

# Flying the Flag in Brussels

## Regional Representation Offices in the European Capital

### **Master's thesis**

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## Abstract

Due to the EU's multilevel governance structure, regions have become a relevant actor in the policy-making process on the European level. To actively take part in this process, many regions have opened up regional representation offices in Brussels in order to gather information, build up networks, and seek policy influence. While a lot of attention has been paid to the activities of these offices, the differences in the organizational characters of the representations have been widely overlooked. We can identify three different types of offices in the European capital: single-region liaison offices, offices shared by a selection of regions from one Member State, and national associations, via which all regions of one state are collectively represented. Taking these different organizational forms into account, this thesis seeks to test how domestic political factors shape the type of office a region is most likely to maintain in Brussels. Considering a clustered structure of the data, the results of the performed logistic regressions suggest that domestic political factors are only to a limited extent suitable as shaping factors for the organizational forms of the regional offices. In addition, due to the inclusion of resources-related control factors, the findings suggest that these factors are to a larger extent appropriate to predict what organizational form of an office a region is most likely to maintain in Brussels.

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## Table of Contents

<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>II</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>III</b>
<b>Figures</b> .....	<b>VI</b>
<b>Tables</b> .....	<b>VI</b>
<b>Abbreviations</b> .....	<b>VII</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>2. Fundamental policy developments</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Literature Review</b> .....	<b>7</b>
3.1 Regional representation as a concept .....	7
3.2 Regional representation offices .....	9
3.3 Theoretical concepts.....	10
3.4 Various research foci.....	13
3.4.1 Activities.....	13
3.4.2 Mobilization.....	13
3.4.3 Bypassing governments .....	14
3.4.4 Cooperation partners.....	15
3.4.5 Domestic factors .....	15
<b>4. Theoretical framework</b> .....	<b>17</b>
4.1 Theoretical foundation.....	17
4.2 Population ecology theory.....	17
4.3 The dependent variable: organizational character of a regional representation office.....	19
4.4 The independent variables: domestic political factors shaping the organizational form .....	19
4.4.1 Political factors .....	20
<b>5. Research design</b> .....	<b>23</b>
5.1 Research type.....	23
5.2 Operationalization .....	24
5.2.1 Sample .....	24
5.2.2 Dependent variable .....	27
5.2.3 Independent variables .....	29
5.2.3.1 Regional authority .....	29
5.2.3.2 Regionalist parties .....	30
5.2.3.3 New Member State .....	30
5.2.3.4 Control variables.....	31
5.3 Methodology.....	32
5.3.1 Applied research method .....	32
5.3.2 Reliability.....	33
5.3.3 Validity .....	34

<b>6. Results</b> .....	<b>36</b>
6.1 Descriptive statistics .....	<b>36</b>
6.1.1 Multiple organizational characters .....	36
6.1.2 Country-wise distribution of data .....	37
6.1.3 Independent variables .....	40
6.1.3.1 Regional authority .....	40
6.1.3.2 Regionalist parties .....	41
6.1.3.3 New Member State .....	42
6.2 Explanatory analysis.....	<b>44</b>
6.2.1 Individual office.....	44
6.2.2 Shared office .....	48
6.2.3 National associations .....	50
<b>7. Discussion of the findings</b> .....	<b>52</b>
7.1 Regional authority .....	<b>52</b>
7.2 Presence of regionalist parties .....	<b>53</b>
7.3 New Member State .....	<b>54</b>
7.4 Resources-related control variables.....	<b>54</b>
<b>8. Conclusion</b> .....	<b>57</b>
8.1 Summary.....	<b>57</b>
8.2 Reflections on results .....	<b>58</b>
8.3 Reflections on methodology and data .....	<b>59</b>
8.3.1 Sample limitations .....	59
8.3.2 Limitations of operationalization.....	59
8.4 Future research .....	<b>60</b>
<b>9. References</b> .....	<b>62</b>
<b>10. Appendices</b> .....	<b>68</b>

## Figures

1	Policy developments	6
2	Channels of regional representation	8
3	Multilevel governance	11
4	Population ecology theory	18
5	NUTS	26
6	Regions per type of office	39

## Tables

1	Activities of representation offices	9
2	Literature review	16
3	Types of office	36
4	Operationalization	43
5	Frequencies	43
6	Results individual office	47
7	Results shared office	49
8	Results national association	51
9	Summary of the results	52
I.	Info box I	27

## Abbreviations

AALEP	Accredited Public Policy Advocates to the European Union
AIC	Akaike's Information Criterion
CoR	Committee of the Regions
CPMR	Conference for Peripheral Maritime Regions
EC	European Commission
EFA	European Free Alliance
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
LAU	Local Administrative Units
MLG	Multilevel governance
NUTS	Nomenclature des unités territoriales statistiques
OLS	Ordinary Least Squares
RAI	Regional Authority Index
REGLEG	Regions with legislative competences
SEA	Single European Act
-2LL	-2 Log Likelihood/deviance

“The Europe we think of will not be a federation of nation-states, and not only their common economic area. European policy means promotion of regional policy, with the aim of a Europe as network of free regions, and this means: to overcome the imbalance between large and powerful, and small and politically powerless nations.”

*- Address of Walter Hallstein, former President of the European Commission, Rome 1964,  
translation based on Guérot (2017:180) -*



## 1. Introduction

*“Behind every European decision are not institutions, but people. Establishing contacts and maintaining relations with these decision-makers are vital to our work of our State Representation in Brussels. An attractive house in a central location provides the essential pivot for effective political involvement in the European capital.”*

These words come from the official website of the State Representation of the German Federal State of Baden-Württemberg to the European Union and give an impression of the character of many regional representation offices in Brussels. In times where regions demand for more autonomy, self-rule, or even – as the case of Cataluña teaches us – want to become completely independent, our focus is directed towards the political competences of a region, within their domestic context, but also on the European level.

What started with only a few regional representations in the beginning of the 1980s, developed into a complex net of several liaison offices and other types of representations that serve subnational entities to fly their flag in Brussels, to observe EU policy developments and to build up networks and contacts to the EU institutions and other subnational actors. Nowadays, regions and other subnational tiers of government from the majority of the EU Member States are represented via representation offices in Brussels.

The expansions of the EU policy competences and the progressive European integration have changed the political structure in Europe. The political dimension as well as the EU treaties have altered the role of the nation-state by adding supranational structures and institutions above the nation-state, but also in shifting power towards subnational layers of governance (Keating, Hooghe, & Tatham, 2006). Regional actors have therefore become an established and relevant actor in the policy-formulation and implementation process of EU legislation (Tatham, 2008).

In their role as standard-bearer for their regions in the European capital, the subnational entities have developed a uniform set of activities “as they all seek to inform, network, lobby and market for their regions” (Huyseune & Jans, 2008:10). In other words, they all seek to increase their visibility towards the European institutions in order to make their regional interests clear and be taken into account in the legislation process, as well as to follow closely current policy developments. Nevertheless, we cannot find a uniform landscape of these representations in Brussels, as differences can be identified between the Member States, and in terms of established offices types. On the one hand, for some Member States, a multitude of subnational entities from various levels (e.g. regions, metropolitan areas or even smaller municipalities) are represented via official representations in Brussels. On the other hand, there are Member States, from which only a limited number of subnational entities have taken the plunge to open a regional ‘embassy’ in the European capital.

With regard to the offices’ organizational forms, we can find liaison offices of single regions, offices that are shared and maintained collectively by a selection of regions, or national associations, in which all regions of a Member State are collectively represented. Despite their apparent uniform set

of activities, the subnational representations differ in their appearance in Brussels. Seeking to understand the differences in the organizational forms, we need to take a closer look at the domestic political factors applying to the regions that maintain any form of representation office in Brussels, as the offices can be considered as external branch of the respective regional government (Tatham, 2008). Therefore, this thesis aims at answering the following research question:

**How do domestic political factors shape the organizational form of  
a regional representation office in Brussels?**

Seeking to answer this main question, this thesis provides insights into the following sub-questions:

- (1) How are regional representation offices conceptualized in the available literature?
- (2) How does regional authority shape the type of office a region runs in Brussels?
- (3) How does the presence of regionalist parties shape the type of office?
- (4) Does the factor of belonging to a new Member State (EU10) have an effect on the type of office?
- (5) Are domestic resources-related factors able to shape the type of representation office?

*Scientific relevance*

Within the EU, the nation-state is not the only player anymore since the structures and treaties of the EU provide access to, and seek input from multiple actors from supranational, national, regional and local levels. The legislation process is therefore not dominated by the nation-state only; it also includes actors from different levels (Knodt & Hüttmann, 2012). Consequently, regions have become a relevant actor in the policy-making process on the European level. With their representation offices, regions might have developed a uniform set of activities they aim to carry out. However, in terms of their organizational characters, the offices do not seem to be that uniform. As the main emphasis of previous literature within this field has been dedicated to grasp the offices' activities, motivations, bypassing strategies or cooperation, the fact that there are different organizational forms of offices has been widely neglected. To be able to make statements about the offices' activities, we consider it as essential to firstly get insights into what types of office the regions run in Brussels, and what factors might shape the type of office. The organizational form might be therefore considered as a pivotal factor influencing the portfolio of activities a region is able to pursue in Brussels. This research further aims to contribute to the existing knowledge, as it has become clear that maintaining representation offices is nowadays considered as a sort of standard for regions in the EU. The thesis takes this as an assumption and goes beyond the sheer status of running an office and seeks to get insights into the prevalent organizational forms in order to make a contribution to the limited knowledge about the organizational characters of the regions' Brussels offices.

