Achieving party unity : a sequential approach to why MPs act in concert

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Chapter 4

The influence of institutions: MPs' decision-making mechanisms in 15 national parliaments

4.1 The influence of institutions

As mentioned in chapter 3, the impact of institutional settings on party group (voting) unity in parliament has been both theorized and studied empirically in the existing literature on representation and legislative behavior (see for example Bowler et al., 1999b; Carey, 2007, 2009; Depauw and Martin, 2009; Morgenstern, 2004; Ozbudun, 1970; Sieberer, 2006). We argue, however, that these institutions do not affect voting behavior directly. Instead, we contend that these institutions influence MPs' decision-making process in determining whether to cast their vote in parliament according to the party group's position, or to dissent from the party group line. Relying on the 2010 PartiRep Survey in 15 national parliaments, the aim of this chapter is to ascertain what the relative contribution of the different decision-making mechanisms is to party group unity, whether this varies by country, and to what extent institutions can account for these differences.[1]

There are a number of different institutions that are hypothesized to impact legislative party unity, but in this chapter we focus on three institutions that are deemed most relevant for party group unity in the existing literature. First, most comparative studies expect the conditions under which MPs compete for (re-)election, to play an important role in determining party group unity (Carey, 2007, 2009; Depauw and Martin, 2009; Martin, 2011; Sieberer, 2006). Electoral laws that allow voters to cast a personal vote and, in the case of list systems enable voters to upset the order in which candidates are

[1] Parts of the analyses in this chapter are also included in Van Vonno et al. (2014).

elected to parliament, are expected to lead to lower levels of party group unity in parliament. The institutional characteristics of these so-called candidate-oriented electoral systems provide candidates with incentives to cultivate a personal vote and to engage in intra-party competition with their fellow candidates, which is expected to increase in intensity with district magnitude. Alternatively, party-centered electoral systems, where voters are unable to cast personal votes and cannot upset the order in which candidates are elected to parliament, are hypothesized to be conducive the party group unity, as candidates must rely on, and contribute to, the political party label as a means of appealing to the electorate. In this case, intra-party competition is argued to decrease as district magnitude increases.

Although the electoral connection is considered conventional theoretical wisdom, the empirical evidence for its influence on parliamentary party voting unity is mixed (Martin, 2014). In his analysis of party voting unity in 11 Western parliamentary systems, Sieberer (2006) follows Mitchell (2000) in his classification of electoral systems as party-oriented, intermediate or candidate-oriented.[2] Contrary to his expectations, Sieberer (2006) finds that party voting unity is actually higher in candidate-centered electoral systems than party-centered systems. Average party voting unity is highest in countries classified in the intermediate category (although variance in average party group unity is lowest in party-centered electoral systems), leading him to question the validity of the argument that party voting unity is a function of electoral rules and personal vote seeking. Carey (2007), however, finds that the level of intra-party competition in the electoral arena explains variations in party voting unity in a range of different systems across the globe,[3] and Hix's (2004) study of voting behavior in the European Parliament reveals that the electoral system by which Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are elected in their home countries influence voting unity in European party groups.[4] According to Depauw and Martin (2009), these mixed results are in part due to the different classifications of electoral systems as candidate or party-centered electoral systems used in the studies.

Depauw and Martin (2009) further argue that variations in parliamentary party voting unity that are attributed to electoral systems may actually stem from differences in political parties' internal candidate selection procedures, which take place before political parties and their candidates enter the electoral arena. Rahat and Hazan (2001) distinguish between the dimensions of inclusiveness and (territorial) centralization in the process of candidate selection. The inclusiveness dimension refers to the number of actors included in the selectorate, which may range from the entire population of

[2] Mitchell (2000) classifies closed-list proportional representation (PR), additional member systems and formally open but in practice rather closed list systems, as party-centered electoral systems. Single-member simple plurality, alternative vote and double-ballot systems are classified as intermediate electoral systems. Genuinely open-list PR and systems in which voters have a single transferable vote (STV) fall under candidate-centered.

[3] Carey (2007) simply tests whether electoral systems allow for intra-party competition or not.

[4] Hix (2004) classifies closed-list and semi-open-list PR systems as party-centered electoral systems, and fully open-list PR and STV systems as candidate-centered. He also includes district magnitude in his model as a separate variable.

the country (which is not common in European party systems), to all party members via party primaries, to a special party agency, and finally to only a select group of political party leaders. The centralization dimension refers to whether selection takes place at the local, district, regional or national level. Candidate selections procedures that are exclusive and centralized are hypothesized to lead to high levels of party group voting unity, as they place the control over candidate selection in the hands of a relatively small and homogeneous group, concentrated at the national level, that is able to (directly) monitor the behavior of incumbent MPs. Contrarily, candidate selection procedures that are inclusive and decentralized are hypothesized to lead to lower levels of party voting unity in parliament (Depauw and Martin, 2009).

There are only a few empirical studies that actually include candidate selection as a possible determinant of party group voting unity.[5] Sieberer (2006), who dichotomizes candidate selection procedures into those with high and low centralized control,[6] finds a positive relationship between centralized control and party voting unity in his study of 11 parliamentary democracies. Depauw and Martin (2009) also test for a relationship between party voting unity and candidate selection in their analysis of 16 European democracies. Using Lundell's (2004) five-point scale,[7] which combines both the centralization and inclusiveness dimensions of candidate selection procedures developed by Rahat and Hazan (2001), Depauw and Martin (2009) find that party voting unity increases as candidate selection becomes more centralized and exclusive. Both Faas (2003)[8] and Hix (2004)[9] find that MEPs are more likely to defect from their European party group line when their political party's candidate selection procedure is more centralized at the national level in their home country. Finally, although Hazan and Rahat (2006) do not look at party voting unity, they find that in the Israeli parliament the democratization of candidate selection (which entails increasing candidate selection inclusiveness) led to an increase in the adoption of private member bills, which is argued to be an individualistic form of parliamentary behavior and indicative of the 'personalization of politics'. Their

[5] In his study of party voting unity in 19 countries, Carey (2007, 94) includes a hypothesis regarding the degree of decentralization of government. Carey reasons that in unitary systems the strongest level of party organization is the national level, whereas in federal systems the subnational levels of party organization are usually more powerful. As candidate selection methods may differ between parties within the same country, looking directly at candidate selection instead of the degree of government decentralization serves as a more precise measure of power distribution within political parties.

[6] Sieberer (2006) considers centralized control high when the party leadership can select candidate directly, or proposals from the local or regional level have to be approved by the central party leadership; candidate selection centralization is low in all other circumstances.

[7] The scale developed by Lundell (2004) starts with control over selection located exclusively at the local level (1) or district level (2), and ends with control over selection located exclusively at the national level (5). In between (3-4), selection takes place at either the district, regional or national level, but other levels can exercise influence over the selection process by being able to propose candidates, actually add names to the list, or veto candidates.

[8] Faas (2003) uses three categories: candidate selection by central leadership, by party congress and by regional party organization.

[9] Hix (2004) simply dichotomizes candidate selection into centralized (national party executive or national party congress) and decentralized (regional or local party caucus).

analysis does not allow for cross-country comparison, but they do note that "Members of the US Congress, which is known for its low levels of party cohesion, are selected through highly inclusive primaries. In contrast, British, Irish, and Norwegian legislators (as well as most other West European legislators), who are selected by more exclusive selectorates, exhibit higher levels of cohesion." (Hazan and Rahat, 2006, 381).

Finally, the defining aspect of parliamentary systems, the confidence convention, is expected to generate higher levels of party group unity in parliamentary systems than in presidential systems. In parliamentary systems, the executive is dependent on the continued explicit or implicit confidence of a plurality in the legislature (Strøm, 2000, 365). Although confidence votes are not regularly used, their possibility alone is expected to lead to higher levels of party voting unity (Kam, 2009). Some authors even consider the confidence convention both a necessary and a sufficient condition for high party group unity (Diermeier and Feddersen, 1998). Carey (2007, 94), on the other hand, argues that since confidence provisions are not formally summoned on most votes, their impact may be overstated. The confidence convention is further argued to have a stronger impact on an MP when his party is in government than when his party is in opposition. For government MPs, dissent acquires a second dimension: voting against the Prime Minister and cabinet, which may bring down the government and, in some systems, may lead to early parliamentary elections. According to Carey (2007) the confidence convention cannot account for why MPs in opposition party groups vote in unity, however, as there are no additional costs associated directly with being in opposition and party voting disunity.

As stated above, our main argument is that these institutions do not affect party group unity directly, but instead affect the decision-making process MPs apply in determining how to vote in parliament. This is already evidenced by the theoretical arguments developed by scholars in their study of the relationship between institutions and party voting unity, which often highlight the impact of these institutions on different causal (i.e., MPs' decision-making) mechanisms (see section 3.2 in chapter 3). Below we outline how we expect each of these three institutions to affect the decision-making mechanisms employed by MPs. We then test our hypotheses in 15 national parliaments on the basis of the 2010 PartiRep Survey.

4.2 Expectations

4.2.1 Division of labor

During the first stage of our sequential decision-making process, individual MPs determine whether they actually have a personal stance on the vote at hand. It may be, however, that because of the considerably heavy workload in most national legislatures, MPs do not have the time or resources to form their own personal opinion on all topics (Andeweg and Thomassen, 2011a; Whitaker, 2005). In order to deal with this workload, party groups apply a division of labor among their members (Andeweg and Thomassen, 2011a; Krehbiel, 1991; Shepsle and Weingast, 1994; Skjaeveland, 2001), As such, candidates' background and specialization in particular issue areas are likely to be important

criteria during parties' candidate recruitment and selection process. Moreover, MPs' specializations are likely to develop further during their time in parliament and their experience as spokespersons for their party groups in their legislative committees. This too may result in MPs being less knowledgeable and up-to-date about topics outside of their own field. If MPs lack a (strong) opinion on the topic that is put to a vote, they follow the voting advice provided by their fellow party group members who are specialized in, or act as a spokesperson for, the relevant issue area, and thus MPs contribute to party group unity through cue-taking.

In this chapter, we present some descriptive statistics for our indicators of cue-taking, but we do not formulate or test any hypotheses about cue-taking in the sequential decision-making model. First, the PartiRep survey questions do not allow us to measure the role of cue-taking during MPs' voting decision making itself (see subsection 4.3.1). Our first indicator enables us to gauge whether MPs are more likely to consider themselves generalists or specialists. We argue that if there are many specialists in parliament, this evidences that party groups are likely to apply a division of labor, and thus that MPs will need to engage in cue-taking when voting on issues that fall outside their own portfolio. Our second indicator is a question that asks respondents whether they consider it true or false that in the day-to-day practice of parliament, the party group spokesperson determines the position of the party group on his topic. We argue that if MPs answer that this is true, this also provides some evidence for the argument that party groups apply a division of labor among their MPs. Both questions, however, do not refer specifically to the role of cue-taking when it comes to MPs' decision-making process preceding a vote in parliament, which makes it problematic to place this mechanism in the sequential decision-making model. Moreover, the question that we use to measure the second decision-making stage, party group agreement, cannot distinguish between MPs who vote with the party group line because they personally agree with it, and MPs who vote with the party group because they lack a personal opinion on the topic, but *do not disagree* with the party group's position (see discussion in subsection 4.3.2 below), which also makes the inclusion of cue-taking in the sequential decision-making model problematic.

