR in Brussels.

Table 1 shows that CWP participants have a strong national role orientation. Most CWP participants feel allegiances towards their 'own' government institution and to their 'own' national government. However, due

Table 1 Distributions of allegiances to domestic government institutions, professional backgrounds, policy sectors and supranational institutions (%)^a

<i>Allegiances</i>	<i>National officials</i>	<i>Permanent representatives</i>
<i>National allegiances</i>		
To 'own' government institution ^b	96	82
To their 'own' national government	93	97
To their professional background	40	29
<i>Sectoral allegiances</i>		
To their 'own' policy sector	59	61
<i>Supranational allegiances</i>		
To the CWPs attended	40	54
To the EU as a whole	22	33
Mean <i>N</i>	38	29

^aThe dependent variables combine values 1 and 2 on the following five-point scale: very great extent (1), fairly great extent (2), both/and (3), fairly small extent (4) and very small extent (5).

^bFor the permanent representatives this variable measures allegiances to their 'own' PR.



to permanent representatives having only temporary posts at the Brussels delegations, allegiances towards this institution are lower than the corresponding allegiances among the national officials. Table 1 also demonstrates that the second most important allegiance reported is sector. Finally, supranational allegiances are evoked less strongly than both the national and the sectoral allegiances. Supranational roles are indeed secondary among national EU decision-makers (Egeberg *et al.*, 2003). These observations are also supported in our interview data. One Swedish national official argued that,

‘I feel strongest allegiance to Sweden, but I develop a certain loyalty to the committee. Still, this loyalty never exceeds the loyalty to [my national institution]’ (author’s translation). Similarly, one Danish national official claimed that, ‘I have the strongest national role, but this [role] should always be in accordance with the principles of the [EU] Treaty’ (author’s translation).

Table 1 also shows that permanent representatives evoke supranational roles more strongly than do national officials. One important observation in this respect is that the enactment of supranational roles does not replace existing national roles among the permanent representatives attending CWPs. These officials are heavily pre-socialized through national (and possibly international) educational institutions and through office. Despite pre-socialization, however, permanent representatives are re-socialized within the CWPs. Processes of re-socialization, however, do not replace or transform their pre-established national and sectoral roles (Table 1).

The following two tables reveal the distributions of supranational allegiances when controlling for (i) the intensity of attendance on CWPs (Table 2) and the length of attendance on CWPs (Table 3).

Contrainstuitively, Table 2 shows that Swedish officials evoke supranational allegiances more strongly than the Danish officials. Together, Tables 2 and 3

Table 2 Distributions of supranational allegiances among Danish and Swedish officials, controlled for the intensity of attendance on CWPs (national officials vs permanent representatives) (%)^a

	<i>Danish officials</i>		<i>Swedish officials</i>	
	<i>National off.</i>	<i>Perm. repr.</i>	<i>National off.</i>	<i>Perm. repr.</i>
Allegiances to the CWPs attended	42	50	36	65
Allegiances to the EU as a whole	14	20	26	53
Mean <i>N</i>	21	15	17	17

^aThe dependent variables combine values 1 and 2 on the following five-point scale: very great extent (1), fairly great extent (2), both/and (3), fairly small extent (4) and very small extent (5).



demonstrate that the intensity of attendance on the CWPs have an independent effect on supranational roles. Only weak support is lent to the assumed effect of the length of participation (see Table 2). A multivariate analysis of the relative explanatory effect of the length and intensity of attendance on CWPs is provided in Tables 5 and 6. These more robust regression analyses support the observations made in Tables 2 and 3 (cf. below).

The next question is to what extent supranational roles reflect *re*-socialization processes within the CWPs or processes of *pre*-socialization prior to entering the CWPs. Are national civil servants generally supranationally oriented before attending the CWPs or do they become increasingly europeanized during their 'stay' at these committees? How can we be certain that supranational roles stem from socialization dynamics at the EU level and not out of the sheer self-selection of civil servants with pre-established supranational roles (Pollack, 1998, 27)? One way of testing these alternative hypotheses is by studying how the participants are selected to the CWPs. Our data reveal that the majority of the sampled CWP participants (80 percent of the national officials and 95 percent of the permanent representatives) are routinely *invited* to attend meetings in the committees. Hence, only a minority of the CWP participants has been subject to self-selection to these committees. However, one could assume that officials with pre-established supranational roles are over-represented in the national civil service at large, especially at the Permanent Missions in Brussels. Still, recruitment to these institutions is generally based on merit rather than on any system of patronage. For most of the national civil servants, participation in CWPs represents an integral part of their otherwise complex portfolio. Therefore, supranational roles can hardly reflect processes of self-selection to the CWPs or the national government apparatus. However, permanent representatives tend to have more prior knowledge of and interests in the EU system than average national bureaucrats (Hayes-Renshaw and Wallace, 1997, 75–76). These predispositions make the