### *Societal relevance*

The idea of a *Europe of the Regions* might not be prominent anymore, however the representation offices bring Brussels closer to the regions, and the regions closer to Brussels, as the offices raise awareness for regional interests, identities and expertise in the EU policy-making process on behalf of their citizens. In the way regions are performing in Brussels, one could say that they have emancipated themselves from the gate-keeping power of the nation-state in foreign affairs, and that they are eager to make their voices heard. The annually *European Week of Regions and Cities* organized by the Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the Commission shows that regions are taken serious as a partner in the EU policy arena. Moreover, due to the sheer consultative status of the CoR, where all regions are represented, the respective regional offices become even more important, as the regions are able to determine for themselves, what objectives they aim to achieve in Brussels. It is therefore not only important to know, if a region runs an office in Brussels, but also with what structure a region maintains a representation. Especially in times, where nationalist movements are gaining ground in the Member States and the EU institutions are depicted as elite without contact to the citizens, the regional offices might serve as a bridge from the regions to the EU. Knowing that the region and its interests are represented in Brussels, the EU might not seem that far away anymore for the citizens. This might also contribute to a greater European awareness in the regions itself, and consciousness for regional interests in the EU institutions.

### *Outline*

The first chapter briefly summarizes the policy developments that led to regional engagement at the EU level. Thereafter, the literature review explains the theoretical angles of regional representation and outlines the different research foci of previous literature. Within the theoretical framework, the hypotheses are placed in the context of the population ecology theory. The operationalization of the variables and the clarification of the applied research method follow in the research design section. Thereafter, standard multivariate and multilevel logistic regressions applied to each type of office are discussed. The results of the regressions show that political factors serve only to a limited extent as shaping factors for the organizational form of an office. Moreover, the results suggest that resources-related factors shape the type of office to a larger extent. As a final step, potential limitations and implications as well as suggestions for future research are discussed in the conclusion.

## 2. Fundamental policy developments

According to the number of representation offices of subnational entities in Brussels, whether it be regions, local government units or municipalities of EU Member States, the active presence of these subnational entities has somehow become a standard in the EU policy arena (Huyseune & Jans, 2008; Rowe, 2011). In order to get insights into the office types of these representations in Brussels, it is firstly crucial to understand the policy developments since the 1980s that have paved the way for subnational actors to find their role in the EU policy-making process (Figure 1).

The idea of a *Europe of the Regions* was one predominant concept in the 1980s and 1990s with regard to the future of the EU and how the European integration can be intensified (Elias, 2008). The concept entails a policy system not exclusively based on nation-states, but with an equal inclusion of regional actors in the policy-making process. The coming into force of the Single European Act (SEA) in 1987 can be considered as the first motivational step for subnational actors to demand for more access to the EU policy-making process. With the SEA, the policy competences of the EU institutions were expanded into policy areas such as environment, social policy or research and development. These competence expansions touched upon jurisdictions that used to be executed by regional and local tiers of government in some Member States (Hepburn, 2008; Keating, 2006). Therefore, the EU directives in the abovementioned areas have had a direct impact on the regional tiers of government, as the regional actors have been included in the drafting and implementation process of the policy (Hepburn, 2008). Moreover, with the 1988 Structural Funds reform that doubled the available budget for regional policy in order to overcome regional disparities, the EU paved the way for new funding opportunities for more regions. These financial incentives offered subnational actors an additional reason to become active in Brussels (Bachtler, Josserand, & Michie, 2003), as they have been actively involved in the management of the funds (Keating, 2006).

The peak of these policy developments was reached with the 1992 Maastricht Treaty that institutionalized the role of regional and local actors in the EU policy-making process. With the treaty, the Committee of the Regions (CoR), the official assembly of representatives of regional and local tiers of government, was included into the policy-making process by assigning it a consultative role in the initiation process of legislation (Hooghe, 1995). Furthermore, the principle of subsidiarity was included in the treaty, enforcing the role of subnational entities in the implementation of legislation laid down in the treaties, as this principle “rules out Union intervention, when an issue can be dealt with effectively by Member States at central, regional or local levels” (Panizza, 2018). This principle empowered the regional levels in the Member States to effectively implement the policies (Hepburn, 2008). In addition to that, the Maastricht Treaty also made it possible for ministers of regional governments to represent their entire Member State in the Council of Ministers if the policy is of concern to regional interests in the respective Member State (Panara, 2015). Moreover, the treaty established the Cohesion Fund, which further aims at improving the living conditions in less developed regions throughout the Union. This fund served as an additional important source of

financial means for a great number of regions (especially in the newer Member States) (Rodriguez-Pose & Courty, 2018).

Although the initial idea of a *Europe of the Regions*, in which regions take over the role of the nation-states was not realized in its original sense, the mentioned policy developments representing an “institutional openness” (Huyseune & Jans, 2008:4) in combination with the expansion of EU policy competences have still led to an active engagement of subnational entities in Brussels. As a consequence, subnational actors are nowadays represented in Brussels via their own regional representation office, trans-regional networks, the CoR, and by maintaining active contacts to the EU institutions (Elias, 2008; Marks, Haesly, & Mbaye, 2002).

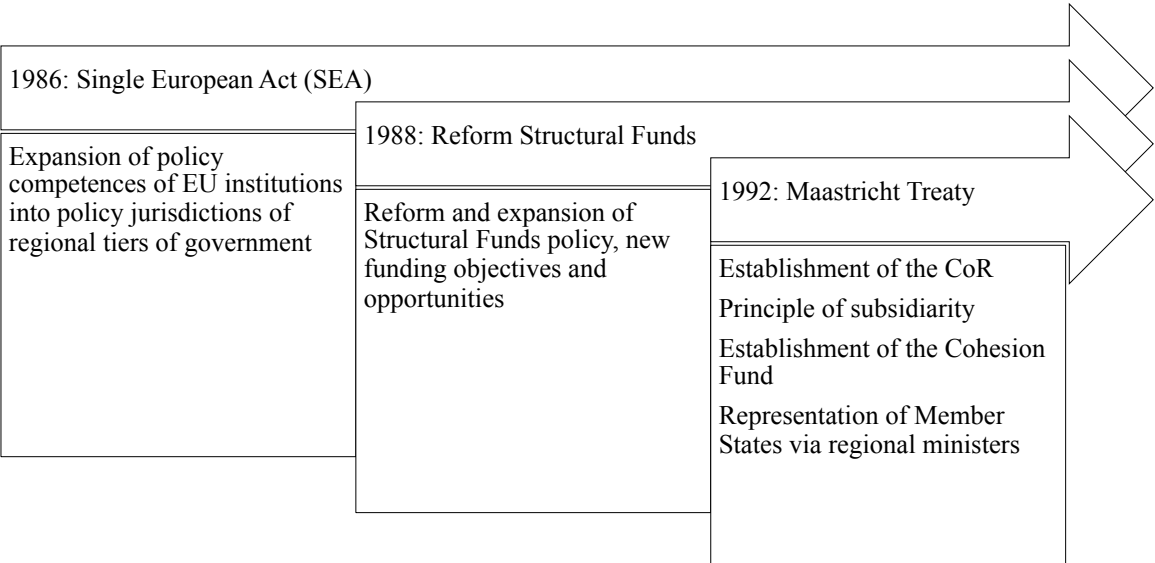


Figure 1. Policy developments leading to regional mobilization. Own illustration, based on Huyseune & Jans (2008).

### 3. Literature Review

Due to the emergence of regions as not negligible political instances in the policy processes in Brussels, numerous scholars and studies have approached this *actorness* and engagement of regions within the EU governance structures by placing different main emphasizes such as activities, motivations or collective behavior of regions at EU level. The topic is still of relevance for researchers interested in federalism and subnational structures in the EU, however, we can acknowledge a peak moment in research around the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and in the beginning of the 2000s (e.g. Hooghe 1995; Hooghe & Marks, 1996; Keating *et al.*, 2006; Marks *et al.*, 2002) when the idea of a *Europe of the Regions* was discussed in politics and political science. Moreover, the establishment of the CoR shed a light on the future role of the regions in the policy processes of the EU (Jeffery, 1997; Le Galès & Lesquesne, 1998).

#### 3.1 Regional representation as a concept

The diversity of the available literature shows that researchers are interested in the different channels, activities and motivations of regional actors in Brussels. One main focus lies hereby on the representation of regional priorities at the European level and towards the EU institutions. As the numbers of regional representation offices has expanded over the last 30 years, the activities of regions at EU level moved increasingly into the research focus of many scholars (Jeffery, 1997; Rowe, 2011; Tatham, 2008). In the process of capturing ‘regional representation’ as a research object, we need to bear in mind that depending on the study purpose and perspective, the term ‘regional representation’ is defined differently.

While some scholars understand the term as the whole range of opportunities regions have at their disposal to represent their stakes in Brussels (Figure 2) (e.g. Hooghe & Marks, 1996; Tatham, 2008, 2017), other researchers think of ‘regional representation’ as exclusively maintaining a liaison office in Brussels (e.g. Callanan & Tatham, 2014; Nielsen & Salk, 1998; Studinger, 2012).

Based on their understanding, Hooghe and Marks (1996) define five different channels of regional representation at EU level: the Committee of the Regions (CoR), the Council of Ministers, the Commission, transnational regional associations, and regional liaison offices. According to this structure, regions can pursue their interests firstly via the CoR that needs to be consulted by the Commission if the initiated legislation is affecting regional layers of government. Another channel is the representation of regional stakes via a regional minister representing the Member State in the Council of Ministers. According to the authors, this case is however depending on the legislative competences of the regions within their domestic political structure, as not every region in the EU has the competence to represent the entire state in the Council. Moreover, via the contact to Commission officials, regional officials can also provide their regional perspective and expertise to the Commission during the initiation and formulation process of legislative proposals. In addition, the membership of a

region in transnational and European associations of subnational actors is considered as another channel at the disposal of the regions. These associations bring together regions and other subnational layers of government from different states to represent certain characteristics all member regions share (e.g. *Eurocities*, a network of European cities and metropolitan areas). Furthermore, Hooghe and Marks (1996) identify the representation of a region via a liaison office as ‘physical’ representation maintained by the region itself (see next paragraph) as another channel of representation. A similar overview of these identified representation channels can also be found in the contributions of Tatham (2008) and Rowe (2011).