Second, the institutions that we focus on in this chapter are not likely to have a strong impact on the division of labor parliamentary party groups apply and MPs' tendency to engage in cue-taking, especially when taking our indicators into consideration. Although we argue above that specialization is likely to be an important candidate selection criterion, there is no reason to suspect that the inclusiveness of the selectorate or the centralization of the candidate selection procedure will necessarily influence the number of policy specialists and generalists, or that candidate selection procedures will impact the way in which parliamentary party groups organize their workload. Instead, the extent to which party groups apply a division of labor and MPs are able to engage in cue-taking is likely to be determined by institutions and specific rules and procedures inside the legislative arena, for which we lack the data on for the parliaments included in our analysis (but see chapter 6 for an analysis of changes in cue-taking over time in the Dutch national parliament), as well as party group size (for which we test in chapter 5).

4.2.2 Party agreement

If MPs do have an opinion on a vote in parliament, they move on to the second decision-making stage, at which they assess whether their opinion on the issue at hand corresponds with the position of their party group. Party agreement is the most basic source of MPs' toeing the party line on their own accord (Krehbiel, 1993) and is held to mainly result from a process of (self-)selection. Individuals interested in a political career are likely to join the political party with which they agree the most in terms of ideology and general policy position (Rush and Giddings, 2011), and party selectorates recruit, select and promote candidates whose preferences are most in line with their own. Thus, working under the assumption that selectorates choose candidates whose preferences match their own, the further removed from the national level (i.e., the more decentralized), and the larger the group involved in the candidate selection process (i.e., the more inclusive the selectorate), the wider the range of their preferences, and thus the more likely it is that they will choose a heterogeneous group of candidates, which will lead to lower levels of agreement in the parliamentary party group. If candidate selection is concentrated in the hands of the national party leaders, a relatively small and probably homogenous group, party agreement is likely to be higher, as party leaders are likely to select candidates who agree with the party program and electoral manifesto as much as possible. Our expectation is therefore that *MPs in parties with exclusive and centralized candidate selection procedures are more likely to frequently agree with the party than MPs in parties with inclusive and decentralized candidate selection procedures (H1a).*

When it comes to the influence of electoral institutions, we argue that party group agreement is likely to be higher in party-oriented electoral systems than in candidate-oriented electoral systems. As stated above, it is in the interest of the party selectorate to only grant access to the political party label to those candidates who reflect the party selectorate's own policy positions. Moreover, in list systems specifically, party selectorates are likely to place those candidates with whom they agree with the most at the top of the candidacy list in order to maximize these candidates' chances of (re-)election. Therefore, in party-centered electoral systems, where voters are unable to cast a personal vote and/or there is little intra-party competition and few incentives for personal vote seeking, the party's control over candidates extends into the electoral arena in terms of who is eventually elected to parliament. In candidate-centered electoral systems, where voters are able to cast a personal vote, and/or intra-party competition is strong and there are more incentives for candidates to engage in personal vote seeking, parties to some extent lose their control over who is elected to parliament. Given that the policy preferences of the electorate at large are likely to be more heterogeneous than those of the party selectorate, party agreement in parliament is likely to suffer. Moreover, as a personal vote seeking strategy, candidates may attempt to distinguish themselves from their fellow candidates with whom they compete. One strategy could be by adopting, or emphasizing, a policy position that differs from that of (the other candidates of) that help by the political party. Our hypothesis is that *MPs in party-oriented electoral systems are more likely to frequently agree with the party than MPs in candidate-oriented electoral systems (H2a).*

Finally, when it comes to the effects of government participation in parliamentary systems, one could argue that if an MP's party participates in government, this increases the likelihood that MPs will disagree with the party's position. Domestic circumstances and international pressures may lead the government to take ad hoc or unpopular measures, which governing parties' counterparts in parliament are expected to support, but individual MPs may not agree with. In the case of coalition government, governing parties may have to support certain government initiatives that are a part of the coalition agreement, but that were not originally in their party's own electoral manifesto or party program, also increasing the likelihood of MPs' disagreement with the party line in parliament. We expect that *MPs in governing parties are less likely to frequently agree with the party on a vote in parliament than MPs in opposition parties (H3a).*

4.2.3 Party loyalty

If MPs do not agree with the party group line on a vote in parliament, they move on to the next decision-making stage, at which they weigh whether their loyalty to the party group overrides their disagreement with the group's position. MPs who subscribe to the norm of party group solidarity toe the party group line voluntarily despite their reservations because they acknowledge the importance of legislative party group unity for parliamentary government. Party group loyalty is theorized to be the result of processes of socialization and internalization. Norms of group loyalty are learned not only in parliament (Rush and Giddings, 2011), but also through prior party experience (Asher, 1973; Crowe, 1983).

Similar to party group agreement, a candidate's loyalty to his selectorate is likely to be an important candidate selection criterion. Thus, if candidate selection is concentrated in the hands of the national party leadership, MPs are more likely to subscribe to the norm of party group loyalty, than if the selectorate is more inclusive and decentralized. In the cases of the former, it is clear who an MP's main principal is (the national party leadership). The more inclusive and decentralized the selectorate, however, the more competing principals there are within the political party to whom an MP may owe his allegiance, and thus the more likely that his loyalty to the party group leadership will be diffused by his loyalty to other party members and branches of the party organization, who may disagree with the position of the party group and expect the MP to vote in line with their own, instead of the party group's, position (Carey, 2009). Therefore, we expect that *MPs in parties with exclusive and centralized candidate selection procedures are more likely to subscribe to the norm of party loyalty than MPs in parties with inclusive and decentralized candidate selection procedures (H1b).*

The notion of competing principals is also important when it comes to the influence of electoral institutions on MPs' decision to vote with the party group's position despite disagreement. In party-oriented electoral systems in which parties control ballot access, voters are unable to cast a personal vote and/or there is little intra-party competition, MPs owe their seat to the party and benefit from the collective party reputation. The party is therefore their main principal, and thus MPs are more likely to be loyal to the party group in the case of disagreement. In candidate-oriented electoral systems, voters

can cast a personal vote and/or there is more intra-party competition, and thus there is more incentive to cultivate a personal reputation that sets MPs apart from their other party group members, and MPs are more likely to owe their seats to voters who elected on them on basis of their personal policy stances. Voters are therefore more likely to act as competing principals to the political party, and thus loyalty to the party group may be diffused to an MP's own (potential) voters. The hypothesis is that *MPs in party-oriented electoral systems are more likely to subscribe to the norm of party loyalty than MPs in candidate-oriented electoral systems (H2b).*

Finally, the added responsibility of supporting government initiatives, and the threat of early elections if the government is brought down, may instill in government MPs a stronger feeling of responsibility towards their political party, and make them more likely to support their party group voluntarily in the case of disagreement, than opposition MPs. We expect that *MPs in governing parties are more likely to subscribe to the norm of party loyalty than MPs in opposition parties (H3b).*

4.2.4 Party discipline

When MPs disagree with the party group line, and do not subscribe to the norm of party group loyalty or the conflict with the party group's position is so intense that it outweighs their loyalty to the party group, party (group) leaders may employ disciplinary measures in an attempt to sway their vote. At the final decision-making stage, MPs must decide whether (the promise of) positive incentives or (the threat of) negative sanctions outweigh their resolve to dissent from the party group line. As opposed to party group agreement and party group loyalty, which results in MPs' voluntarily contributing to party group unity, party discipline is an involuntary pathway.

Control over candidate selection is an important tool that can be used to discipline MPs. When candidate selection procedures are inclusive and decentralized, the national party (group) leadership's access to candidate selection as a potential and credible disciplining tool is limited. Contrarily, when the national party (group) leadership has extensive control over candidate selection, this can be very powerful disciplining tool.[10] In terms of negative sanctions, the party (group) leadership can (threaten to) not reselect an MP who is considering dissenting or has dissented from the party group line. In the case of candidacy lists, the party (group) leadership can also decrease an MP's chances of re-election by placing him near the bottom of the electoral candidacy list. In terms of positive sanctions, the party (group) leadership can do the opposite and (promise to) reselect an MP, or place him nearer to the top of the candidacy list. Therefore we expect that *MPs in parties with exclusive and centralized candidate selection procedures are more likely to be disciplined than MPs in parties with inclusive and decentralized candidate selection procedures (H1c).*

[10] Depending on the rules of the political party, the parliamentary party group leadership may be involved in candidate selection, and thus have direct access to reselection as a disciplining tool, or may play only an advisory role, making its access indirect and the use of candidate reselection as a disciplinary tool dependent on others within the party organization.

The same logic holds for electoral institutions: in party-oriented electoral systems, where political parties control ballot access and voters are unable to cast a personal vote, political parties' control over candidate selection extends in to the electoral arena. In the case of list systems, safe positions near the top of the list are very valuable to candidates, as being placed high on the party electoral candidacy list greatly increases their chances of (re-)election. In candidate-centered electoral systems, where voters can cast a personal vote and/or influence the order in which candidates are elected to parliament, the party's (leaderships') ability to use the electoral system as a credible sanctioning tool is diminished. We expect that *MPs in party-oriented electoral systems are more likely to be disciplined than MPs in candidate-oriented electoral systems (H2c).*

In Anglo-Saxon parliamentary systems such as in the United Kingdom, where government (junior) minister are also members of parliament, a governing political party technically has the power to demote a frontbencher who refuses to vote with the party's position, to the position of backbencher. However, in most countries a (junior) minister cannot simultaneously hold a seat in parliament, and therefore being a governing party does not give a party's leadership access to other tools to discipline its MP than if the party is in opposition. A governing party could promise an MP a future position in government, but there is no guarantee that the party will remain in government after the next elections. Thus, in parliament, governing and opposition party groups have access to the same disciplining tools. Depending on the rules of parliament, party (group) leaders can remove an MP from his legislative committees, or (temporarily) relieve an MP of his spokesmanship for particular topics. They can also expel an MP from the party group, and in legislatures where MPs' seats formally belong to the party, even evict him from parliament entirely, thus ending his political career. The added responsibility of government and the threat of early elections if the government is brought down, however, may make governing parties more willing than opposition parties to (threaten to) use these disciplinary measures when MPs threaten not to toe the party group line voluntarily. Our final hypothesis is that *MPs in governing parties are more likely to be disciplined than MPs in opposition parties (H3c).*

4.3 Analysis of the decision-making mechanisms in 15 national parliaments

This analysis relies on data collected in the context of the PartiRep project. One of the components of the PartiRep project involves a cross-national survey carried out in 15 countries among members of 65 national and sub-national legislatures. For the purpose of this analysis only respondents from the 15 national parliaments are included (see Table 4.1). Data collection took place between the Spring of 2009 and 2012, and in the timing of the data collection electoral cycles were taken into account as much as possible to minimize the impact of electoral campaigns and ensure that MPs had been in office for sufficient time to have experience with the phenomena into which our questions

inquired.[11] Depending on country context and the accessibility of MPs, MPs were invited to participate either by filling in a web-based survey or print questionnaire by hand, or were interviewed via telephone or face-to-face.[12]

On average 20 percent of national MPs participated in the survey, but the response rates vary quite a bit between countries (see Table 4.1). There are few studies of response rates themselves in political science, and in particular when it comes to elite surveys. It is therefore difficult to determine whether these response rates can be considered acceptable or are comparable to those achieved through other elite surveys. One recent example of another elite survey is the 2009 Comparative Candidate Survey, which achieved a response rate of 22 percent. During their Inaugural Conference, the members of the project had agreed that "a survey with a return rate below 20 percent of the target population (universe or sample) is not acceptable" (2007). According to this threshold, the overall response rate attained by the PartiRep survey just makes the cut. However, there are a number of individual countries for which response rates are below 20 percent: Italy (7 percent), France (9 percent), the United Kingdom (10 percent) and Portugal (12 percent). And Ireland (20 percent) and Germany (22 percent) are only just above the threshold.