Table 3 Distributions of supranational allegiances among national officials and permanent representatives, controlled for the length of attendance on CWPs (Danish vs Swedish officials) (%)^a

	<i>National officials</i>		<i>Permanent representatives</i>	
	<i>Danish off.</i>	<i>Swedish off.</i>	<i>Danish off.</i>	<i>Swedish off.</i>
Allegiances to the CWPs attended	42	36	50	65
Allegiances to the EU as a whole	14	26	20	53
Mean <i>N</i>	21	17	15	17

^aThe dependent variables combine values 1 and 2 on the following five-point scale: very great extent (1), fairly great extent (2), both/and (3), fairly small extent (4) and very small extent (5).



permanent representatives somewhat more likely to be pre-socialized supranational actors than other national government officials.

Why supranational allegiances emerge

According to the organizational theory arguments presented above, officials devoting much time and energy to EU committees are more likely to develop new supranational roles than officials using less energy on such endeavors. Hence, supranational roles are likely to reflect daily exposure towards and face-to-face interaction within supranational institutions. The first part of this section shows statistical distributions of the length and intensity to which national civil servants and permanent representatives actually attend CWPs, and the extent to which Danish and Swedish officials differ in this respect. The second part of this section applies multiple OLS regression analyses to demonstrate the controlled relationships between the length and intensity of attendance on the CWPs and the enactment of supranational roles among the participants.

As expected, Danish officials have, on average, attended CWPs for longer periods of time than the Swedish officials. In our sample, 100 percent of the Swedish officials attended the CWPs for the first time in 1994 or later — reflecting the EEA agreement between the EU and the EFTA countries in 1994. Most of the sampled Danish officials made their first appearances in the CWPs prior to 1994. Consequently, most of the Danish officials have participated for longer periods of time in the CWPs than the Swedish officials.

According to Flynn (2000, 87), some EU committee meetings are more akin to academic seminars with informal and regular interaction than to traditional international diplomacy with sporadic formal encounters. Table 4 shows that national civil servants devote a great amount of time participating on CWPs, provide frequent oral presentations during CWP meetings and have extensive informal contacts outside the formal committee meetings. Moreover, Table 4 demonstrates that officials at the PR attend the CWPs more intensively in these respects than the national officials. According to our data, national officials have on average attended three CWPs. National officials also attend on average six CWP meetings during 1 year (1998). Permanent representatives, in contrast, have on average attended 19 CWPs. These officials also attend on average 82 CWP meetings during 1 year (1998). Together, these observations give ample indications that officials at the PR in Brussels attend the CWPs more intensively than national officials from the capitals.

In the following, multiple OLS regression analyses are introduced to test to what extent the length and intensity of participation on the CWPs accompanies supranational roles among the participants. These regression analyses apply



two dependent variables: (i) allegiances towards the CWP (Table 5) and (ii) allegiances towards the EU as a whole (Table 6). The independent variables included in the regressions are those presented in Table 4, supplemented by one additional independent variable discussed above: the length to which officials

Table 4 Distributions of intensity of attendance on CWP (average numbers* and %)

	<i>National officials</i>	<i>Permanent representatives</i>
<i>Intensity of attendance</i>		
Average number* of CWP attended	3	19
Average number* of CWP meetings attended	6	82
Time devoted participating on CWP ^a	35	93
Giving oral presentations during	64	93
<i>Committee meetings^b</i>		
Informal contacts outside formal committee meetings	50	67
Face-to-face contacts	51	90
Contacts by phone, fax and/or e-mail		
Mean <i>N</i>	44	30

^aValues 1 and 2 are combined on the following five-point scale: very great extent (1), fairly great extent (2), both/and (3), fairly little extent (4) and very little extent (5).

^bThis variable and the next variables combine values 1 and 2 on the following five-point scale: very often (1), fairly often (2), both/and (3), fairly seldom (4) and very seldom (5).