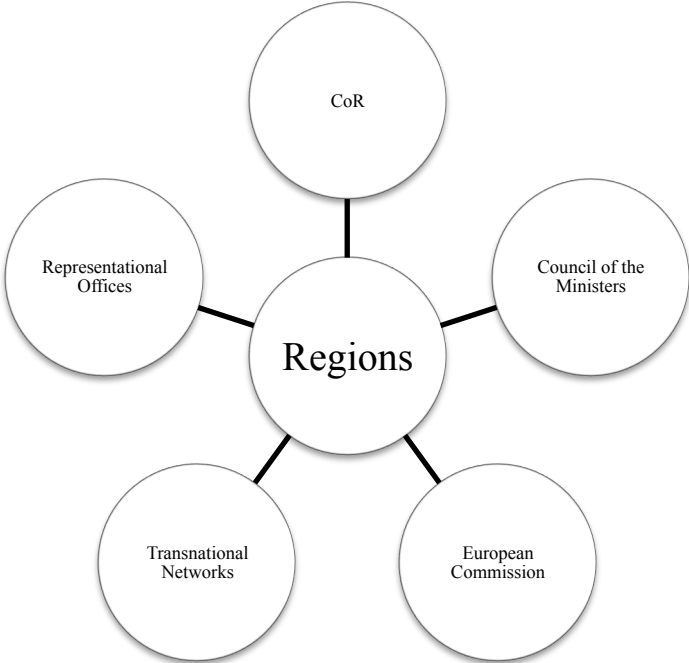


Figure 2. Channels of regional representation. Own illustration, based on Hooghe & Marks (1996), Tatham (2008).

In contrast to this broader notion, in other studies ‘regional representation’ is considered exclusively as maintaining a ‘physical’ representation office in Brussels. This understanding does not include all other mentioned representation opportunities and channels. In these studies, regional representation means sending representatives of the respective regional governmental structure to a Brussels-based ‘embassy-alike’ representation office of the region to keep an eye on the policy-making developments and processes at EU level (Studinger, 2012). Due to their information gathering and policy monitoring function on EU level, Donas, Fraussen and Beyers (2014:80) consider the regional offices as “early warning system” for the officials in the concerned region. Moreover, for Jaurisch (2014:192), the offices serve the regional governments as means to acquire “first-hand, up-to-date intelligence from Brussels”.

### 3.2 Regional representation offices

As seen in the broad basis of studies in the available literature, a very distinctive form and channel of active engagement of subnational actors at EU level, is maintaining a regional representation (liaison) office in Brussels. Since in this thesis, the main emphasis will be placed on regional liaison offices, we will now focus on the existing literature about these offices as research object. Before moving on to the various research foci that can be identified in the literature, we first need to understand, what the purpose of these offices is, which functions they fulfill and how the offices are theoretically approached and perceived in the literature.

With regard to their purpose, Jaurisch (2014:192) for instance defines the offices as a “non-institutionalized and informal way of representation [to] collect information at the EU level and deliver it to the regional capital”. A similar understanding provides Moore (2006:198); she describes the offices’ purpose as “a service, which selects, interprets, filters and analyzes the information gathered”. These examples of definitions are also reflected in their functions. For instance, in terms of the offices’ main tasks, Marks *et al.* (2002) identify four core activities (Table 1): (1) information gathering and collection, (2) building up cooperation and information exchange networks, (3) building bridges to the EU institutions to provide regional perspectives and preferences to the EU officials, and (4) making use of the gathered information as well as established networks and contacts to seek to influence upcoming EU legislation. Based on similar outlines of core functions of the offices that can also be found for example in the contributions of Nielsen and Salk (1998), Huysseune and Jans (2008), or Tatham (2017), the boundaries between these tasks are not always clear-cut, as the activities are overlapping and conducted simultaneously.

Table 1  
*Main functions of regional offices*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Outline</b>
Information gathering	Collecting information about upcoming funding opportunities and legislation
Network building	Finding and identifying like-minded regions and trans-regional networks
Contacts to EU institutions	Providing regional perspectives and expertise to the Brussels-based institutions
Seeking policy influence	Making use of information, networks and contacts to seek policy influence



### 3.3 Theoretical concepts

Within the literature, we often come across a similar theoretical framework for regional representation offices at the EU level: many scholars (e.g. Callanan & Tatham, 2014; Le Galès & Lesquesne, 1998; Rowe, 2011; Studinger, 2012) locate the active engagement of regional actors in Brussels between the multilevel governance (MLG) approach by Hooghe and Marks, and a broader framework of general interest representation at the EU level.

Within the field of a MLG perspective to describe the EU as a political system, Gary Marks and Lisbeth Hooghe can be considered as the pioneers in establishing a theoretical framework for the role of regions in the EU policy process. Their MLG approach (e.g. 1996, 2001) considers the EU as an independent political system with different layers of governance, and where several actors are involved in the policy process. According to the MLG approach, the nation-state is not the only player anymore since the structures of the EU provide access to, and seek input from multiple actors from supranational, national, regional and local levels. The decision-making process is therefore not dominated by the nation-state only. This assumption positions the MLG concept in contrast to the intergovernmentalism-based concept to describe the EU as political system dominated by nation-states (Keating, 1998; Panara, 2015). The decision-making in the MLG concept is hence more seen as a process of mutual dependences between the involved actors from different levels (Figure 3). Furthermore, according to Hooghe and Marks, likewise to the decision-making process, the policy competences are not executed by nation-states only, as supranational entities and regional actors have taken over competences from the nation-states. In addition, Knodt and Hüttmann (2012) argue that due to the 2009 Lisbon Treaty, the impact of the nation-states has further diminished since the supranational dimension of the EU has firstly expanded its policy competences into more areas, and secondly while implementing EU policy, the Commission collaborates closely with regional actors (instead of solely with national governments) to ensure an effective implementation. This has further increased the relevance of regional actors in the policy process. Therefore, according to Panara (2015:47), the MLG concept became the “key pattern for understanding the functioning of the EU and its territorial dynamics”. Based on this theoretical reasoning of the inclusion of different levels into EU governance, regions are able to take part in the policy-making process via their presence and engagement in Brussels, for instance via a representation office.

Despite the frequent use of the concept across the literature, scholars (e.g. Jeffery, 1997; Knodt & Hüttmann, 2012; Rowe, 2011) also critically analyze the applicability of the MLG concept as a theory to understand the existence of the offices. The authors identify the purely descriptive character of the concept and its insufficient foundation to formulate assumptions and explain variations across Member States as major weaknesses and limitations.

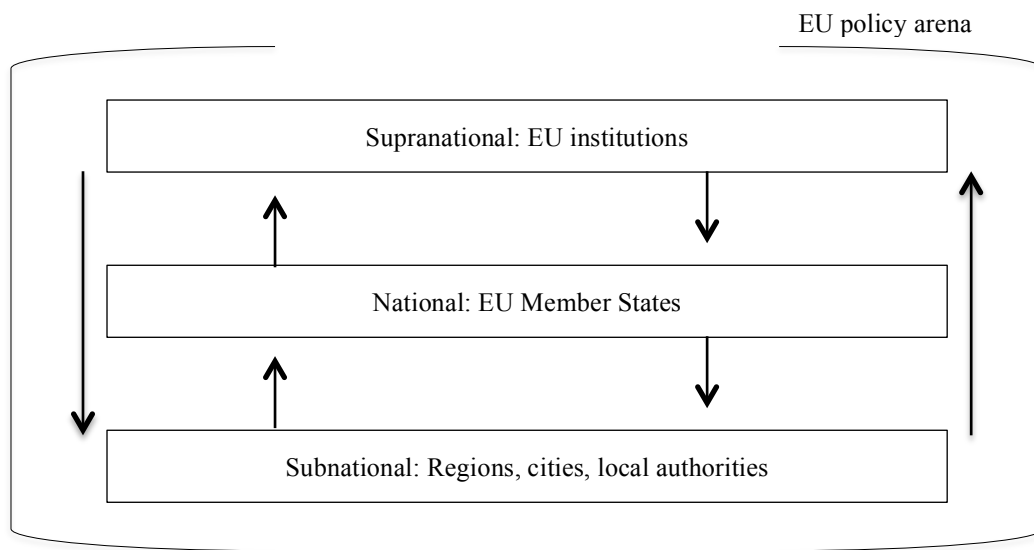


Figure 3. Multilevel governance. Own illustration, based on Hooghe & Marks (2001). Figure adapted from University of Portsmouth European Studies HUB (2013).

Besides the MLG concept, scholars conceptualize regional offices as Brussels-based territorial interest organizations aiming to lobby the EU institutions. In the general literature on interest representation in the EU, we can see that little attention is paid to regional representations as interest organizations since most contributions (e.g. Joos, 2011; Klüver, 2013; Richardson & Coen, 2009) focus on the representation of business and societal interests. However, while scrutinizing the offices' engagement in Brussels, scholars nevertheless make use of classical interest representation concepts, such as network and exchange theories. Within these concepts, policy-makers have limited resources at their disposal and are therefore in need of external information input. Consequently, interest groups seek to exchange their expertise for access to internal information about upcoming legislation (Donas *et al.*, 2014). With regard to their core functions, Donas *et al.* (2014) consider the offices as interest-driven intermediaries between the stakes of the region (including the region's economy and other constituencies) on one side, and the European institutions on the other. Based on the offices' monitoring activity to collect information and their efforts to establish lobbying networks, the authors argue that the regions' Brussels offices execute tasks, similar to those of classical interest groups. Moreover, the authors state that the offices gain their legitimacy by effectively defending regional stakes in Brussels, comparable to how a classical interest organization would gain legitimacy by successfully protecting the interests of a certain industry branch (Donas *et al.*, 2014). In addition, Greenwood (2011:438) argues that, with their representation offices, the regions are "more actors of participatory democracy than of representative democracy" in order to make their voice heard and actively lobby for the preferences and interests of the regions at the EU level.