The dataset's representativeness of the population was tested by the project leaders using the Duncan Index of Similarity, on the basis of which the authors conclude that "the selection closely resembles the population in most respects" (see Deschouwer et al. 2014, 11). 49 percent of respondents are from governing parties, and 51 percent are members of parties in opposition, which in almost all countries is very similar to the ratio in the population. The sample is also fairly representative of party group membership, although there are a few exceptions (Deschouwer et al., 2014, 11).[13] As such, responses are weighted to correct for these potential biases in response rates between party groups in legislatures. A second weight is applied to bring the number of responses in the different countries in line with one another. Still, country differences in response rates should be kept in mind in interpreting the analyses in this chapter.[14] Finally, the eight independents (defined as MPs whose political party only has one seat in parliament) included in the data set are excluded from the analysis, as they have no parliamentary party group to conform to.

As highlighted in subsection 3.2.1 in chapter 3, there are a number of other variables, including those at the political party and individual level, that are also argued to affect individual MP behavior and party group unity. Although the survey is deemed fairly

[11] Only in the Netherlands, Norway and Spain did data collection take place in the months prior to the national parliamentary elections.

[12] The fact that different methods of data collection were used may hve

[13] In both France and Spain, the Socialist party is overrepresented, whereas the Conservative Party is slightly underrepresented. In Italy the Partito Democratico is overrepresented, whereas Popola della Libertá is underrepresented (Deschouwer et al., 2014, 11). In Poland, the large established parties are slightly underrepresented (André et al., 2012, 109).

[14] All analyses have been checked for correlations with response rates. Noteworthy findings are discussed in the text.

Table 4.1: PartiRep MP Survey response rates for 15 national parliaments

	Population	Response		Government	Candidate selection inclusiveness			Candidate selection centralization	Electoral system	
					Primaries	Agency	Leaders	National level	Personal vote	District magnitude
Country	N	n	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	seats (n)
Austria	183	55	30	60	0	100	0	20	80	2-7
Belgium	150	70	47	62	0	88	12	12	100	5-24
France	577	50	9	0	0	0	100	2	100	1
Germany	622	134	22	43	0	100	0	0	41	1-65
Hungary	386	99	26	49	0	57	43	43	54	1-58
Ireland	166	34	20	44	55	45	0	45	100	3-5
Israel	120	39	33	49	51	28	21	100	0	120
Italy	630	45	7	44	0	0	100	100	0	6-43
Netherlands	150	63	42	37	17	83	0	100	100	150
Norway	169	46	27	57	0	100	0	0	100	4-17
Poland	460	55	12	48	0	23	77	100	100	7-19
Portugal	230	76	33	40	0	100	0	67	0	2-47
Spain	350	104	30	66	0	0	100	26	100	3-47
Switzerland	200	49	25	78	0	100	0	0	0	1-26
United Kingdom	650	62	10	47	100	0	0	0	0	1
Total / average	5043	983	20	49	11	59	30	36	59	28

Note: The 2010 PartiRep MP Survey was financed by the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office (BELSPO). The codebook and instructions for obtaining the data can be found on the PartiRep website (www.partirep.eu).

Table 4.2: Average party group unity in 15 national parliaments (Rice score)

Country	Period	Rice score
Austria	1995-1997	98.33
Belgium	1991-1995	99.06
France	1993-1997	99.33
Germany	1987-1990	96.33
Hungary	-	-
Ireland	1992-1996	100.00
Israel	1999-2000	96.88
Italy	1996-2001	96.46
Netherlands	2006-2010	99.96
Norway	1992-1993	95.90
Poland	-	-
Portugal	-	-
Spain	-	-
Switzerland	1991-1994	86.60
United Kingdom	1992-1997	99.25
Total / average		

Rice score sources: Source for Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Italy and United Kingdom is Depauw and Martin (2009). The authors excluded both non-votes and abstentions. Source for Switzerland is Lanfranchi and Lüthi (1999). The scores for the Netherlands were calculated by the author.

representative of the population of MPs in the 15 national parliaments included in the study, and there are over 100 parliamentary party groups included in the survey, and data weights have been used to try to correct for potential biases, there are some party groups, especially the smaller ones, that are underrepresented or not represented at all, which may have made the inclusion of party (group) related factors problematic. Thus, one of the main reasons why we have opted to limit the analysis to only three main institutional variables is data-driven.[15]

In each of the sections below, we first present descriptive statistics on the four decision-making mechanisms. When possible we also validate our measures of the decision-making mechanisms with other questions from the 2010 PartiRep Survey. Each discussion of the descriptive statistics of the individual mechanisms is followed by a multivariate analysis in which we test the hypotheses developed above (with the exception of

[15] We did check for correlations between the questions used to measure the decision-making mechanisms and the potentially relevant variables included in the PartiRep dataset. Almost all of the relationships were not statistically significant, and for some the relevance and suitability of the variables (i.e., question formulation and/or answering categories formulations and variable type) for our analysis can be questioned.

cue-taking for which we did not develop any hypotheses, see subsection 4.2.1). Because all our dependent variables are categorical, logistic regression is the best multivariate method to use. In order to take the hierarchical nature of the data into account, we use a multilevel model, through which we control for the 15 parliaments and 94 political party groups that MPs are members of.

First, to test our hypotheses regarding government participation in parliamentary systems, we use a simple dummy variable that marks whether an MP's party is in opposition (0) or in government (1). Regarding the operationalization of candidate selection, MPs' parties' candidate selection procedures are classified according to the two dimensions of inclusiveness and centralization identified by Rahat and Hazan (2001) in the PartiRep dataset. These classifications are based on the expert judgments of the PartiRep project researchers from the respective countries. Inclusiveness is measured using a categorical indicator, the categories being that party selects its candidates via party primaries, a party agency or the party leadership. Most of the respondents in the 2010 PartiRep survey are selected by a party agency (59 percent), one-third are selected by party leaders, and about 10 percent are selected through party primaries. The PartiRep experts also classified the decentralization of candidate selection procedures as either taking place at the local, district, regional or national level. We have opted to combine these two dimensions into one dummy variable: candidate selection is both exclusive and centralized when it takes place at the national level by party leaders or a select party agency (1), and candidate selection is considered inclusive and decentralized when candidates are selected through party primaries at any level of the party organization, or by party leaders or a party agency at one of the subnational levels (0).[16]

Next, as explained above, the classification of the formal properties of electoral systems as either candidate- or party-oriented is not consistent in the literature, which may account for the mixed results regarding their effects on party voting unity. In line with Carey (2007), we opt for the simplest measure, and that is to differentiate between systems in which voters can formally cast a preference vote for an individual candidate (0) and systems in which voters cannot (1).[17] We also check for the effect of district magnitude (decimal logged), as one could argue that when voters can cast personal votes the intensity of intra-party competition, and thus the value of an individual reputation, increases with district magnitude, because the number of co-partisan competitors also increases. When voters cannot cast a vote for an individual candidate, the value of the political party label instead increases with district magnitude (Carey and Shugart, 1995). The frequency distributions of these variables for each of the 15 parliaments are presented in Table 4.1 .

Table 4.2 provides information on recent Rice scores for those parliaments for which these are available, as an indication of the levels of party group unity found in previous research. Party voting unity is very high in almost all of our 15 parliaments, meaning that

[16] Alternative classification of candidate selection procedures based on the expert judgment of the PartiRep project research team produced very similar results.

[17] Alternative classification of the formal properties of electoral systems based on the expert judgment of the PartiRep project research team produced very similar results.

by and large, MPs usually vote with the party group in parliament. With the exception of Switzerland, Rice scores are all above 95. As stated before, however, these scores do not allow us to ascertain the relative contribution of each of the decision-making mechanisms (see section 3.2 in chapter 3). Ideally, our explanatory model of decision making would be tested by asking MPs what motivated their choice at each stage of their decision-making process on individual legislative votes. However, the available data precludes us from doing so, and we are also unable to connect MPs' responses to the PartiRep Survey questions to their past voting behavior. We can, however, get a general idea of the relative importance that the decision-making mechanisms play in determining party voting unity, and how these may vary between countries and with different institutions, based on our 2010 PartiRep Survey. Thus the results below reflect general tendencies, but can be considered in light of these high levels of party voting unity found in previous research.

4.3.1 Division of labor

During the first stage of the sequential decision-making process, individual MPs determine whether they actually have an opinion on the vote at hand. We argue that as a result of the heavy workload of parliament and the division of labor party groups apply in order to deal with this workload, it is likely that MPs do not have the time or resources to form a personal opinion on all topics, and if they lack an opinion MPs vote according to the voting advice provided by their fellow party group members.

We lack a direct measure of cue-taking that refers specifically to its role in MPs' decision making when it comes to voting in parliament, but we can ascertain the extent to which MPs are likely to view themselves as generalists or specialists, our argument being that specialists are more likely to lack an opinion on votes outside of their area of expertise, and thus are more likely to rely on cue-taking. In the 2010 PartiRep Survey, MPs were asked whether they, in their role as a Member of Parliament, prefer to speak on a wide range of issues from different policy areas, or instead specialize in one or two policy areas. The aggregate percentage of MPs who indicate to keep up with a wide range of issues (referred to as generalist), is practically the same as the percentage of MPs who indicate to specialize (referred to as specialist, see Table 4.3). In most individual countries, however, the percentage of specialists is indeed higher than the percentage of generalists; specialists are in the minority only in Norway (16 percent), Ireland (29 percent), and the Netherlands (36 percent), followed to a lesser extent by Austria (45 percent) and Italy (47 percent). With the exception of Italy, the parliaments where specialists are in the minority are also those with the fewest number of seats (see Table 4.1), entailing that the average size of party groups is likely to be smaller as well; this may explain why in these parliaments MPs are more likely consider themselves generalists (for a further analysis of the relationship between party group size and the percentage of generalists versus specialists, see chapter 5).

We also inquired into MPs' perception of the role of the parliamentary party spokesperson in determining the position of the party on his topic. One could argue that where there is a strong division of labor, parliamentary party spokespersons play an important

Table 4.3: Specialist or generalist in 15 national parliaments (%)

	Generalist	Specialist	Total	Total (n)
Austria	55	45	100	48
Belgium	38	63	101	66
France	33	67	100	48
Germany	45	55	100	131
Hungary	42	58	100	99
Ireland	71	29	100	32
Israel	39	61	100	38
Italy	53	47	100	45
Netherlands	64	36	100	60
Norway	84	16	100	45
Poland	38	62	100	54
Portugal	36	64	100	76
Spain	37	63	100	103
Switzerland	50	50	100	48
United Kingdom	50	50	100	60
All	51	50	101	953

χ^2 (14) = 97.750, sig. = .000; φc = .324, sig. = .000

role in determining the position of the party, and MPs will also be more likely to rely on the parliamentary party spokespersons' voting advice when they do not have a personal opinion on issues put to a vote in parliament. According to the figures in Table 4.4,[18] 61 percent of all MPs answer that it is (mostly) true that the parliamentary party spokesperson determines the position of the party on his topics. In most individual countries, the answering patterns are very similar to those at the aggregate level. Countries where the parliamentary party spokesperson seems to play an especially important role include Austria (85 percent answer that the statement is (mostly) true), Spain (78 percent), Ireland (75 percent) and Poland (74 percent). The exceptions are Hungary, where only 36 percent of respondents answer that the statement that the parliamentary party spokesperson determines (mostly) true (and almost half consider the statement is (mostly) false), and Italy (34 percent answer that the statement (mostly) true). All in all, these descriptive statistics do seem to imply that cue-taking may be an important pathway to party unity, although given the high levels of party voting unity found in previous studies, it is certainly not the only one.

[18] For presentation purposes the answering categories 'mostly false' and 'false' are collapsed into one category, as are the answering categories 'mostly true' and 'true'.