Table 5 Factors relating to allegiances towards the CWP attended^a

<i>Independent variables</i>	<i>National officials</i>	<i>Permanent representatives</i>
Length of attendance on CWP	0.35	-0.15
Time devoted participating on CWP	-0.22	0.50*
Number of CWP attended ^b	-0.31	-0.11
Number of meetings attended during the last year on CWP (1998)	0.23	-0.06
Giving oral presentations during committee meetings	-0.02	0.16
Face-to-face contacts outside formal CWP meetings	0.59*	-0.35
Contacts by phone, fax and/or e-mail with fellow committee members	-0.12	0.16
	$R^2 = 0.29$	$R^2 = 0.40$

Regression coefficients (beta). * $P \leq 0.05$.

^aThe dependent variables have the following values: very great extent (1), fairly great extent (2), both/and (3), fairly small extent (4) and very small extent (5).

^bThis variable has values that correspond to the actual number of committees attended. Attendance on many committees is given a high value, while attendance on few committees is given a low value. For example, attendance on one committee is given the value of 1.



have attended the CWPs.⁸ Together, the four regression models analyzed below (Tables 5 and 6) enable us to measure the relative explanatory power of our two central independent variables: the length and the intensity of attending CWPs. In both tables, several operational measures of the intensity variable are applied (see above for a complete list of these measures). Owing to low *N* in the analyses, however, significant relationships are hard to find. Yet, significance does not relate to any theoretical universe in these regressions. Owing to the fact that the samples are based on *systematic* selection procedures, significance tests demonstrate, at best, the robustness of the relationships studied.⁹

Table 5 analyzes to what extent officials who have participated for long periods of time and with a high degree of intensity on the CWPs come to feel allegiances towards these committees.

Table 5 shows that only two proxies relate significantly with the dependent variable. Moreover, these proxies represent one out of two independent variables: the *intensity* of attendance on the CWPs. No empirical support is given to the assumption that the length of participation on CWPs fosters supranational roles. Notwithstanding few significant observations in Table 5, the explained variance (R^2) is fairly high in each of the regression analyses. The two significant observations presented above support the expected pattern with respect to the intensity variable. Permanent representatives who devote much time participating on CWPs tend to feel allegiances towards these committees (0.50*), and national officials who have many informal face-to-face contacts

Table 6 Factors relating to allegiances towards the EU as a whole^a

<i>Independent variables</i>	<i>National officials</i>	<i>Permanent representatives</i>
Length of attendance on CWPs	0.27	0.26
Time devoted participating on CWPs	-0.07	0.27
Number of CWPs attended ^b	0.42	0.60*
Number of meetings attended during the last year on CWPs (1998)	0.01	-0.01
Giving oral presentations during committee meetings	0.18	0.30
Face-to-face contacts outside formal CWP meetings	0.05	-0.25
Contacts by phone, fax and/or e-mail with fellow committee members	-0.01	0.34
	$R^2 = 0.13$	$R^2 = 0.32$

Regression coefficients (beta)^a* $P \leq 0.05$

^aThe dependent variables have the following values: very great extent (1), fairly great extent (2), both/and (3), fairly small extent (4) and very small extent (5).

^bThis variable has values that correspond to the actual number of committees attended. Attendance on many committees is given a high value, while attendance on few committees is given a low value. For example, attendance on one committee is given the value of 1.



with fellow committee participants feel allegiance towards the CWPs (0.59*). Hence, senior CWP participants who engage in informal networking with other committee participants evoke supranational roles more strongly than novices who are less attracted by informal networking in Brussels. Lewis (2000) and Trondal (2001) make similar observations. These findings are also supported in our interview data. One Danish national official argued that,

‘The essential happens in the breaks [between the formal meetings] (author’s translation). One Swedish national official observed that, ‘we have frequent contacts between the meetings, rather informal and personal contacts. This results in a certain allegiance to the committee and to the individuals who attend. I almost know the committee participants better than my colleagues back home. We turn into a club’ (author’s translation).

Finally, Table 6 demonstrates similar empirical patterns with respect to allegiances towards the EU as a whole.