While these theories are mainly suitable to understand the activities of regional representations as interest organizations, scholars also make use of the population ecology theory in order to scrutinize the organizational characteristics of the representations as interest groups in Brussels. According to the theory, the density and features of a population of interest organizations (e.g. what organizational forms can be found) is depending on factors in the respective organizational environment such as incentives (e.g. government goods and services), available resources, the stability of the political system, or the given space to the organizations by the constituents they serve. The interest groups are adapting and reacting in an optimal manner to the demands and requirements of their respective organizational environment in order to further 'survive' in this environment and to be able to fulfill their tasks (Bernhagen, 2017; Lowery & Gray, 1995). The population ecology theory has been used in order to establish a theoretical approach towards the interest groups in and around the EU policy-making arena in Brussels.

Messer, Berkhout and Lowery (2011) describe the EU policy arena with its different institutional actors as a niche space for interest groups. Therefore, the interest groups (such as industry organizations) need to develop special characteristics in order to fulfill to the given space and requirements. The opportunity structure provided by the EU, where formal and informal input from interest organizations is politically wanted and needed, determines the organizational environment of the interest groups in Brussels. They therefore need to adapt to this structure to provide the EU with their perspective. Moreover, in the contributions of Berkhout, Carroll, Braun, Chalmers, Destrooper, Lowery and Rasmussen (2015) as well as Carroll and Rasmussen (2017), we see the inclusion of domestic economic and cultural factors in the Member States (e.g. GDP or membership in voluntary organizations) in order to describe the respective organizational environment and to account for the variation amongst interest groups on EU level.

For our context of regional representations, scholars such as Donas and Beyers (2012) as well as Nielsen and Salk (1998) have applied this theory seeking to understand the factors in the organizational environment of regional representations. Hereby, the authors include domestic political and economic factors of the respective regions in order to account for the conditions in the organizational environment in which the regions and their offices are embedded. This theoretical angle is especially important for us, as we aim to scrutinize the impact of domestic political factors of the regions on the organizational form of the representation offices in Brussels.

### 3.4 Various research foci

When scanning the available literature dealing with regional representation offices, we can identify various study foci in the contributions. The majority of previously conducted studies are dedicated to

- (a) the activities of the offices in Brussels,
- (b) the reasons for regional mobilization to establish an office,
- (c) potential bypassing practices towards the central government of the region's Member State, and
- (d) the cooperation of the Brussels-based offices.

#### 3.4.1 Activities

As seen above, amongst others, Marks *et al.* (2002) have scrutinized the activities of the offices in Brussels. In addition to their general description of the offices' core tasks, in their study, they find that the majority of the regions indeed make use of their office to gather information and establish networks with other regions to align with like-minded partners, however, for most regions, seeking policy influence is perceived as secondary on their agenda. Moreover, the authors find that there are differences in the prioritizing of tasks depending on the resources of the offices. Accordingly, Marks *et al.* (2002) argue that especially regions with large and well-funded offices are more likely to seek policy influence, whereas regions with poorer equipped offices prioritize information gathering. Following this argumentation, the findings of Tatham (2017) also show that the activity profile of an office is depending on resources and the domestic institutional context of the region. Whereas offices from prosperous regions prioritize seeking policy influence, offices from less-wealthier regions are more focused on information gathering and monitoring of funding opportunities provided by the EU's Structural Policy. In addition, Tatham (2017) argues that experience and the longevity of the presence in Brussels also has an impact on the offices' activities, as regions from older Member States (in terms of their accession year) are more likely to involve their office in more complex and resource-intensive activities such as actively seeking to influence EU legislation.

#### 3.4.2 Mobilization

Besides the offices' activities, scholars focus on the mobilization of regions to establish representations in Brussels. In contrast to the studies that scrutinize the offices' activities and functions, the mobilization studies aim to grasp the reasons and motives behind the decision to establish an office in Brussels. As an example, in their empirical study based on interviews with regional civil servants, Tatham and Bauer (2014) find that the regions' mobilization motivations were shaped by the opportunities given to subnational actors in the aftermath of the treaty reforms and the establishment of the CoR. In addition, the authors place emphasis on the domestic structures in the regions. Thus, they conclude that the self-rule competence of a region can be considered as a major motivation to establish an office in Brussels, as the region has more discretion at its disposal to pursue own policy initiatives independently from the respective central government. In terms of the regions' motivations, Callanan and Tatham (2014) make a general distinction between regulatory mobilization

and financial mobilization based on their conducted survey and interviews with heads of regional offices in Brussels. Regulatory mobilization is defined as “the proactive, dynamic process where regional governments seek to influence EU policy and legislative outcomes” (191), whereas with financial mobilization, they refer to the “tracking and gathering of information with a view to accessing EU funding” (191). While Callanan and Tatham (2014) consider the first as a proactive process, they refer to the latter as a reactive process depending on the opportunity and incentive structure provided by the EU funding system. Their findings are in line with previous conducted studies, as the authors also conclude that weaker regions were mostly attracted to go to Brussels by the financial incentives of the funds, whereas regions with more policy competences are more likely to realize their motivation of seeking policy influence with their offices. However, the authors also come to the conclusion that the two streams of motivations are not mutually exclusive and in many cases both are valid.

### 3.4.3 Bypassing governments

As another focus of previously conducted studies in this area, we can identify potential bypassing practices towards the central government of a region’s Member State. For instance, Tatham (2010) scrutinizes in his study the patterns of interaction of regions with their respective central government. He therefore distinguishes between cooperative interaction with the central government, where the region has similar policy objectives as the central government and makes use of its office to lobby for these goals, and into bypassing action, where the region pursues different policy objectives with their office than the central government. To understand, what factors determine if a region sticks to its central government’s line or decides to prioritize other goals, Tatham (2010) tests different factors applying to the regions, such as their level of self-rule or their absolute and relative size. As a conclusion, he argues that the political divergence in terms of having a different party-political coalition in charge in the regional government compared to the central government, as well as the degree of self-rule are determining factors if a region pursues different policy goals with its regional engagement in Brussels. With regard to bypassing activities of regions, the single-nation study by Jaurisch (2014) offers additional in-depth insights into the regional engagement of the German *Bundesländer* concerning the negotiations of the funds in the multiannual financial frameworks 2007-2013 and 2014-2020. The results of the conducted interviews with officials in the Brussels representations of the federal states have shown that during the bargaining process of the financial framework for 2007-2013, the positions of the federal states were substantially different from those of the central government. In that phase, the *Bundesländer* made use of their Brussels representations to lobby for their own objectives regarding the allocation of the funds. In contrast to that, Jaurisch (2014) argues that for the framework of 2014-2020, the federal states cooperated closely with the central government and made therefore use of their offices to lobby for the same goals in the allocation of the funds as the German federal government. According to Jaurisch (2014), this process symbolizes social

learning of regional actors and shows that the regional goals and potential bypassing activities are context-driven.

#### 3.4.4 Cooperation partners

Collective action and cooperation amongst Brussels-based offices and with the EU institutions respectively, can be identified as another major research focus. As an example, Greenwood (2011:446) describes the regions' offices in Brussels as "actors of common interest", as they all seek to represent their region's interests and – to varying extent – set their own policy agenda on behalf of the regions' priorities. For that reason, Greenwood (2011) argues, the regions establish formal and informal networks amongst the representation offices to collectively represent the interests of regional tiers of governance in the EU (e.g. the REGLEG group representing the *Regions with legislative competences*). Donas and Beyers (2012) also identify various types of offices and cooperation forms amongst the regions' Brussels-based offices. The authors find that especially weaker regions in terms of legislative as well as financial resources establish collective forms of offices and networks amongst like-minded regions at EU level. Moreover, according to the authors, the distinctive information need by the different EU institutions are leading to various organizational forms of offices and cooperation amongst the offices to adapt optimally to this structure. In terms of cooperation partners in Brussels, Beyers, Donas and Fraussen (2015) argue, for redistributive policy issues, regions with their representation offices have various venues at their disposal to cooperate. The results of their conducted interviews show that the staffs of the Brussels-based offices interact with national as well as supranational instances to represent their regional interests. Their results suggest that the policy distance is a crucial factor while choosing a cooperation partner. Therefore, if a region's position is closer to the one of the central government, the regions are more eager to interact with the Member State's Permanent Representation, and less eager with the supranational institutions. Vice versa, if the policy distance between the region and the central government is larger, regions are more likely to interact closely with the respective DG of the Commission, and less likely with the central government. However, the authors also find that "irrespective of what is at stake, the national Permanent Representation is always a relevant interlocutor" (Beyers *et al.*, 2015:17) for the regions to interact in Brussels.

#### 3.4.5 Domestic factors

In most contributions of the relevant literature, we have seen that scholars admit that the MLG model is applicable to the regional engagement at EU level, however it lacks theoretical and causal explanations for regional mobilization (e.g. Blatter, Kreutzner, Rentl, & Thiele, 2008; Knodt & Hüttmann, 2012; Panara, 2015; Rowe, 2011; Tatham & Thau, 2014). In order to formulate hypotheses and understand regional representation at EU level, in many conducted studies, the MLG framework is therefore combined with domestic factors of the regions in their Member States (Blatter *et al.*, 2008, 2009; Hooghe, 1995; Nielsen & Salk, 1998). The need to include the national factors and conditions

applying to the regions in order to scrutinize the engagement of regions at EU level is shared and supported by almost all studies in this field. For instance, Rowe (2011:81) argues that it is necessary to include a “domestic lens” in order to have a better understanding for the variation amongst regional representations in Brussels. According to her, this offers the opportunity to include domestic factors, such as the legislative competences of a region, the “existence of regional political demands” (81) as well as the applying financial and institutional context. A similar argumentation can be found in Nielsen and Salk (1998): the authors suggest including factors such as the size of the region, available resources, the structure of the regional economy as well as the degree of regional autonomy and the identity. Accounting for these factors helps to further determine the *room for manoeuvre* of a regional representation in Brussels. Comparable justifications to include domestic factors can also be found for instance in the contributions of Beyers *et al.* (2015); Donas *et al.* (2014) and Tatham (2017).