Table 4.4: 'The parliamentary party spokesperson gets to determine the party's position on his topic' in 15 national parliaments (%)

	(Mostly) false	Neither	(Mostly) true	Total	Total (n)
Austria	10	5	85	100	47
Belgium	23	23	55	101	66
France	30	17	53	100	49
Germany	13	19	68	100	133
Hungary	48	16	36	100	98
Ireland	25	0	75	100	32
Israel	24	12	65	101	38
Italy	25	41	34	100	43
Netherlands	22	23	54	99	65
Norway	23	9	68	100	46
Poland	6	20	74	100	54
Portugal	31	9	59	99	75
Spain	11	11	78	100	102
Switzerland	25	13	63	101	49
United Kingdom	23	21	55	99	60
All	24	15	61	100	957

χ^2 *(28) = 115.206, sig. = .000;* φc *= .248, sig. = .000*

4.3.2 Party agreement

If MPs do have an opinion on a vote in parliament, they move on to the second decision-making stage, at which they assess whether their opinion on the issue at hand corresponds with the position of the party. If this is the case, they vote with the party line voluntarily out of simple agreement. In the literature on party unity, ideological Left-Right and policy scales found in elite surveys are often used to gauge party agreement. These scales can be used to calculate a party's coefficient of agreement (Van der Eijk, 2001) or party homogeneity in terms of the difference between MPs' own position and the mean (or another central tendency, such as the median) position of all party group members. Alternatively, Kam (2001a, 103) measures the absolute distance between MPs' self-placement and the position at which they themselves place their party, as he argues that MPs may have different interpretations of the scale. In this study, we use MPs' self-reported frequency of disagreement as a measure of party agreement.

In the PartiRep Survey, respondents were asked how often, in the last year, they found themselves in the position that their party had one position on a vote in parliament, and they personally had a different opinion. This question goes further than the abstract ide-

ological and policy scales used in previous studies: the question specifies two actors (the individual MP and the party) and the event (a difference of opinion over an upcoming vote), and provides quantifiable answering categories (the frequency of disagreement over months and years). The question gives a sense of, on the whole, how often MPs disagree with their party on a vote in parliament. MPs' answers to the question remain estimations, however, although if MPs disagreed infrequently they ought to be able to recall each unique vote for which this was the case, and it is safe to assume that disagreement occurs quite frequently if MPs cannot recall the exact number of times they disagreed with their party. It could be argued, however, that since the question refers specifically to voting that it may measure MPs' behavior (and thus MPs' contribution to party group unity, the final outcome of MPs' decision-making sequence), instead of attitudinal party agreement. But the fact that the question is followed by a direct follow-up question as to how an MP *should* vote in the case of disagreement with the party's position (see subsection 5.3.3), implies that MPs are likely to have interpreted the question as inquiring into the frequency of disagreement before voting took place.

Another potential problem of the question is the fact that it refers to the position of an MP's 'party', and not specifically his party group in parliament. Thus, respondents may have interpreted 'party' as referring to the party group, but also to other parts and members of the party organization. The question does, however, also refer specifically to a conflict of positions on 'a vote in parliament', which makes it likely that respondents have interpreted the question as referring to the party group in parliament, although we cannot be sure. One more drawback of the question is that it does not allow us to distinguish between MPs who vote with the party because they agree with the party's position, or because they lack an opinion but do not *do not disagree* with the party's position (i.e., they do not have an opinion on a particular vote and rely on the voting advice provided by their fellow party members). Thus, infrequent disagreement (or more precisely, lack of disagreement) as a result of cue-taking cannot be ruled out by our measure.

Of all the MPs in our 15 national parliaments, 61 percent disagree infrequently with their party (28 percent (almost) never disagree with the party's position on a vote in parliament and 33 percent indicate that disagreement occurs about once a year, see Table 4.5)[19], meaning that it is a quite important pathway to party voting unity. Still,

[19] Of course, what these percentages mean is relative to the (average) number and the relative frequency of different types of votes (i.e. roll call or regular votes) held in each parliament per year, as well as the voting procedures per parliament. These figures are unfortunately not available for all parliaments. Hix et al.'s (2005) study of the dimensions of conflict in legislatures does offer an indication of the number of roll call votes for four of the parliaments included in our analysis. Hix et al. (2005) analyzed all roll call votes during one term in either the late 1990s or early 2000s, or part of a term if the data from the full-term were not available. They then excluded all lopsided votes (for which less than 10 percent of MPs were on the minority side) and all MPs who voted fewer than 25 times. Looking at the four parliaments in our analysis that were included in their study, we see that in Belgium there were 663 roll call votes during the 2003-2007 term, in France there were 105 roll call votes in the 1997-2002 term, in Poland there were 1,050 roll call votes during the 1997-1999 term, and in Israel there were 584 roll call votes in October and November 1999. In the Netherlands there were 6,304 votes during the 2006-2010 term, of which only 48 were taken by roll call. The question inquiring into the frequency of disagreement does not, however, specify on what type of vote disagreement takes place.

Table 4.5: Party agreement (the frequency of disagreement with the party's position on a vote in parliament) in 15 national parliaments (%)

	Frequently disagree		Infrequently disagree			
	Once a month	Every three months	Once a year	(Almost) never	Total	Total (n)
Austria	0	21	58	21	100	46
Belgium	7	27	32	34	100	68
France	4	42	40	14	100	49
Germany	4	38	29	29	100	133
Hungary	19	31	31	20	101	99
Ireland	0	20	58	22	100	32
Israel	27	33	2	38	100	39
Italy	18	38	32	12	100	44
Netherlands	7	21	33	40	101	62
Norway	9	22	34	35	100	45
Poland	2	28	41	29	100	53
Portugal	15	35	25	25	100	76
Spain	5	16	27	51	99	103
Switzerland	13	25	50	13	101	48
United Kingdom	23	23	33	21	100	61
All	11	28	33	28	100	958

χ^2 (42) = 168.897, sig. = .000; φc = .425, sig. = .000 (four original answering categories)

χ^2 (14) = 65.801, sig. = .000; φc = .265, sig. = .000 (four answering categories collapsed into 'frequently disagree' and 'infrequently disagree')

39 percent indicate that disagreement with their party occurs frequently (28 percent disagree with the party line about once every three months and 11 percent indicate to disagree about once a month). These aggregate figures hide considerable differences across parliaments, however. Party agreement is highest among MPs in Ireland (where 80 percent indicate to disagree about once a year or (almost) never), Austria (79 percent), Spain (78 percent) and the Netherlands (72 percent), and only in Israel, Italy, Portugal and Hungary does a (small) majority of MPs indicate to experience frequent disagreement with the party on a vote in parliament.

In order to validate this indicator of party agreement, MPs' responses to the frequency of disagreement question are compared to the distance between where MPs place themselves on the 11-point Left-Right ideological scale, and where they perceive

their party to be (Kam, 2009).[20,21] 40 percent of MPs perceive no distance between their own position and their political party's position, another 40 percent perceive a 1-point difference, and the remaining 20 percent place themselves at two or more points from their party (not shown in Figure 4.1). We can therefore conclude that in general, the parties are quite homogeneous in terms of their Left-Right ideology, at least according to MPs' own perceptions. Our expectation is that the larger the absolute distance MPs perceive between their own and the party's position, the more frequently they disagree with the party. For presentation purposes, we combine all perceived distances of two or more points into one category (see Figure 4.1). The answering categories used for the question concerning the frequency of disagreement are also collapsed: 'about once a month' and 'about once every three months' are combined into 'frequently disagree', and the categories 'about once a year' and '(almost) never' are collapsed into 'infrequently disagree'.[22]

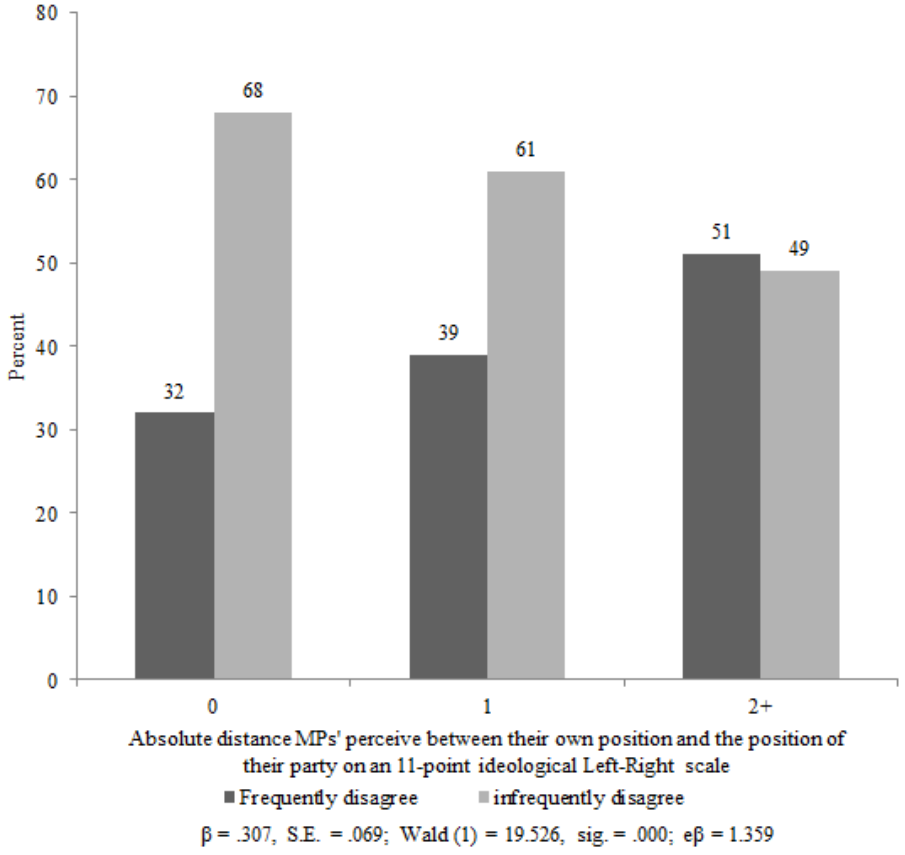
Among those MPs who perceive no ideological distance between themselves and the party, 68 percent infrequently disagree with their party and 32 percent indicate to frequently disagree. And among those MPs who perceive a 1-point difference, 61 percent infrequently disagree and 39 percent frequently disagree. This linear trend continues, in that the larger the perceived ideological distance, the higher the percentage of MPs who frequently disagree with their party over a vote in parliament. Indeed, a one-step increase in the absolute perceived distance between an MP and the party's position on the 11-point Left-Right scale increases the odds of frequently disagreeing as opposed to infrequently disagreeing with the political party over a vote in parliament by a factor of 1.359. All in all, MPs who, according to their own perception, share the ideological position of the political party are more likely to usually agree with the party on a vote in

[20] Validation of party agreement with the ideological distance MPs perceive between their own and their party's position can be framed as both convergence and nomological validation (Adcock, 2002). On the one hand, ideological placement has been used as a proxy for the influence of policy preferences on parliamentary behavior in previous studies (convergence validation). On the other hand, it can be argued that ideological distance as a measure of policy differences can be seen as a cause or predictor of the frequency of disagreement (nomological validation).

[21] The questions that ask MPs to place themselves and the political party on the Left-Right ideological scale are located consecutively in the PartiRep Survey, making it reasonable to assume that any distance indicated by MPs is conscious and meaningful. However, that MPs are first asked to place themselves may act as an anchor for where they subsequently place the political party, making the latter contingent on the former. This may lead to an underestimation of the distance MPs perceive between their own and the party's position. As is the case with the question concerning the frequency of disagreement, MPs are asked to place their 'party', and not specifically their party group, on the Left-Right scale. Thus means we cannot be sure whether respondents kept in mind their party group, or another part of their party organization, or their party members, when answering the question.