Similar to Table 5, Table 6 demonstrates that the intensity of attendance on the CWPs is conducive to the emergence of supranational allegiances among the participants. More precisely, Table 6 reveals that officials having attended many CWPs tend to feel allegiance towards the EU as a whole (0.42 and 0.60*). One Swedish national official who had participated in several CWPs argued that,

‘a feeling of participation in the EU – as an organization – develops’ (author’s translation).

The above regression analyses reveal that the explained variance (R^2) is lower in Table 6 than in Table 5, which indicates that the intensity variable has stronger causal impact on the allegiances attached to the committees than towards the EU as a whole. Moreover, the explained variance is higher in the regression analyses on the permanent representatives than in the analysis on the national officials. Hence, the observations presented in Tables 1 and 3 are supported in Tables 5 and 6. Permanent representatives attend the CWPs with a higher degree of intensity than the national officials, accompanying stronger supranational roles among the former. No solid empirical support is provided for the assumption that the length of participation on the CWPs is conducive to supranational roles. This conclusion thus explains the observation made in Table 2, namely that Danish officials participating on the CWPs evoke supranational allegiances less strongly than their Swedish counterparts. This conclusion partly reflects the fact that the intensity of attendance on EU committees is a stronger driver of re-socialization than the sheer length of participation. This conclusion, however, may also reflect the fact that our empirical operationalization of the length variable is less rich than the operationalizations of the intensity variable.



Conclusions

This article has demonstrated that CWP's indeed are sites of socialization and re-socialization of national civil servants. Processes of re-socialization towards supranational roles are shown to reflect at least one variable: national civil servants attending EU committees fairly *intensively* tend to evoke supranational roles more strongly than officials who attend EU committees with less intensity. This study also shows that officials at the Brussels-based PR attend CWP's more intensively than national officials from the capitals. This difference accompanies stronger supranational roles among the permanent representatives than among the national officials. The Council of Ministers and the working groups beneath are traditionally conceived as the hothouse of intergovernmentalism in the EU. This analysis challenges such conceptions by highlighting cells of supranationalism within the Council of Ministers (cf. Beyers and Dierickx 1997; Checkel, 2003; Lewis, 2000). Moreover, the regression analyses demonstrate that the length of attendance is a weaker explanatory proxy than the intensity of attendance as to explain supranational roles among the CWP participants.

Based on this conclusion, a revised Figure 1 provides a more accurate empirical picture of the re-socialization of civil servants.

Compared to the original Figure 1, Figure 2 has filled two of the initially empty cells with empirical observations. Figure 2 clearly illustrates that the intensity of participation on EU committees is an important cause of supranational role orientation. However, this study also shows that the transformative power of EU committees is secondary to the influence

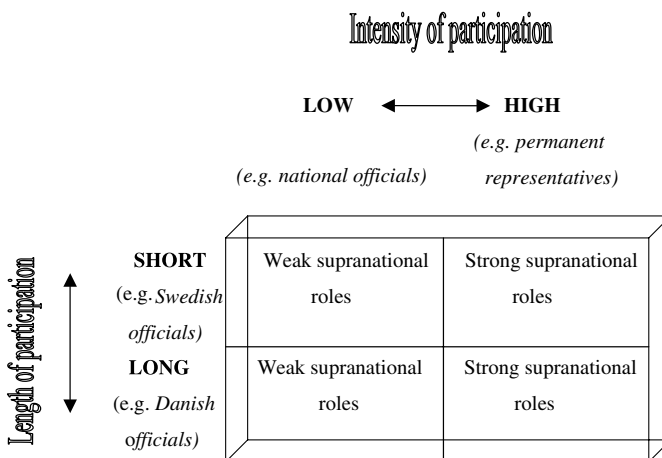


Figure 2 A two-dimensional plot of empirical observations.



generated by domestic government institutions (cf. Table 1). The effects generated by the intensity of attendance on EU committees are mediated and filtered by the primary institutional affiliations embedding the committee participants (Beyers and Trondal, 2003; Egeberg *et al.*, 2003).

In contrast to Haas' (1958) assumption that the emergence of supranational loyalties is detrimental to pre-established national allegiances, the current study demonstrates that supranational role perceptions and national/sectoral roles may coexist (cf. Table 1). Civil servants are multiple and complex selves with different roles and action modes. Certain organizational variables, however, may activate particular repertoires within a set of roles and deactivate others. Supranational roles are activated particularly among senior EU committee participants who attend the committees with a high level of intensity. 'Going supranational' in EU committees, however, does not imply 'staying supranational' when the officials return to their national ministries and agencies. After their stay in Brussels, these officials may re-activate national and sectoral roles. The current study, however, has emphasized that officials attending EU committees intensively are more likely to 'stay supranational' than officials having only occasional trips to Brussels.