In the sections above, we have seen how regional representation is perceived from a theoretical perspective and what main emphasizes have been put on by different researchers in order to grasp the active engagement of regional actors in Brussels. Table 2 summarizes the different research foci.

Table 2  
*Research foci*

<b>Research focus</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Mobilization</b>	<b>Bypassing</b>	<b>Collective action</b>	<b>Domestic factors</b>
<b>Authors</b> <i>(selection)</i>	Le Galès & Lequesne, 1998 Marks <i>et al.</i> , 2002 Huyseune & Jans, 2008 Donas <i>et al.</i> , 2014 Tatham, 2017	Keating, 1999 Fleurke & Willemse, 2006 Moore, 2008 Callanan & Tatham, 2014 Tatham & Thau, 2014 Tatham & Bauer, 2014	Keating <i>et al.</i> , 2006 Tatham, 2010 Jaursch, 2014 Tatham & Bauer, 2014	Weyand, 1996 Greenwood, 2011 Donas & Beyers, 2012 Beyers & Donas, 2014 Beyers <i>et al.</i> , 2015	Hooghe, 1995 Nielsen & Salk, 1998 Blatter <i>et al.</i> , 2008; 2009 Rowe, 2011 Tatham & Thau, 2014
<b>Findings/ emphasis</b>	Differences in the prioritizing of activities according to prosperity of the region	Financial and regulatory incentives for regions to establish in Brussels	Political divergence and self-rule as driver of bypassing	Different patterns of inter-office cooperation and with EU institutions	Inclusion of national factors and conditions to understand engagement of regions

## 4. Theoretical framework

In the literature review, we have seen the variety of existing literature on the topic of regional engagement at EU level. Within the theoretical framework, we concretize our dependent variable and make use of the population ecology theory in order to derive our independent variables and hypotheses from.

### 4.1 Theoretical foundation

With regard to regional representation and subnational engagement at EU level, Hepburn (2008) and Studinger (2012) acknowledge that there is a lack of a sound theoretical structure to understand and analyze the European engagement of regions. For instance, according to Hepburn (2008), theories of Europeanization cannot be applied to the context of subnational actors since these theories mainly focus on the impact of the European integration on policy processes on Member State level and do not take a regional dimension into account. Studinger (2012) argues to take the assumption that political decisions taken at the EU level have direct impacts and consequences for regions and their policy discretion as a starting position to understand the existence of regional representations in Brussels.

This assumption is linked to the multilevel governance approach by Hooghe and Marks (1996, 2001). Concerning the continuous expansions of supranational competences of the EU based on the various treaties, the Union has increasingly turned into a system of multilevel governance structures, with overlapping competences and interdependences of different actors, all involved in the broadest sense in the EU policy-formulation and implementation process (Studinger, 2012). As a consequence of the networking character of EU policy, a steadily growing number of private and public interest organizations are represented in Brussels (Klüver, 2013). The European regions follow this trend and establish themselves with regional representation offices in Brussels (Studinger, 2012).<sup>1</sup>

### 4.2 Population ecology theory

As seen in the literature review, the population ecology theory is used to understand the influence of factors in the organizational environment of interest groups on their organizational characteristics. Since the aim of this thesis is to gain insights into the impact of regional political factors (as factors in the regions' organizational environment) on the organizational form of representation offices, this theory is considered as applicable to the context of this thesis. Considering the weakness of the MLG framework to derive hypotheses from and the lack of other general theories on Europeanization being able to apply to regional representations, it is essential to reflect on the choice of the foundational theory. The population ecology theory is included, as it is able to account for variation within and amongst interest group populations, and the theory suggests that characteristics in the organizational

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<sup>1</sup> For multilevel governance, see literature review.



environment have an effect on the composition of the population (e.g. the types of office) (Gray & Lowery, 2000; Halpin & Jordan, 2009). As seen in the literature review, scholars make use of domestic factors from Member States or regions seeking to explain variation in the interest group population. As this thesis focuses on the potential impact of regional political factors on the organizational form of regional representation offices, domestic determinants of the regions' organizational environment are included in order to explain the variation amongst the different office types of regional representations.

In this context, this theoretical concept is applied to regions and their Brussels offices as population of interest groups. With the MLG framework, the network environment of the EU policy system applying to subnational actors is taken into account. However, as the regional offices are considered as external branches of their respective region (Tatham, 2008), to understand and scrutinize the organizational forms of the offices, the regions' domestic environmental constraints and factors are taken into account as they – according to the theory – determine the requirements the organizational form of an office has to fulfill in Brussels (Figure 4). Since the research focus lies on the political aspects within a region, the thesis concentrates on political and institutional conditions in the domestic environment of the regions.

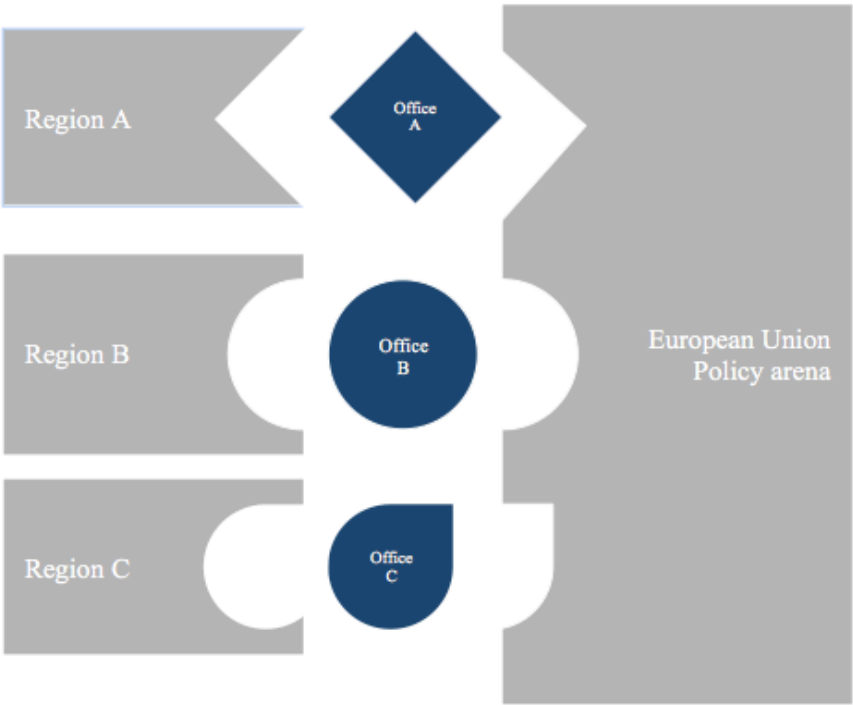


Figure 4. Adaption of regional representation offices. Own illustration, based on Lowery & Gray (1995); Messer et al. (2011).

#### 4.3 The dependent variable: organizational character of a regional representation office

A regional representation office (in any organizational form) can be considered as a very distinctive form of active engagement of subnational actors at the EU level since it is the costliest form of regional mobilization, given the fact that a region needs to maintain an office in Brussels, which is equipped with sufficient resources and permanent staff (Rowe, 2011).

Some of the (Western-)German *Bundesländer* were one of the first regions that opened a permanent regional representation in Brussels during the 1980s (Moore, 2006). Over the last three decades, we can see a strong increase in regional representation offices in Brussels: in 1985, five regional offices were registered, by 1994 already 100 offices were opened (Greenwood, 2011) and by 2017, around 250 representation offices of different subnational actors from all over the EU can be found in Brussels (Rodriguez-Pose & Courty, 2018).

Likewise to the diversity of the regions in the EU, different organizational forms of the regions' representation offices can be identified in Brussels. In our context, the organizational form is defined as the "organizational configuration an organization conforms to at any single point of time" (Halpin & Nownes, 2011:57) and refers to the offices' structures in terms of how and with whom the region maintain their regional representation offices. For the theoretical understanding, we consider regions maintaining Brussels offices therefore as 'organizations'. Moreover, Halpin and Nownes (2011:57ff.) determine three core components of organizations that determine their organizational character: (1) 'technical settings', such as basic features for the organization; (2) organizational features and strategies, such as the policy strategy or the formal structure and (3) organizational identity that entails the organization's aim and goals. To follow this distinction, in this thesis, we will concentrate on the second component since this category includes the formal character and structure of an organization, which we consider as the organizational character of a region's Brussels office.

In order to understand the presence of different organizational forms of offices, we need to identify potential factors that might shape the organizational character of regional representation offices in Brussels.

#### 4.4 The independent variables: domestic political factors shaping the organizational form

Since our focus lies on the organizational forms of the regions' offices, according to the population ecology theory, we need to understand the applying factors in the regions' organizational environment. Within previously conducted studies on regional representation, the inclusion of domestic conditions (e.g. political and institutional context) applying to regions ('domestic lens') is widely used in order to make statements about their activities and engagement at EU level. With regard to the structure of the organizational environment of the regions, in this thesis, the domestic political context, in which the regions maintain the offices, is included. In the following, three hypotheses are therefore derived based on the political factors in the organizational environment of the regions and their respective offices.