[22] Although the measurement scale is meaningful (months and years), the intervals between the answering categories differ. As the two middle answering categories (once every three months / once every year) are the most popular, dichotomizing any way other than down the middle results in a skewed distribution of responses. Although there may be context-specific theoretical arguments in favor of dichotomizing differently in specific legislatures (e.g. in some parliaments votes take place much less frequently than in others, and thus disagreement once a year may be considered quite frequent), it is best to dichotomize down the middle for the entire data set to obtain the most equal variance between the two groups.

Figure 4.1: Party agreement (the frequency of disagreement with the party's position on a vote in parliament) and the absolute distance MPs' perceive between their own position and the position of their party on an 11-point ideological Left-Right scale in 15 national parliaments (%)



parliament. This entails that our measure is likely to be a good measure of party agreement.

Moving on to the effects of institutions on MPs' frequency of agreement, Table 4.6 presents the estimated binary logistic regression coefficients, robust standard errors, significance levels and odds ratios for each of the variables hypothesized to influence party agreement. The null model includes only the random effects (the effects of country and political party), models 1 through 3 test for individual institutions, model 4 contains all fixed and random effects, and model 5 reruns the full model but disregards the hierarchical nature of the data, and thus tests for fixed effects only.

On their own, most of our institutional variables have a statistically significant effect

Table 4.6: Party agreement (the frequency of disagreement with the party's position on a vote in parliament) in 15 national parliaments: multilevel binary logistics regression

Predictor = frequently agree	Random effects												Fixed effects			
	Model 0				Model 1				Model 4				Model 5			
	β	SE	sig.	e^{β}	β	SE	sig.	e^{β}	β	SE	sig.	e^{β}	β	SE	sig.	e^{β}
Candidate selection																
(predictor = nat. leaders or agency)					.842	.418	.044	2.321	.762	.443	.086	2.143	.543	.202	.008	1.720
					Model 2											
					β	SE	sig.	e^{β}								
Electoral system preferential voting																
(predictor = no personal vote)					.707	.389	.070	2.027	.559	.501	.265	1.749	.428	.418	.308	1.534
District mag. (decimal logged)					.366	.120	.002	1.441	.197	.213	.355	1.218	.195	.166	.243	1.215
Preferential voting * district mag.					-.876	.193	.000	.416	-.788	.264	.003	.455	-.844	.323	.010	.430
					Model 3											
					β	SE	sig.	e^{β}								
Government participation																
(predictor = government)					-.552	.240	.021	.576	-.562	.242	.020	.570	-.428	.173	.014	.652
Intercept	.534	.142	.000	1.706					.498	.300	.097	1.645	.546	.176	.002	1.727
-2 Log pseudo likelihood	4445.324								4203.014				431.727			
% correct	66.5								65.8				58.7			

on party agreement. First, candidate selection exclusiveness and centralization have a positive effect on party agreement, as expected (H1a). MPs who belong to parties in which candidate selection is concentrated in the hands of party leaders or party agency at the national level are more likely to agree with their party, than MPs who are selected by subnational party leaders or agencies, or party primaries at any level of the party organization (model 1). When placed in the full hierarchical model, candidate selection is just shy of statistical significance (model 5).

On its own, voters' inability to cast a vote for an individual candidate has a positive (almost statistically significant) effect on party agreement (model 2): when preference voting is not allowed, the odds of an MP frequently agreeing with his party increase by a factor of 2, which is in line with our hypothesis (H2a). However, the interaction between preference voting and district magnitude is in the opposite direction from what was predicted. In other words, in systems that do not allow preference voting the odds of an MP infrequently disagreeing with the party decrease as district magnitude (and thus intra-party competition) increases. The interaction effect between voters' inability to cast a personal vote and district magnitude remains statistically significant in the full model as well (model 5).

Finally, as predicted (H3a), government participation indeed has a negative effect on party agreement (model 4); MPs in governing parties are less likely to frequently agree with their party on a vote in parliament than MPs whose parties are in opposition. The difference between MPs in governing parties and those in opposition is again just shy of statistical significant after the other variables are added (model 5).

It seems that political parties in these parliamentary democracies can, to a large extent, rely on MPs' agreement with the party line for party voting unity in parliament. Moreover, with the exception of the formal properties of the electoral institutions, all of our institutional variables have the predicted effects on party agreement. Nonetheless, around 40 percent of MPs indicate to frequently disagree with their party which, given the high levels of voting unity found in previous comparative analyses, is more than one would expect if party agreement were the sole determinants of MPs' voting behavior. Parties, it seems, must also rely on other mechanisms to achieve party unity.

4.3.3 Party loyalty

If MPs do not agree with the party line on a vote in parliament, they move on to the next decision-making stage, at which they weigh whether their loyalty to the party group overrides their disagreement with the party group's position. MPs who subscribe to the norm of party group solidarity toe the party group line voluntarily despite their reservations because they acknowledge, and have internalized, the importance of party group unity for parliamentary government.

As already mentioned (see subsection 4.3.2), the question concerning the frequency of disagreement was followed by a question asking respondents how they think an MP

Table 4.7: Party loyalty (own opinion versus party's position) in 15 national parliaments (%)

	Own opinion	Party's position	Total	Total (n)
Austria	53	47	100	44
Belgium	31	69	100	68
France	64	35	100	48
Germany	53	47	100	124
Hungary	38	63	101	95
Ireland	20	80	100	31
Israel	44	56	100	37
Italy	64	36	100	44
Netherlands	11	89	100	45
Norway	15	85	100	42
Poland	51	50	101	52
Portugal	45	55	100	75
Spain	17	83	100	101
Switzerland	88	13	101	48
United Kingdom	53	47	100	55
All	38	62	100	909

χ^2 *(14) = 114.279, sig. = .000;* φc *= .359, sig. = .000*

should vote in the case of conflict between an MP's opinion and the party's position.[23, 24] Table 4.7 shows that 62 percent of MPs contend that when in disagreement with the party's position on a vote in parliament, an MP still ought to vote according to the party's

[23] As was the case with the question pertaining to the frequency of disagreement used as an indicator of party agreement, the question refers to the respondent's 'party', and not specifically the party group.

[24] In past parliamentary surveys held in the Dutch Second Chamber, the question as to how an MP ought to vote when his opinion conflicts with the position of the party included a middle answering category 'it depends'. This category was always the most popular among Dutch MPs. The omission of this category in the 2010 PartiRep Survey was associated with almost 30 percent of Dutch respondents refusing to answer the question, and a very high percentage of respondents selecting the answering category 'MP should vote according to his party's opinion' (see Table 6.18 in chapter 6). In the other 14 national parliaments included in the analysis in this chapter, however, the omission of this category seems to have had a smaller effect on the response rate: 7 percent (67 respondents) of the total number of MPs' responses to the question are missing. In comparison: 2 percent (18 respondents) of MPs from these 15 national parliaments refused to answer the question that preceded this question in the survey. Of the 65 MPs who did not fill in the question pertaining to party loyalty, 18 percent (12 respondents) filled in the survey online, 42 percent (28 respondents) filled in a hard-copy version, and 40 percent (26 respondents) were interviewed face-to-face (20 of these respondents were from the Netherlands). These percentages and number of respondents are not weighted.

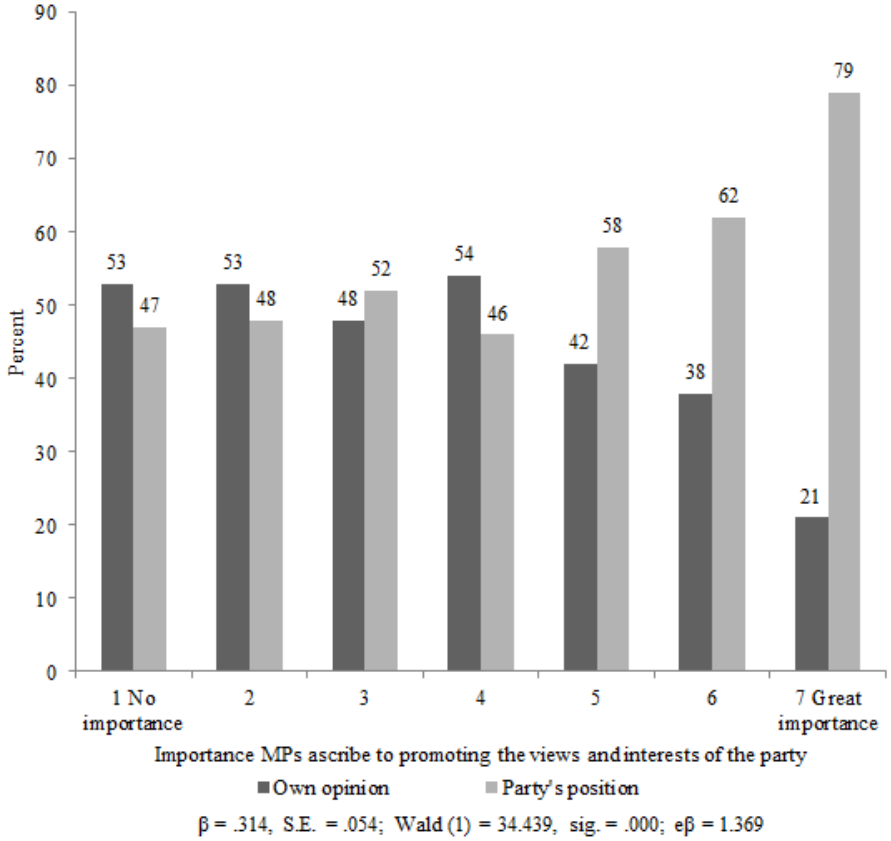
position. Since the question pertains specifically to situations in which MPs disagree with the party line, this entails that the resultant behavior in these situations is not based on party agreement, and thus serves as a good indicator of party loyalty. That over 60 percent of MPs answer to voluntarily submit to the party line despite disagreement means that it is an important voluntary pathway to unity that parties can rely on. Still, 38 percent answer that in the case of disagreement an MP ought to vote according to his own opinion. Thus, if party loyalty were the sole determinant of party voting unity, we would likely see more party disunity in these parliamentary systems than is now the case. Subscription to the norm of party loyalty is particularly high among MPs in the Netherlands (89 percent), Norway (85 percent), Spain (83 percent) and Ireland (80 percent). In Switzerland, however, only 13 percent answer that an MP should follow the party line when in disagreement. Party loyalty also seems to be less prevalent in France, Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom, Austria and Poland, where only a minority indicate that in the case of disagreement an MP ought to opt for the party's position.[25]

In order to validate this measure of party loyalty, MPs' responses are compared to the importance they ascribed to promoting the views and interest of their party. Supposedly, MPs who attach great importance to promoting the interests and views of the party are also more likely to subscribe to the norm of party loyalty. Most MPs consider representing the interests of the party rather important, with more than 80 percent positioning themselves on the right end of the scale (scoring 5 points or more on the 7-point scale). Furthermore, there is a positive and almost linear relationship between ascribing importance to promoting the views and interests of the party and thinking that an MP ought to vote according to the party line in the case of disagreement. Of those MPs who assign the greatest importance to promoting the interests of the party (scoring a 7 on the scale), 79 percent subscribe to the norm of party loyalty. At the other extreme, only 47 percent of MPs who ascribe no importance to promoting the views and interests of their party subscribe to the norm of party loyalty. A one-step increase on the scale 7-point ordinal scale towards ascribing more importance to promoting the views and interests of the party increases the odds of voting with the party's position as opposed to voting to according to an MP's own opinion by a factor of 1.369. All in all, MPs' opinions about how an MP ought to vote in the case of disagreement appears to be a good indicator of party loyalty.