Future research on multiple allegiances should analyze both how multiple allegiances are arrived at, how they are arranged and under what conditions different arrangements of allegiances are most likely to materialize. Assuming that multiple allegiances may be hierarchically nested, cross-cutting and/or blurred/fused, studies should reveal the conditions that make each 'arrangement' most likely. According to Pescosolido and Rubin (2000, 62), 'individuals are not enmeshed within interconnected circles but rather stand out-side them, and their connections to institutions are multiple and often temporary, not single and life long'. Beyers and Trondal (2003), for example, argue that institutional ambiguities reduce the likelihood of hierarchically nested allegiances and increase the probability that national and supranational allegiances become blurred and meshed. Moreover, Egeberg (1999) demonstrates empirically that EU committees foster nested roles — territorial roles are primary to supranational roles. This article has argued theoretically and demonstrated empirically that intensive involvement of national officials at the EU arena may represent a trigger to supranationalism. However, further research is needed to unpack the world of multiple allegiances theoretically and empirically.

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Notes

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- 2 Thanks to John Erik Fossum at ARENA for this point.
- 3 The sheer size of societal communities, organizations or collegial arrangements may affect the role perceptions enacted by individuals, and this dimension may also to some extent condition the impact of the intensity dimension. CWPs normally convene from 20 to over 40 people. Consequently, the potential for intimacy and close bargaining and arguing is provided by the sheer size of these committees and groups. This intimacy may provide for an '*esprit de corps*' to emerge among the participants. However, the committees covered by this study are of approximately the same size. Hence, no hypotheses are generated on the basis of the size variable as to the emergence of supranational roles among the committee participants.
- 4 Contrary to the above argument, one may argue that protracted exposure towards certain institutions teaches actors how to decouple talk and action — thus keeping the role perceptions of the actors largely unchanged and unaffected by ways of presenting them (March, 1984). For example, EU committee participants may be inclined to adopt 'Euro-talk' picturing oneself as supranational, that is, using 'Euro-jargon', while at the same time acting in accordance with established national expectations and obligations. Combining pre-established national modes of acting and a standardized and supranational community language, civil servants may be able to satisfy inconsistent expectations and demands. 'Euro-talk' may thus reflect 'the norms geared exclusively for talk' more than the norms of action and practice (Brunsson, 1998, 267). When do processes of socialization and re-socialization occur and when do individuals just 'talk to talk' (Moravcsik, 2001, 237)? In this article role perceptions are studied separately from decision behavior. However, it might be questioned whether the role perceptions evoked by officials are myths or reality to them (Brunsson, 1989). Solid theoretical solutions to this puzzle are not suggested in this article.
- 5 The distinction between 'full-timers' and 'part-timers' is not solely a question of the time and energy devoted by officials towards different organizational communities. In addition, this distinction is based on formal organizational affiliations, that is, whether individuals have



primary or secondary affiliations to particular organizations. In that respect, domestic officials who attend EU committees should be conceived as 'full-timers' within their domestic ministries or agencies and only 'part-timers' at the EU level of governance.

6 Empirical studies show that officials participating on Commission expert committees *and* comitology committees have difficulties separating these committees with respect to their formal status (Institut für Europäische Politik 1987, 81; Van Schendelen, 1996). 'This mixture of working group and comitology committee sometimes makes it very difficult for national civil servants to know when they have to act as representative of a Member State within a Comitology committee and when as an independent national expert' (Demmke 1998, 17). Excluding both of these committees from the analysis helps in reducing the likelihood of mixing different committees, albeit without completely excluding this possibility.

7 The European Economic Area.

8 This variable is selected instead of the country variable (Denmark *vs* Sweden). Collinearity diagnostics indicate that both variables cannot be included in the same regression model due to extreme multicollinearity. The variable 'length of attendance' is preferred in the regression analyses because this variable best serves the analytical purposes.

9 Diagnostics of collinearity between the independent variables analyzed in Tables 5 and 6 unveil no indications of extreme multicollinearity. Thus, the independent variables seem to have independent causal impact on the two dependent variables.