#### 4.4.1 Political factors

Besides the regions' fund seeking "financial mobilization", Callanan and Tatham (2014:191) contextualize the engagement of regions with their Brussels-based offices as "regulatory mobilization" based on the aim of the regions, on the one hand to influence and enrich legislative processes in Brussels with their regional perspective, and on the other hand to gather information about upcoming legislation that might have a regional impact. However, given the diversity of regions in the EU in terms of political and economic structures, the need for information about legislative processes is depending on the legislative competences of the respective region. Donas *et al.* (2014) argue that regions with more political competences need more information about EU policy processes, as these regions will later implement the policy on the regional level. From the population ecology theory's perspective, this can be considered as the need for information to adapt optimally to the policy environment of the EU, as regions with more competences are more likely to be confronted with the implementation and finalization of EU policy at a regional level. We therefore take the authority and self-government competences of the regions into account, as this factor might determine the region's capacity, for instance, to autonomously implement the EU policy. In this context, regional authority is understood as the extent to which a subnational entity is able to independently exercise political authority in and over the region (Hooghe, Marks, & Schakel, 2009; Tatham, 2017).

Based on that, we assume that regions with a high degree of regional authority to act more autonomously from their central government in the respective region, as they have for instance law-making competences or financial autonomy. Due to their constitutionally enshrined rights, these regions do not need collective action with other regions of their Member State to 'fight' for the representation of their interests at EU level. Moreover, due their extensive legislative competences, these regions have a stake in more policy areas, as they have to implement the EU policy on regional level. Based on that, we expect that regions with a high degree of regional authority are more likely to maintain an individual office in Brussels in order to be able to monitor and gather exclusive information about upcoming relevant legislation and policy implementation.

*H<sub>1</sub>: Regions with a high degree of regional authority are more likely to maintain an individual office, and less likely to be engaged via a shared office and via a national association.*

Another political factor we need to take into consideration besides a region's degree of authority in order to account for the determinants in the organizational environment of a region is the presence of regionalist parties. The degree of regional authority can be linked to the ability of a region to maintain a certain political regional identity and distinctiveness, as the region for instance is equipped with the legislative competences to determine its own education and cultural policy. With that, the region has the opportunity to further cultivate and educate its regional identity and values, what might become a major political issue and objective for regionalist parties, whose political purpose is to

protect this regional identity (Fitjar, 2010; Hepburn & Detterbeck, 2013; Studinger, 2012). Based on Massetti and Schakel (2013:798), a regionalist party is defined here as “parties prioritizing [the] achievement of some kind of territorial self-government and the administration of regional powers and resources in the exclusive interest of the region”. Over the last decades, regionalist parties have “moved out from niche actors in party systems to mainstream political players with ‘the power to protest’” (Hepburn & Detterbeck, 2013:82). Moreover, Bauer (2006) and Tatham (2010, 2017) argue that a party political divergence between the government of a region and its central government of the EU Member State has implications for the regional engagement in Brussels, as the regional stakes might not be completely reflected by the constellation of the central government due to party political differences with the regional executives. Given their established position and potential political divergences, regionalist parties have sought to establish themselves via organizations and alliances at the European level (such as the European Free Alliance, EFA) (Hepburn & Detterbeck, 2013). Taking this into account, Donas and Beyers (2012), Elias (2008) and Hepburn (2008) argue therefore that the sheer presence of regionalist parties, seeking and pleading for more regional autonomy as well as the cultivation of a regional identity might place these issues in the regional political debate. This might also further have an impact on the formulation of the policy objectives a region wants to achieve with its engagement at the EU level. We therefore assume that the debate for more regional autonomy and the protection of the regional identity highlighted by regionalist parties is expressed by maintaining an individual office in Brussels in order to lobby for these goals exclusively on behalf of the own region.

*H<sub>2</sub>: Regions that are home to a regionalist party are more likely to maintain an individual office, and less likely to be engaged in a shared office and in a national association.*

To further account for determinants in the organizational environment of the regions, we also include the status of the Member State as old or new EU member into account, as this nationwide determinant might also affects the structure of the organizational environment of a region. Pitschel and Bauer (2009) as well as Tatham (2014) have highlighted the emerged differences in the territorial and subnational mobilization between the EU15 – those Member States that have joined the EU before 2004 – and the group of the EU10, those states that joined the EU during the 2004 Eastern enlargement and later. The regions of the EU10 are less developed in terms of economy, but also in terms of political capacity, as the regional layers of government in most new Member States were only introduced incrementally with the transformation process into modern democracies after the downfall of the Soviet Union (Keating, 2006; Moore, 2008; Rowe, 2011; Tatham, 2014). Moreover, in the face of their weaker position within their Member State, the regional Brussels-based offices from the EU10 are often understaffed and poorly equipped (Moore, 2008). Given that context, these regions spend less time on pure lobbying and are therefore more likely to cooperate with their central government to provide their regional perspective in the EU policy-making process (Tatham, 2010, 2012). Hence, with

regard to their relative ‘newness’ to the EU policy system, their lack of domestic resources and political capacities, we expect that regions from the EU10 are more likely to engage via a shared office or national association.<sup>2</sup>

*H<sub>3</sub>: Regions of the EU10 are more likely to engage via a shared office, or national association, and less likely to maintain an individual office.*

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<sup>2</sup> As we control for other resources-related factors at a later stage, we focus hereby on the sheer status of a region coming from the EU10 or EU15 as political factor.

## 5. Research design

After the explanation of the theoretical framework and the formulation of testable hypotheses, the research design aims to translate these theoretical concepts in measurable entities of study. An adequate conversion of the theory contributes to the internal validity of the study since it transforms the theoretical assumptions into an observable and interpretable research design based on measurable real world expressions of the theoretical concepts that helps to understand the relationship between the variables. Moreover, in order to provide transparency and intersubjectivity, it is crucial to account for the choices made during the research design process (Van Thiel, 2014).

This part proceeds as follows: after a brief justification of the chosen research type, the sample of the study will be outlined. Moreover, for each variable, the operationalization into measurable concepts will be explained and justified.

### 5.1 Research type

To get a better understanding of the organizational form of regional representation offices in Brussels, different categories of research could be applied. As seen in the literature review, previous studies to scrutinize regional representation offices and their activities, cooperation partners or strategies have made use of qualitative or quantitative research methods respectively. In our case, likewise qualitative (e.g. co-variation or congruence studies) and quantitative methods (e.g. cross-sectional analysis) could be applied to our research purpose. For instance, a small-N qualitative co-variation case study could provide in-depth information about the motivations and decisions taken to choose one particular organizational form to represent the regional stakes in Brussels, as the study focuses on one case. With that narrow focus, individual motivations and policy targets can be highlighted for the case of one region. As seen in the literature, these in-depth case studies have mainly been applied in order to understand the individual patterns of selecting cooperation partner or activities of selected subnational entities in the EU policy arena (e.g. Moore, 2006; Jaurisch, 2014).

Furthermore, to apply a small-N congruence analysis with regard to the organizational character of regional representation offices might become problematic since mutually exclusive and competing theories with an appropriate degree of explanatory power need to be identified for our case. The literature shows that the concept of MLG is almost used in every study to provide a basic theoretical framework to understand the presence of regional actors in Brussels. However, to identify competing theories that also include the organizational form of the representation offices is difficult, given the lack of a general sound theoretical framework for regional representation (Studinger, 2012). Additionally, according to Tatham (2008), a possible disadvantage for qualitative studies is the need to conduct interviews and surveys with relevant officials of the subnational entities to collect sufficient data since the activities of regional representations are not completely documented in a lobbying register, such as for business interest groups, and not every region makes its European strategy papers

publicly accessible. Moreover, the interviewees could be biased, not willing or not allowed to reveal their lobbying strategies and objectives of their presence in Brussels.

As described before, the aim of this study is to make a contribution to the scientific discourse about the organizational character and types of regional representation offices in Brussels. Therefore, large-N quantitative observational studies offer the opportunity to include a high number of cases into the observation (Haverland, 2007) and to test hypotheses while controlling for other factors in order to examine the significance of the multiple factors applying to regional representation offices in a systematic manner. A cross-sectional research design helps to understand “the relationship between variables across individual units [...] at a single point of time” (Kellstedt & Whitten, 2013:87). Hence, this type of research is considered as an appropriate way to examine variation between different regions in the EU (as spatial units) and their organizational form of the regional representation. Moreover, the cross-sectional type of research allows us to include various explanatory variables that could have an influence on the organizational character of a regional representation. Given these opportunities and the high number of cases, this study might help to get a better insight into the organizational forms of representation offices of regional actors in Brussels and further contributes to the scientific discourse about the regional representation offices as research object in general. Different characters of offices have been identified in contributions with other foci (e.g. Rowe, 2011; Tatham, 2008). However, only very few studies (e.g. Donas & Beyers, 2012; Nielsen & Salk, 1998; Weyand, 1996) have taken the different organizational forms into account. This study therefore aims to contribute to these few previously conducted studies by including recent data, changed contextual factors (e.g. the 2016 reform of the regional structure in France) and also data of new Member States of the EU (e.g. Croatia) as well as new policies (e.g. the reformed structural and cohesion policy within the multiannual financial framework 2014-2020).

## 5.2 Operationalization

In the following, the operationalization of the study sample as well as the dependent and independent variables will be discussed.

### 5.2.1 Sample

As a first step to conduct a cross-sectional study, we need to define the unit of study and the population of units that are taken into account. In our case, the units of study are subnational entities on the first level below the central government of a state. Since we focus on regional representation in the EU, solely subnational entities are taken into consideration that come from an EU Member State.

To define the final sample, we need to determine the sampling frame. In order to get insight into the total population of subnational entities that is represented via any form of office at the EU level, different sources that document the regional representations in Brussels were consulted. To determine the sample, the official list of regional offices registered by the Committee of the Regions (2017), a

list of regional offices by the European Union Contact Directory (2008) and a collection of regional offices by the Association of Accredited Public Policy Advocates to the European Union (AALEP) (2016) were taken into account. Moreover, due to some incomplete information in these lists<sup>3</sup>, additional desk research was conducted to capture the largest extent possible with regard to regional offices in Brussels. For that, especially the homepages of the Member States' national Permanent Representations to the EU offer reliable information about the regional structure and which regions are represented via which office in Brussels.