When it comes to the effects of institutions, we hypothesized that candidate selection procedures that are inclusive and decentralized diffuse loyalty to the party group in parliament, as this creates a situation of competing principals within the party (H2a). Indeed, on its own, being selected by national party leaders or an agency, as opposed to party leaders or an agency at the subnational level or through primaries at any level, increases the odds of subscribing to the norm of party loyalty by a factor of 1.484 (model

[25] France, Italy, Germany and the United Kingdom also happen to be among the countries where the attained survey response rate was low. It could be that MPs who do not subscribe to the norm of party loyalty were more likely to participate in the survey than MPs who do subscribe to the norm. Maybe the former group saw the survey as a means of expressing their lack of loyalty. As far as we know, however, MPs in all countries were approached to participate in a survey about representation in general, and not specifically their relationship with their party (group).

Figure 4.2: Party loyalty (own opinion versus party's position) and the importance ascribed to promoting the views and interests of the party in 15 national parliaments (%)



1 in Table 4.8). However, once other variables are added to the model, the influence of candidate selection is not statistically significant.[26]

Concerning electoral institutions, voters' ability to cast a personal vote is also expected to lead candidates to engage in personal vote seeking, which may lead to a situation of competing principals once in parliament, and diffuse MPs' loyalty to the party (H2b). Whether personal voting is formally possible does not seem to have an effect on

[26] It may also be that the question we use to measure party loyalty is interpreted in different ways: the question asks how an MP ought to vote in the case of disagreement between an MP's own opinion and the position of the party, but does not explicate 'the position of the party' as that of the party group in parliament. Thus, respondents may have interpreted the position of the party to include that of their selectorate, or specific groups within the political party, as well. This lack of specification of what is meant by 'the party's position' also holds for our measure of party agreement, however, on which our measure of candidate selection did have a statistically significant effect.

party loyalty, however (model 2). And again, when district magnitude is taken into consideration the effect is statistically significant, but in the opposite direction from what was predicted, actually decreasing the odds of an MP voluntarily voting with the party line when in disagreement.

One could question whether the formal properties of electoral institutions accurately capture MPs' tendency to engage in (or the value they ascribe to) personal vote seeking, or their response to the dilemma they face when confronted with competing principals. In order to gauge the former, we have added a variable that includes MPs' responses to the question whether they would rather spend scarce time and resources running a personal campaign (1) or party campaign (5), measured on a five-point ordinal scale (model 4). Indeed, MPs who indicate to prefer to run a party campaign are more likely to vote according to the party line when in disagreement, whereas MPs who would rather spend their time and resources on a personal campaign (thus engaging in personal vote seeking) are less likely to subscribe to the norm of party loyalty (the variable is almost statistically significant on its own).

By using the choice between an MP's own opinion and his party's position as our measure of party loyalty (and thus dependent variable) we implicitly assume that voters as a potential focus of representation are nested in representatives' personal preferences. To better capture the influence of voters versus the party as competing principals on MPs' party loyalty, we use a question that asks respondents how an MP ought to vote in the case of disagreement between the voters' and the party's position. According to the theory of competing principals, an MP who chooses to vote according to his own opinion in the case of disagreement with the party's position does so because his own opinion is based on, or at least informed by, voters' preferences, and the MP wishes to remain loyal to the voters.[27] Model 5 shows that this is indeed the case, and that the choice between voters' and the party as competing principals has a very strong effect on party loyalty: On its own, the odds of an MP subscribing to the norm of party loyalty as opposed to not doing so are almost 8 times higher for an MP who selects the party's position over voter's opinions than for an MP who would opts for the voters' opinion.

Model 6 includes only all of the formal institutional variables, in which only district magnitude and the interaction effect between voters' inability to cast personal votes and district magnitude remain statistically significant (but not in the predicted direction). Adding our measures of MPs' tendency to engage in personal vote seeking and the influence of competing principals does not change the effect of these formal institutions much (model 7). In the full model, our measure of personal vote seeking is no longer statistically significant, but the effect of an MP's choice between voters' and the party as competing principals still is. Finally, we also predicted that MPs from governing parties would be more likely to subscribe to the norm of party loyalty than opposition

[27] Another option is that an MP is not responsive to voters' interests, but considers himself a 'trustee' in terms of his style of representation and thus truly follows his own opinion (Eulau et al., 1959; Wahlke et al., 1962; Converse and Pierce, 1979, 1986). This situation is actually better captured by the question as to whether he would prefer to spend his scarce time and resources running a personal or party campaign, as one could argue that a trustee does not face a situation of competing principals; only an MP who takes on the representational style of 'delegate' does.

Table 4.8: Party loyalty (own opinion versus party's position) in 15 national parliaments: multilevel binary logistics regression

Predictor = party's position	Random effects														Fixed effects			
	Model 0				Model 1				Model 6				Model 7				Model 8			
	β	SE	sig.	e^{β}	β	SE	sig.	e^{β}	β	SE	sig.	e^{β}	β	SE	sig.	e^{β}	β	SE	sig.	e^{β}
Candidate selection																				
(predictor = nat. leaders or agency)					.395	.199	.048	1.484	.289	.269	.283	1.335	.193	.279	.490	1.213	-.057	.227	.802	.945
					Model 2															
					β	SE	sig.	e^{β}												
Electoral system preferential voting																				
(predictor = no personal vote)					.633	.582	.277	1.883	.621	.567	.274	1.861	.906	.728	.214	2.475	1.117	.561	.047	3.054
District mag. (decimal logged)					1.051	.355	.003	2.862	1.015	.409	.013	2.760	.950	.371	.011	2.586	.833	.208	.000	2.301
Preferential voting * district mag.					-1.202	.431	.005	.300	-1.200	.459	.009	0.301	-1.131	.489	.021	.323	-1.183	.420	.005	.306
					Model 3															
					β	SE	sig.	e^{β}												
Government participation																				
(predictor = government)					.275	.210	.191	1.317	.269	.216	.212	1.309	.394	.233	.091	1.483	.445	.209	.034	1.561
					Model 4															
					β	SE	sig.	e^{β}												
Personal vote seeking																				
Personal (1) or party campaign (5)					.185	.106	.081	1.203					.102	.090	.259	1.107	.143	.103	.163	1.154
					Model 5															
					β	SE	sig.	e^{β}												
Competing principals																				
Voters' (0) or party's position (1)					2.046	.332	.000	7.737					2.083	.393	.000	8.029	2.096	.220	.000	8.130
Intercept	.401	.225	.076	1.493					-.438	.226	.052	.645	-2.193	.334	.000	.112	-2.110	.345	.000	.121
-2 Log pseudo likelihood	4272.320								4051.932				3753.471				600.578			
% correct	70.6								69.7				73.4				71.3			

MPs because of the added responsibility of maintaining their party in government (H2c). On its own, government participation does not have a statistically significant effect on whether an MP will toe the party line voluntarily despite disagreement (model 3), but the variable does increase in strength in the model containing both formal institutions as well as our measures of personal vote seeking and competing principals.

All in all, 60 percent of our MPs hold the opinion that an MP ought to vote according to the party's position in the case of conflict. It is noteworthy that the formal properties of institutions seem to have less effect on MPs' tendency to subscribe to the norm of party loyalty than they do on MPs' frequency of disagreement. It may be that candidates' loyalty is a less important candidate selection criterion than candidates' policy preferences are (one could argue that due to the personal normative nature of the mechanism, it is difficult for selectorates to gauge the extent to which candidates will be loyal to them).[28] It is somewhat surprising, however, that electoral institutions seem to have the opposite effect on party loyalty than what is argued in the literature concerning personal vote seeking and the notion of competing principals. Of our two individual level attitudinal measures of these concepts, the one which poses voters' and the party as competing principals does prove to have predictive power in the full model. [29]

4.3.4 Party discipline

When MPs disagree with the party line, and do not vote with the party out of loyalty, their party (group) leaders may employ disciplinary measures in an attempt to sway their votes. At the final stage of our sequential decision-making model, MPs must decide whether (the promise of) positive incentives or (the threat of) negative sanctions outweigh their resolve to dissent from the party line. As opposed to party agreement and party loyalty, which results in MPs' voluntary contribution to party voting unity in parliament, party discipline is an involuntary pathway.

As mentioned in subsection 3.2.2 in chapter 3, the observation and measurement of party discipline is problematic. First, the threat, promise or expectation of sanctions alone may be enough to elicit submission to the party line. Second, when discipline is applied, this is usually done behind the closed doors of the parliamentary party group, as public disciplining can lead to media attention which is assumed to have negative effects on the electoral prospects of the party as a whole. Finally, it is difficult to distinguish between behavior resulting from the use of sanctions and other relatively innocent factors

[28] Ideally, we would also check whether an MP's choice when force to choose between the parliamentary party group's position and his party's selectorate's opinion would prove a more accurate measure of the situation of competing principals within the political party. Unfortunately, we do not have the data to do so.

[29] Although there is a statistically significant correlation between our measure the frequency of disagreement and our measure of the voters' versus the party as competing principals, we do not include these in the multilevel multivariate analysis of party agreement (see Table 4.6) for substantive reasons. Party agreement, we argue, is not influenced by the existence of potentially competing principals, but by that when making their vote choice, voters' select the party or candidate whose policy stances are representative of their own.

Table 4.9: Satisfaction with general parliamentary party discipline in 15 national parliaments (%)

	More strict	Remain as it is	Less strict	Total	Total (n)
Austria	41	59	0	100	50
Belgium	11	78	11	100	59
France	15	77	8	100	48
Germany	46	52	2	100	129
Hungary	26	65	9	100	97
Ireland	26	61	13	100	32
Israel	13	77	10	100	38
Italy	38	59	3	100	43
Netherlands	9	83	8	100	63
Norway	7	89	4	100	45
Poland	8	72	20	100	50
Portugal	5	73	22	100	71
Spain	6	73	21	100	92
Switzerland	29	71	0	100	44
United Kingdom	17	75	8	100	52
All	17	72	11	100	913

χ^2 *(28) = 112.700, sig. = .000;* φc *= .251, sig. = .000*

(e.g., not being placed on the electoral candidacy list for the upcoming elections may be a negative sanction applied by the party leadership, but it may also be the case that an MP simply wants to retire from politics).

Unfortunately, the PartiRep Survey does not have any questions that ask MPs directly whether sanctions are applied if an MP does not vote according to the party line, or threatens to do so (but see subsection 5.4.4 in chapter 5 for an analysis of the expected likelihood of negative sanctions among Dutch representatives). We do, however, have questions that inquire into MPs' satisfaction with general, as well as specific aspects of, party discipline in their parliamentary party group. Respondents were asked whether they thought that party discipline should be more strict than it is now, should remain as it is, or should be less strict than it is now. In interpreting the answering categories, we assume that MPs who hold the opinion that party discipline ought to be more strict are not likely to have been disciplined themselves, but feel that they personally, or their party group as a whole, suffers from the recalcitrant behavior of fellow group members. They thus value the collective benefits of presenting a united front to the outside world

Table 4.10: Satisfaction with parliamentary party discipline when it comes to sticking to the parliamentary party line in votes in 15 national parliaments (%)

	More strict	Remain as it is	Less strict	Total	Total (n)
Austria	10	85	5	100	48
Belgium	0	89	11	100	61
France	14	77	10	101	48
Germany	11	80	9	100	126
Hungary	15	72	12	99	97
Ireland	7	81	13	101	32
Israel	16	76	8	100	38
Italy	33	61	6	100	43
Netherlands	0	96	5	101	63
Norway	4	87	9	100	45
Poland	5	80	16	101	50
Portugal	7	71	23	101	72
Spain	9	79	12	100	92
Switzerland	13	75	13	101	45
United Kingdom	12	74	14	100	54
All	9	80	11	100	914

χ^2 *(28) = 72.762, sig. = .000;* φc *= .201, sig. = .000*

above an individual MP's personal mandate and freedom.[30] Those who answer that party discipline should remain as it is probably perceive a good balance between the two, or value one above the other, but are content with how they are maintained in the parliamentary party group. And MPs who answer that party discipline ought to be less strict are those who value an individual MP's freedom and personal mandate above presenting a united front, and are likely to have experience with party discipline being used against them (or have operated under the threat of sanctions). Admittedly, however,

[30] This interpretation is in line with the distinction between individual costs and collective benefits forwarded by Andeweg and Thomassen (2011a) in their analysis of the pathways to party group unity in the Dutch Parliament. In the 1990 Dutch Parliamentary Study MPs were asked an open question about the advantages and disadvantages of party discipline. Positive aspects included the collective benefits of presenting a unified front to the outside world and making clear where the political party stood, whereas negative aspects were placed primarily at the individual level (such as curtailing individual MPs' freedom and stifling creativity). Andeweg and Thomassen (2011a, 661) interpret these results as "party discipline is considered rational from a collective point of view, not from an individual point of view". Jensen (2000, 224-226), who uses the same question in his study of Nordic countries, comes to a similar conclusion, and dichotomizes the variable by combining the answering categories party discipline 'ought to remain as it is' and 'should be more strict'.

Table 4.11: Satisfaction with parliamentary party discipline when it comes to taking political initiatives only with the parliamentary party's authorization in 15 national parliaments (%)

	More strict	Remain as it is	Less strict	Total	Total (n)
Austria	29	57	14	100	48
Belgium	8	79	13	100	61
France	8	83	10	101	48
Germany	11	80	9	100	127
Hungary	25	68	7	100	96
Ireland	3	71	26	100	32
Israel	12	79	9	100	38
Italy	12	79	9	100	43
Netherlands	6	88	7	101	63
Norway	12	80	8	100	46
Poland	15	64	21	100	50
Portugal	2	80	18	100	71
Spain	9	67	24	100	91
Switzerland	13	75	13	101	45
United Kingdom	11	78	11	100	52
All	11	76	13	100	911

χ^2 *(28) = 73.232, sig. = .000;* φc *= .201, sig. = .000*

the question does not allow us to gauge MPs' responsiveness to party discipline (i.e., we do not know whether they are actually disciplined into toeing the party line, or choose to stay true to their own opinion and dissent).[31]

Given that much of the comparative literature emphasizes party discipline as a prominent pathway to party group unity, it is surprising that over 70 percent of MPs are sat-

[31] Another potential problem is that the party discipline questions in the surveys do not specify which definition of party discipline MPs should keep in mind. As the term already brings about conceptual confusion within legislative studies, this may also be the case in the minds of MPs. It is unclear whether respondents make this same distinction in term of voluntary and involuntary mechanisms as we do in our decision-making model. However, in the study of party group unity in Finland by Jensen (2000, 221), MPs were asked to evaluate party cohesion and party discipline separately, with very different results: only 8 percent of Finnish MPs preferred stronger discipline, while 48 percent preferred stronger party cohesion. Although this does not help us verify *how* MPs interpret the concepts, it does make clear that MPs do see a distinction between the two. Moreover, the answering categories to the questions in the PartiRep Survey refer to 'strictness', which holds connotations with 'authority' and thus suggests discipline and sanctions imposed by the political party. It may be, however, that respondents have interpreted the question as mainly referring to negative, as opposed to positive, sanctions.

Table 4.12: Satisfaction with parliamentary party discipline when it comes to keeping internal party discussions confidential in 15 national parliaments (%)

	More strict	Remain as it is	Less strict	Total	Total (n)
Austria	35	65	0	100	48
Belgium	60	41	0	101	61
France	60	39	2	101	48
Germany	80	20	0	100	128
Hungary	67	32	1	100	98
Ireland	60	38	2	100	32
Israel	28	68	4	100	38
Italy	41	59	0	100	43
Netherlands	22	78	0	100	63
Norway	22	73	5	100	45
Poland	59	38	3	100	49
Portugal	57	42	2	101	71
Spain	65	32	3	101	93
Switzerland	43	57	0	100	45
United Kingdom	46	54	0	100	54
All	48	50	2	100	916

χ^2 *(28) = 135.487, sig. = .000;* φc *= .274, sig. = .000*

isfied with general party discipline, answering that it should remain as it is (see Table 4.9). Satisfaction with general party discipline is highest in Norway (89 percent) and the Netherlands (83 percent). Moreover, the majority of MPs who are not satisfied with general party discipline would like to see it applied more strictly. This is especially the case in Germany (46 percent), Austria (41 percent) and Italy (38). Only in Portugal, Spain and Poland does a majority of unsatisfied MPs hold the opinion that general party discipline ought to be less strict, which according to our interpretation of the question, implies that party discipline is probably used more often in these parliaments.

Portugal and Poland are also the two countries with the highest percentage of MPs (respectively 23 and 16 percent) who think that party discipline should be less strict when sticking to the party line when voting, the question that is most in line with our measures of party agreement and party loyalty, which both also refer to parliamentary voting. Overall, however, the figures in Table 4.10 reveal that the vast majority (80 percent) of all MPs are satisfied with party discipline when it comes to voting in parliament. Satisfaction with party voting discipline is highest in the Netherlands (96 percent), Belgium (89 percent) and Norway (87 percent). In Italy, a relatively high percentage of MPs (33 percent) would like to see stricter party discipline when it comes to voting in parlia-

Table 4.13: 'Confidential party discussions usually find their way to the media' in 15 national parliaments (%)

	(Mostly) false	Neither	(Mostly) true	Total	Total (n)
Austria	60	20	20	100	47
Belgium	51	10	39	100	68
France	10	27	64	101	49
Germany	21	6	72	99	133
Hungary	33	4	63	100	99
Ireland	37	5	58	100	32
Israel	17	3	80	101	39
Italy	14	26	60	100	44
Netherlands	74	13	12	99	65
Norway	61	19	19	99	45
Poland	21	16	64	101	53
Portugal	20	3	77	99	75
Spain	11	14	76	101	102
Switzerland	25	13	63	101	49
United Kingdom	30	15	56	101	58
All	34	12	54	100	958

χ^2 *(28) = 241.124, sig. = .000;* φc *= .359, sig. = .000*

ment.

Almost the same distribution holds for MPs' satisfaction with party discipline when it comes to seeking authorization from the party group when taking parliamentary initiatives (over three-quarters of MPs are satisfied), with this time Ireland (26 percent) Portugal (18 percent), Poland (21 percent) and Spain (24 percent), as the countries with the highest percentage of MPs who feel that party discipline should be relaxed (see Table 4.11). Only in Austria (29 percent) and Hungary (25 percent) does a substantial percentage of MPs feel that party discipline should be more strict when it comes to taking parliamentary initiatives.

In light of these high levels of satisfaction with party discipline, it is interesting to draw attention to scholars' tendency to emphasize party discipline as a pathway to party voting unity. If party discipline were the main pathway to party group unity, we would expect there to be more MPs who would like to see party discipline applied less strictly. The high levels of satisfaction, however, indicate that party discipline is likely to be applied much less often than is assumed by the literature on party group unity; it is more likely that party voting unity results from the other pathways, such as party group agreement and party group loyalty, than from party discipline.

There is one exception to the pattern of satisfaction with party discipline. When it comes to keeping internal party discussions confidential only 50 percent of MPs are satisfied with party discipline as it is, and among those who are dissatisfied almost all would like stricter party discipline (see Table 4.13). German MPs are most likely to want stricter party discipline when it comes to keeping internal party discussions confidential (80 percent), followed by MPs in Hungary (67 percent) and Spain (65 percent). Satisfaction is highest in the Netherlands (78 percent) and Norway (73 percent). These rather high levels of dissatisfaction highlights that party unity is a much broader requirement, encompassing not only the end vote, but the entire policy making process. Indeed, when asked about the day-to-day practices in parliament, over half of all MPs answer that it is (mostly) true that internal party discussions do find their way to the media (see Table 4.13).[32] Noteworthy is that these percentages are quite high in the parliaments where there is also a high percentage of MPs who would like to party discipline tightened on this aspect of party life as well.[33] This provides some evidence that there are apparently MPs who do breach the confidentiality of internal party discussions.

For our multivariate analysis of party loyalty, binary logistic regression was the obvious choice because our dependent variable is dichotomous. For party agreement we also used binary logistic regression because we dichotomized the four answering categories to the question concerning the frequency of disagreement between an MP's opinion and the party's position into 'frequently agree' and 'infrequently agree' (see subsection 4.3.2). Our measures of party discipline, however, have three answering categories. Considering the hypotheses developed above, what is of interest most is the difference between MPs who hold the opinion that party discipline ought to be less strict (implying that party discipline is indeed applied, or at least that MPs work under its threat) and those MPs who answer that party discipline can remain as it is or should be stricter. We have opted to dichotomize the variable by combining the answering categories party discipline 'should remain as it is' and 'should be more strict', as is also done by Jensen (2000) in his analysis of the Nordic countries. This way, binary logistic regression can be used to test the effects of institutions on party discipline as well. Because our measures of both party agreement and party loyalty refer specifically to voting, we use the party discipline question that asks MPs about their satisfaction with party discipline when it comes to sticking to the party line when voting in parliament.[34] Collapsing two answering categories, in combination with the fact that most of our respondents answer that party voting discipline should remain as it is, accounts for why the percentage predicted correctly by the null model is almost 90 percent (see Table 4.14).

[32] For presentation purpose the extremes of answering categories of the question as to whether it is true or false that confidential party discussions usually find their way to the media are combined: 'mostly false' and 'false' are collapsed into one category, as are 'mostly true' and 'true'.

[33] The bivariate relationship between MPs' responses to the questions as to whether confidential party discussions usually find their way to the media and their opinion on party discipline when it comes to keeping internal party discussions confidential is statistically significant (χ^2 (8) = 91.930, sig. = .000; gamma = -.402, sig. = .000).

[34] The analysis was repeated using MPs' satisfaction with general party discipline as dependent variable; the results were almost identical to the analysis with party voting discipline as dependent variable.

Table 4.14: Satisfaction with parliamentary party discipline when it comes to sticking to the parliamentary party group line in votes in 15 national parliaments: multilevel binary logistics regression

Predictor = should be less strict	Random effects														Fixed effects			
	Model 0				Model 1				Model 6				Model 7				Model 8			
	β	SE	sig.	e^{β}	β	SE	sig.	e^{β}	β	SE	sig.	e^{β}	β	SE	sig.	e^{β}	β	SE	sig.	e^{β}
Candidate selection																				
(predictor = nat. leaders or agency)					-.305	.241	.207	.737	-.184	.230	.425	.832	-.222	.227	.422	.801	-.116	.308	.707	.891
					Model 2															
					β	SE	sig.	e^{β}												
Electoral system preferential voting																				
(predictor = no personal vote)					.116	.538	.829	1.123	.128	.530	.810	1.136	.807	.485	.097	2.241	1.107	.565	.051	3.025
District mag. (decimal logged)					-.409	.185	.027	.665	-.408	.166	.014	.665	-.056	.219	.798	.945	.013	.225	.955	1.013
Preferential voting * district mag.					.076	.326	.815	1.079	.090	.314	.775	1.094	-.757	.368	.040	.0469	-.914	.463	.049	.401
					Model 3															
					β	SE	sig.	e^{β}												
Government participation																				
(predictor = government)					.062	.265	.816	1.064	.155	.279	.279	1.168	.059	.278	.833	1.060	.170	.289	.557	1.186
					Model 4															
					β	SE	sig.	e^{β}												
Party agreement																				
(predictor = frequently disagree)					1.468	.305	.000	4.341					1.391	.283	.000	4.021	1.329	.323	.000	3.778
					Model 5															
					β	SE	sig.	e^{β}												
Party loyalty					1.117	.211	.000	3.057					.979	.274	.000	2.663	.950	.301	.002	2.587
(predictor = own opinion)																				
Intercept	-2.118	.136	.000	.120					-1.827	.176	.000	.161	-3.121	.488	.000	.044	-3.182	.457	.000	.041
-2 Log pseudo likelihood	4922.181								4607.289				4489.757				347.429			
% correct	88.4								88.3				88.4				88.1			

None of the institutional variables have the predicted effect on MPs' satisfaction with party discipline when it comes to voting in parliament (see Table 4.14). We hypothesized that when candidate selection is concentrated in the hands of party leaders and agencies at the national level, this would provide the party leadership access to positive and negative sanctions through which it could discipline recalcitrant MPs, who we argue would answer that party voting discipline ought to be less strict (H3a); this does not seem to be the case (model 1). Extending the party selectorate's power into the electoral arena (H3b), made possible when voters cannot cast preference votes, does seem to have the expected effect (model 2). And again, when combined with district magnitude, the relationship is in the opposite direction (but not statistically significant this time). And finally, our hypothesis that in parliamentary systems government parties would be more willing to use discipline on their MPs because the stakes are higher than for opposition parties (H3c) can be rejected (model 4).