Even though our research focus lies on the representation offices, we first need to come from the prevalent offices to the subnational entities they represent (sample) in order to draw conclusions about their chosen organizational form. Therefore, every office was decoded in order to identify the regions the office represents.<sup>4</sup> For the definition of our sample, we included solely those regions represented by an office, whose countries are listed in the official list of regional offices by the CoR (2017), and whose offices in the list represent regions on the first level below the central government. Therefore, the mainly newer Member States Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Romania and Slovenia as well as Luxembourg were excluded.<sup>5</sup> According to the official list, these states do not maintain any regional representation offices, probably due to the small size of some states, or the only representations these countries maintain are either not corresponding with the first level below the central government (e.g. *Varna Office*), or are the Member States' diplomatic Permanent Representations to the EU (Huyseune & Jans, 2008). With regard to that, we also excluded regions that are considered as purely administrative and statistical units, for instance if the state is considered as highly unitary (e.g. Portugal) (Huyseune & Jans, 2008; Smouts, 1998) or the regional structure is considered as representing development regions in terms of economic and social development (e.g. Greece) (Hooghe *et al.*, 2009; Huyseune & Jans, 2008; Smouts, 1998). Moreover, other offices were excluded from the sample process due to structural reasons.<sup>6</sup> For instance, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are classified as NUTS-1 regions of the United Kingdom. However, with their representation offices, they represent a nation within the United Kingdom and we therefore consider them as a diplomatic national Permanent Representation to the EU and not as a regional representation office representing subnational layers of government.

Taken these limitations into account, a total sample ( $N_{\text{regions}}$ ) of 193 regions represented by various organizational forms of representation offices in Brussels was found. A complete list of these regions is provided in the Appendix I. It has become clear in the data collection process for the sample that the criterion of only taking regions into account that fulfill the NUTS-2 classification (as seen in some

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<sup>3</sup> In most cases, the information about which regions the office represents was missing.

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from Donas & Beyers (2012).

<sup>5</sup> A potential selection bias will be discussed in the validity section.

<sup>6</sup> In the case of England, we have taken the Regions of England with an office into account as first layer below the central government. Although some Counties also maintain offices, we do not take them into account since these offices are mostly a mix of private, public and educational entities that collectively run the office. It is therefore hard to distinguish if they count as pure regional representation or rather as business association (Jeffery, 1997; Moore, 2007).



previous studies, e.g. Nielsen & Salk, 1998; Rodriguez-Pose & Courty, 2018) is not fully applicable to capture all subnational entities represented by regional representation offices in Brussels since some regions in the EU do not correspond with this classification of NUTS-2 (see Info box I and Figure 5). Following only the NUTS-2 classification would limit the sample size, as for instance, the regions of Germany (*Bundesländer*), Belgium (*Gewesten/Régions*) and England (*Regions*) correspond with NUTS-1 level; or the Swedish *Län* or the Slovakian *Kraje* are classified in the NUTS-3 category. Those regions would have not been part of the sample if we would have had solely followed the NUTS-2 criterion.

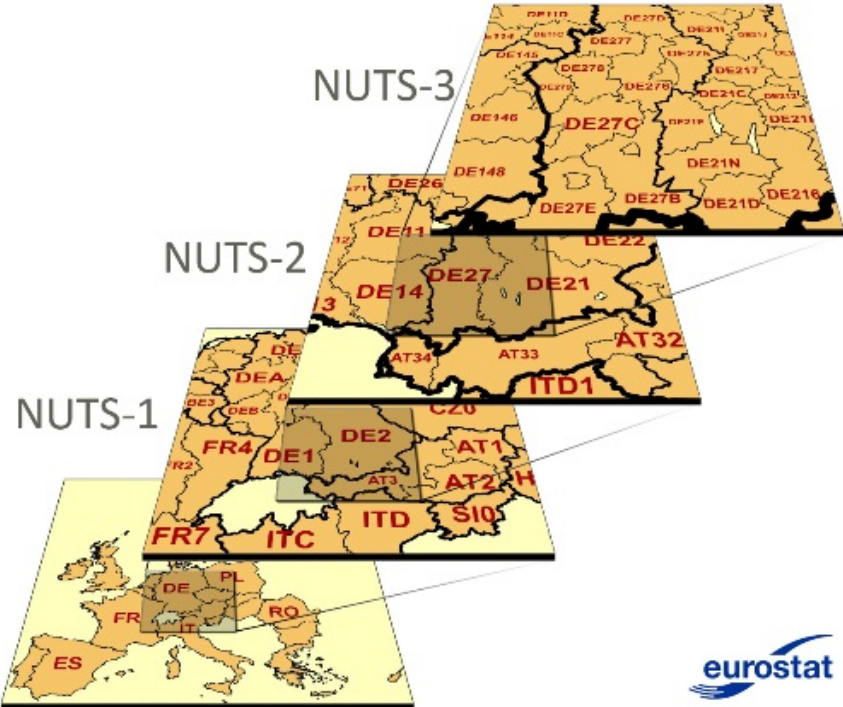


Figure 5. Different NUTS levels in the EU. Eurostat (2013).

### **Nomenclature des unités territoriales statistiques (NUTS)**

The NUTS system was formally introduced in 2003 (Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003) to provide a territorial classification of the EU Member States and their respective regions.

The NUTS system follows four principles:

- (1) There are three hierarchical levels: NUTS-1, NUTS-2, NUTS-3.
- (2) The classification makes use of already existing regional units in the Member States.
- (3) The classification defines minimum and maximum thresholds in terms of population size of a unit.
- (4) At the lowest level, the NUTS classification is complemented by local administrative units-levels (LAU).

According to this, the EU defines the regions as follows (see figure 4):

NUTS-1: major socio-economic regions with a population of three to seven million.

NUTS-2: basic regions for the application of regional policies with a population of 800,000 to three million.

NUTS-3: small regions for specific diagnoses with a population of 150,000 to 800,000.

Based on: Regulation (EC) 1059/2003; Eurostat (2013).

*Info box I. Nomenclature des unités statistiques (NUTS).*

#### 5.2.2 Dependent variable

Scanning the landscape of regional offices at the EU level, multiple organizational forms of regional representation offices can be identified in Brussels: liaison offices, shared representations and offices representing all regions in a Member State. The first type is the ‘classical’ liaison office, which is considered as an individual representation office exclusively maintained by a single region in the EU (Rowe, 2011; Tatham, 2008). Examples are the *State Representation of Baden-Württemberg to the European Union* or the *Representation of the Copenhagen Capital Region to the European Union*. Another type of office that can be mapped in Brussels is a shared regional representation office. Shared in this context is considered as collectively sharing the infrastructure and costs of an office with a selection of other regions from the same Member State. Such an organizational form can be found for instance for some Swedish regions that run together the *Mid-Sweden Office* or five Polish regions coming together under the roof of the *East Poland House*. In the case of an office that is collectively maintained by all regions of a Member State, we speak of a national association (Donas & Beyers, 2012). For instance, all Irish regions are assembled together in the *Irish Regions Office* or all Finnish Regions maintain together the *Brussels Representation of the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities*. Mapping these different kinds of offices in Brussels, we need to take into account that regions also engage via multiple forms in Brussels. Therefore, for instance the Polish region Holy Cross Province maintains an individual Brussels office on its own and is simultaneously also involved via the *East Poland House*, same for the Swedish region of Skåne that has its own Brussels office and is also member of the *Brussels Representation of the Swedish Association of Local*

*Authorities and Regions*. This shows that the organizational characters of the offices are not mutually exclusive.

Next to these purely national and Member State-based types of representation offices, we can also identify offices of associations that represent various regions across Member State borders. These trans-regional associations unite various regions for the purpose of a certain goal or policy area. For instance, *Eurocities* unites major European cities and metropolitan areas throughout the EU, or the *Conference for Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)* brings together more than 160 coastal areas of the EU. Since we will focus on domestic political factors shaping the organizational form of regional representation offices, we will not take these trans-regional offices into consideration for this thesis. In addition, subnational actors of states that are not member of the EU also maintain offices in Brussels (e.g. *Oslo Region Office* or *Zürich EU Representation*). These representations will neither be taken into account.

In order to operationalize this variable, we take a region as unit of study and establish a measurable manner to capture the different, non-mutually exclusive organizational forms. For that reason, the main dependent variable  $Y_{main}$ : *organizational form* was split into three dependent variables that describe the different organizational characters – individual office ( $Y_1$ ), shared office ( $Y_2$ ) and national association ( $Y_3$ ). For the purpose of the feasibility of the quantitative study (logistic regression), these variables will be dichotomized as follows:

$Y_1$ : Individual office (1= individual office – 0= other organizational form)

$Y_2$ : Shared office (1= shared office – 0= other organizational form)

$Y_3$ : National association (1= national association – 0= other organizational form)

Each sub-variable will be included in standard and multilevel logistic regression models to examine the effect of the independent variables on each organizational form.<sup>7</sup> Since the categories applying to the organizational forms of the representation offices are not mutually exclusive, we cannot conduct a multinomial logistic regression analysis due to the fact that we would have to make a (mutually exclusive) distinct allocation of a region to one specific type of office. However, as seen before, some regions maintain their own office *and* are additionally also collectively engaged via a national association or shared representation office (e.g. Skåne). With a multinomial logistic regression, these multiple offices of a region would be ignored, which would have implications for the internal validity and reliability of this thesis. Therefore, binary logistic regression models are considered as an appropriate research method (Long, 1997; Shelley, 2008; Wolf & Best, 2010).

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<sup>7</sup> For further explanations, see methodology.