More so than was the case in our analysis of party loyalty, the effects of institutions decrease even more as we move further down the sequential chain of decision-making mechanisms to the final stage of party discipline. Following the sequential nature of our model, one could argue that it need not be the existence of institutional tools that can be used to discipline MPs that determines the actual use of discipline, but the need for discipline as a result of MPs not toeing the party line on their own accord. Whereas party agreement and party loyalty involve decisions made by individual MPs, the decision to (threaten to) apply discipline is in the hands of the party (group) leadership (an MP's response to the application of discipline is, however, an individual level decision).[35] As such, we expected that MPs who frequently disagree with the party and/or do not subscribe to the norm of party loyalty are more likely to be disciplined, and thus answer that party discipline ought to be less strict. Indeed, both individual level characteristics have a strong predictive effect on MPs' satisfaction with party discipline. Frequently disagreeing with the party increases the odds of answering that party voting discipline ought to be less strict by a factor of 4.341 (model 4), and not voting according to the party line voluntarily out of loyalty does so by a factor of 3.057 (model 5). Both variables remain significant in the full hierarchical model (and removing them from the model does not change the results with regard to the institutional variables, model 6). In other words, the existence of institutions does not determine the application of discipline, but MPs' lack of voluntarily party agreement and party loyalty does. As suggested by Hazan (2003, 3), whose use of the term cohesion encompasses both shared policy preferences and norms of party loyalty, "discipline starts where cohesion falters".

[35] We did not test for the effect of MPs' frequency of disagreement on party loyalty because, although party loyalty follows party agreement in our decision-making model, the subscription to the norm of party loyalty is independent of MPs' party agreement, i.e., whether or not MPs frequently agree with their party does not affect whether or not they subscribe to the norm of party loyalty, it only determines whether the second decision-making mechanism comes into play at all.

4.3.5 The sequential decision-making process

The main argument of this study is that in deciding how to vote in parliament, MPs apply these decision-making mechanisms in a particular order. An MP must first determine whether he has an opinion on the matter. If he does not, he looks to his fellow party group members for voting advice, and the MP contributes to party group unity through cue-taking. Agreement, loyalty and discipline are therefore not relevant. If an MP does have an opinion on the vote, and this happens to be in line with the position of the party group, the MP toes the party line voluntarily out of simple agreement. Again, the mechanisms further down the decision-making sequence—loyalty and discipline—do not play a role in his decision making. If an MP does have an opinion on the matter, and this is in conflict with the party group's position, an MP could still vote according to the party line voluntarily if he subscribes to the norm of party group loyalty, and his subscription the norm outweighs the intensity of the conflict with the party's position. Only if an MP disagrees with the position of the party group and his subscription to the norm of party group loyalty does not override his conflict, do party (group) leaders need to elicit him to toe the party line through (the promise of) positive and (the threat of) negative sanctions. If, at this final stage of the decision-making sequence disciplinary measures are not enough to elicit compliance, we expect that the MP will vote according to his own opinion and thus dissent from the party group line.

As mentioned earlier, this explanatory model of individual MP decision making would ideally be tested by asking MPs about how they came to the decision to vote as they did on individual parliamentary votes. We do not have the data to do so, however. But we can get a general idea of the relative importance of the three last decision-making mechanisms (party agreement, party loyalty and party discipline), at the aggregate level in the 15 parliaments under study, and thus the extent to which parties can count on these pathways to achieve party group unity. We exclude cue-taking from the sequence because whereas the questions we use to measure party agreement, party loyalty and party discipline all refer specifically to voting in parliament, the questions we use to gauge cue-taking do not so do. Moreover, as mentioned before, our indicator of party agreement cannot distinguish between MPs who vote with the party line out of agreement, or because they *do not disagree* as a result of the lack of a personal opinion.

First, 61 percent of all MPs indicate to infrequently disagree with the party's position, answering that they disagree with the party either 'about once a year' or '(almost) never' (see Table 4.15). This entails that, indeed, parties can count on party agreement as an important pathway to party unity. Next, although above we found that 62 percent of all MPs included in the survey subscribe to the norm of party loyalty (see Table 4.7), answering that an MP ought to vote according to the party's position in the case of disagreement, from the perspective of political parties, this pathway is most relevant for those MPs who frequently disagree with the party. Indeed, 21 percent of all MPs frequently disagree with the party line, but can still be counted on to vote with the party voluntarily in the case of disagreement. In most countries, the percentage of MPs found in this category is well above 20 percent (with Belgium taking the lead with 32 percent), meaning that, although not as important as party agreement, the pathway still plays a

Table 4.15: The relative contribution of party agreement, party loyalty and party discipline when it comes to sticking to the parliamentary party line in votes in 15 national parliaments (%)

	Voluntary		Involuntary			
	Agreement	Loyalty	Discipline	Unaccounted	Total	Total (n)
Austria	79	11	5	5	100	42
Belgium	65	27	3	5	100	61
France	53	10	10	28	101	47
Germany	56	19	7	19	101	117
Hungary	51	27	6	16	100	93
Ireland	79	14	3	3	99	31
Israel	39	32	2	27	100	36
Italy	42	23	7	29	101	41
Netherlands	77	22	0	2	101	45
Norway	71	26	0	3	100	42
Poland	69	9	7	15	100	47
Portugal	51	28	15	7	101	71
Spain	74	21	3	3	101	91
Switzerland	57	0	14	29	100	44
United Kingdom	59	11	11	20	101	50
All	61	21	5	13	100	858

χ^2 *(42) = 139.722, sig. = .000;* φc *= .234, sig. = .000*

Note: These percentages may differ from previous tables in this chapter because they only include respondents who answered all three questions. Unfortunately, the questions about party discipline were located near the end of the survey.

prominent role. The exception to this pattern is, Switzerland, where party loyalty does not seem to play a role for any of the MPs who frequently disagree, which is in line with the earlier findings on party group unity in the Swiss national parliament.

Only 5 percent of MPs frequently disagree with the party, do not ascribe to the norm of party loyalty, and answer that party voting discipline ought to be less strict (which we argue to be indicate that MPs are disciplined, or at least operate under the threat of sanctions), meaning that of the three pathways included in our sequential decision-making model, the contribution of party discipline is the lowest. However, given the high levels of party voting unity found in most of these parliaments, it is odd that 13 percent of MPs remain unaccounted for. These MPs frequently disagree with the party, do not vote with the party out of loyalty, and do not think that party discipline should be less strict, instead answering that it should be even more strict, or remain as it is. It could be

that some of these MPs rely mostly on cue-taking for their voting decisions, which we are unable to include in the sequential decision-making model due to the formulation of the question. It may also be that our measurement of party discipline, which admittedly requires quite a bit of interpretation and does not actually inquire into the role of party discipline in MPs' decision making, leads to an underestimation of the role that sanctions play the decision-making process of MPs.

4.4 Conclusion

When it comes to the determinants of party group unity, parties can generally count on MPs voluntarily toeing the party line, with party agreement playing the most important role in MPs' decision making, followed by party loyalty in the case of disagreement. Party discipline, although probably underestimated by our decision-making model, seems to play a secondary role in determining whether MPs conform to the party line or dissent in most of our 15 parliaments. Although we are unable to place the division of labor pathway and associated mechanism of cue-taking in our sequential model, the fact that in most countries the majority of MPs (completely) agree with the statement that the parliamentary party spokesperson determines the position of the party on his topic serves as an indication that parties do apply a division of labor, and that cue-taking is likely to play an important role as well.

The influence of institutions tends to decrease as we move through the sequential decision-making process. Whereas candidate selection and government participation do have the predicted effects on party agreement, the effects of these institutions are much weaker when it comes to party loyalty. And although exclusive and centralized candidate selection procedures and voters' inability to cast a personal vote, in theory, provide political party leaders with additional sanctioning tools that can be used to discipline their MPs, MPs' satisfaction with party discipline does not seem to be affected by these institutions either. Instead, and following the logic of our sequential decision-making model, MPs who frequently disagree with the party, or do not subscribe to the norm of party loyalty in the case of disagreement, are more likely to prefer less strict party discipline, which we hold to be indicative of MPs' past experience with sanctioning by the party (group) leadership.

Concerning the effects of the formal properties of electoral institutions on MPs' decision making mechanisms, the results are somewhat unexpected. In all our multivariate analyses, voters' inability to cast a personal vote has a positive, yet not a statistically significant, effect on MPs' decision-making mechanisms. Yet, in combination with an increase in district magnitude (which is theorized to increase the value of the political party's reputation in the electoral arena, Carey and Shugart, 1995), voters' inability to cast a personal vote does not result in MPs being more likely to frequently agree with the party, stay loyal to the party despite their disagreement, or answer that discipline ought to be less strict. These rather unexpected findings may, in part, be accounted for by our rather crude measure of the formal properties of electoral systems and the classification

of particular countries.[36] As mentioned before, previous studies on the effects of electoral settings on party voting unity have also yielded mixed results, and thus this study forms no exception. However, our alternative (individual level) attitudinal measure for the dilemma of competing principals does have a statistically significant effect on party loyalty. It may thus be that formal institutions do not determine the extent to which MPs are loyal to one principal or another, or that if electoral institutions do provide the means to discriminate between candidates, the electorate does not do so on the basis of party loyalty. This may be because they find it of less importance than, for example, party agreement, or because they are unable to accurately gauge candidates' loyalty due to the personal normative nature of the decision-making mechanism). As mentioned before (see section 3.2 in chapter 3) party loyalty is theorized to result from MPs' socialization through (previous) experience as representatives of their political party, however, the internalization and actual application of norms is an individual's decision; if an MP subscribes to a certain norm, he will apply it whether his (electoral institutional) environment promotes it or not.

This also taps into the 'one- or two-arena debate', as postulated by Bowler (2000), which focuses on whether party group unity in the legislative arena is actually affected by, or insulated from, the institutions and changes electoral arena. This debate is addressed further in chapter 6, where we tackle the question from an alternative perspective by focusing on changes in the relative contribution of MPs' decision-making mechanisms over time in the Dutch national parliament. For now, we continue our analysis of the effects of institutional settings on the decision-making mechanisms MPs apply in determining whether to vote with the party group or dissent, by looking at the differences between representatives in legislatures at different levels of government.

[36] As mentioned in footnote 17, alternative classifications of electoral systems based on the expert judgment of the PartiRep project research team yielded very similar results.