### 5.2.3 Independent variables

In the theoretical framework, the need to include factors of the organizations' environment in order to capture the "ultimate contours of organized interest populations" (Lowery & Gray, 1995:24) is based on the population ecology theory. Since we focus on the political factors, we need to find a way to operationalize these as determinants in the organizational environment of the regions seeking to represent their stakes via an office in Brussels. In this context, political factors are defined as the domestic political conditions and institutional capacities in their respective region. As political factors, we take the regions' authority competences, the presence of regionalist parties and the status of their respective Member State as EU15 or EU10 into account. We have derived these factors from the available literature, in which these factors are widely used in order to scrutinize a region's *room for manoeuvre* and discretion via regional engagement in Brussels (e.g. Nielsen & Salk, 1998; Rowe, 2011; Tatham, 2008). These factors account for the constraints and aspects in the organizational environment shaping the population of regional Brussels offices.

#### 5.2.3.1 Regional authority

Regional authority as "the capacity of a regional government to autonomously exercise authority over those who live in its territory" (Hooghe *et al.*, 2009:11) is linked to various issues and aspects in the domestic context of each region. Therefore, we took the Regional Authority Index (RAI) by Hooghe, Marks and Schakel (2010) into account, which "illustrates the scope and depth of the institutionalization [of regional tiers of authority, *SH*]" (Hepburn & Detterbeck, 2013:78). The usage of this index can be found in various empirical studies focusing on the role of subnational actors in the EU policy arena (e.g. Beyers *et al.*, 2015; Studinger, 2012). One advantage of the index is that it accounts for the different factors that need to be taken into consideration to evaluate the degree of self-governing authority. Therefore, it includes institutional depth, policy scope, fiscal authority, borrowing autonomy, representation, law making, executive control, fiscal control, borrowing control and constitutional reform into the overarching index, where these dimensions are combined (Hooghe & Schakel, 2016:554).<sup>8</sup> The index serves as an instrument to measure the authority of regional governments for 81 countries in the period between 1950 and 2010 on a range between 0 and 30. Although the most recent data is only available for 2010, we still include the index into the study, as there is no comparable alternative index accessible. Moreover, in the most cases, the assigned values for the degree of regional authority have not varied significantly in the period of ten years before 2010, as they remain stable to a large extent.

In other studies (e.g. Rodriguez-Pose & Courty, 2018), regional authority is 'measured' by the membership of a region in the *REGLEG* network of regions, which represents regions with legislative competences. However, we consider the Regional Authority Index (despite its data from 2010) as more appropriate, as it reflects the various dimensions contributing to regional authority and does not depend on the active decision of a region to become member of the informal *REGLEG* network.

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<sup>8</sup> For extended information, consult Schakel and Hooghe (2016).

### 5.2.3.2 Regionalist parties

As another political factor, we took the presence of regionalist parties into account, as we assume that they attempt to focus the regional political debate on more self-governing competences of the region, which also entails the representation of the region in supranational spheres of policy (Hepburn & Detterbeck, 2013). As seen in other studies focusing on the subnational dimension in the EU (e.g. Studinger, 2012; Tatham, 2010), a possible way to ‘measure’ the presence of regionalist parties can be realized in terms of party political divergences between regional and central governments. However, according to Donas and Beyers (2012:535), it is unlikely that a temporary limited coalition has an effect on the choice of a specific type of representation office. Therefore, we take the sheer presence of regionalist parties in the regions into account based on their assumed political motivation to foster self-governing competences and pushing the political agenda for “sub-state territorial empowerment [in order to, *SH*] represent and advance the particular interests of the sub-state territory” (Hepburn & Detterbeck, 2013:81). In order to operationalize this, we dichotomously coded if the region is home to a regionalist party (=1) or not (=0). Based on Donas and Beyers (2012) as well as Hepburn and Detterbeck (2013), we took a collection of regionalist parties in Europe by Massetti (2009), and the member parties of the European Free Alliance (EFA) in the European Parliament into account. This political party group represents parties with a regional focus (EFA, 2016). Also, we completed this with a list of regionalist parties by Massetti and Schakel (2016).<sup>9</sup> Taking these different sources for the presence of regionalist parties into consideration allowed us to account for the growing number of regionalist parties that have established themselves in the last decades (Hepburn & Detterbeck, 2013). Moreover, the EFA party group reflects the movement of regionalist parties to seek alliances at the European level. However, we have to be aware that also statewide national political parties in some cases promote regional interests and the protection of the regional identity via regional and local structures of the statewide national party (ibid.). These parties were however not taken into account since they do not correspond with the basis definition of regionalist parties we refer to. Moreover, we need to be aware that some included regionalist parties (e.g. *South Schleswig Voters’ Association* representing the Danish minority in Schleswig-Holstein) only represent particular minority groups within a region.<sup>10</sup>

### 5.2.3.3 New Member State

As a final step, we included the contextual political factor of belonging to the group of ‘old’ Member States (EU15) or to the one of the states that joined the EU with the Eastern admission round of 2004 (EU10), as we assume that belonging to the EU10 might affect the organizational form of a regional representation in Brussels due to limited resources and their relative ‘newness’ to the EU political system (Pitschel & Bauer, 2009; Tatham, 2014). Using this categorization, we need to keep in mind

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<sup>9</sup> The complete list of coded regionalist parties is included in Appendix II.

<sup>10</sup> Moreover, in the aftermath of the 2016 French regions reform, the regionalist parties corresponding to the former regions have been counted for the new established regions, e.g. regionalist party “Unser Land” representing the former French region *Alsace* has been counted for the new region *Grand Est*.

that the term of ‘EU10’ – although widely used – does not completely capture all new Member States anymore as Bulgaria and Romania joined in 2007 and Croatia in 2013. Nevertheless, in this study, we keep this categorization of EU10 as term for all new Member States that joined the EU since 2004. Based on their year of accession, we dichotomously coded the Member States as EU10 (when admission after 2004) (=1) and earlier than 2004 (EU15) (=0). Data for that categorization was retrieved from the Commission. This helped us to construct two groups of EU Member States. We consider this as an appropriate measure in contrast to include the admission years of the respective Member States. However, we need to bear in mind that the categorization of EU15 and EU10 is no clear-cut distinction between two homogenous groups since also within these groups the regions differ for instance in terms of economic performance. However, since we take this into account via the resources-related control variables, we use the dichotomous categorization of EU15 and EU10.

#### 5.2.3.4 Control variables

According to the population ecology theory, one major additional important factor in the organizational environment is available resources. To account for that, we included resources-related factors applying to the regions as control variables into our study. As resources-related factors, we therefore take the regions’ resource endowment as well as the financial allocations of the Structural Policy of the European Union into account.

Various statistical instruments can express the resource endowment of a region such as the total regional gross domestic product to account for “the monetary value of final goods and services, produced by a country in a given period of time” (Callen, 2017). To account for the wide range of regional GDP in the EU, we also included the regional GDP per capita, which expresses the regional GDP in relation to the population in the respective region (Von Weizäcker, 2017).<sup>11</sup>

In order to account for the amount of financial support received from the structural funds of the EU, we took the financial assignments of the multiannual budget of 2014 – 2020 into consideration. The data for the current amounts of the structural policy of the current financial framework can be found via the Commission. However, the data for the allocated financial support is only provided on Member State level.<sup>12</sup> We therefore use the amount of financial support per capita in the respective state.

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<sup>11</sup> Via Eurostat, GDP per capita (for NUTS-1/-2) is only available in PPS. Since GDP per capita for NUTS-3 regions had to be calculated by dividing the regional GDP by the population size on basis of data available only in Euro, the GDP per capita was therefore also calculated in the same way for NUTS-1 and -2 regions in order to have all data in Euro. Moreover, in some cases (Croatia, Finland, Hungary and Sweden) the most recent data for the regional GDP was solely available for 2015.

<sup>12</sup> Includes European Social Fund, European Regional Development Fund and Youth Employment Initiative.

### 5.3 Methodology

In the following, the choice of the applied research method will be outlined. Moreover, implications with regard to reliability and validity will be discussed.

#### 5.3.1 Applied research method

In order to examine the effects of the chosen independent variables on the different organizational character of regional representation offices in Brussels, logistic regressions were performed. Since the dependent variables are dichotomized, the (binary) logistic regression method of analysis is considered as an effective model to scrutinize possible relationships between the organizational form and the political factors of the organizational environment of the regions (Shelley, 2008). For each dependent variable (each representing a distinct office type), binary logistic regression models were performed. This approach helped us to estimate the coefficients that allow making statements about the probability of a region to adapt to a specific organizational form with regard to a specific independent variable (Wolf & Best, 2010; Field, 2013).

Since the dependent variable is dichotomized for the analysis, we have to consider the implications this method of analysis entails. For applying an ordinary least squares (OLS) method to analyze the data (e.g. via a multiple linear regression), the residuals would have to follow a normal distribution. Moreover, the dependent variable must follow a constant variance over all values of the independent variables (Shelley, 2008). These assumptions are met in a linear regression model with a continuous dependent variable. However, since the dependent variables in our analysis are dichotomous and can thus only take on two values (0,1), for instance, the assumptions of a normal distribution and a constant error variance are not realistic for the models. It is therefore not appropriate to apply a least square method in order to interpret the findings (ibid.). Hence, the logistic regressions offer an effective approach to analyze the data with a dichotomous dependent variable. To be able to interpret the findings of the data analysis, we make use of the logits of the odds of the dependent variable. Based on that, we refer to the formula below. By using the logits of the model, it is possible to include a formula that is similar to one of a linear regression. The odds ratio ( $\exp(B)$ ) of the regression coefficients then show us the strength of the impact of the independent variable on the dependent one since the odds ratio express the predicted change in odds of the dependent variable for a one-unit change of the independent variable (Field, 2013; Schäfer, 2012; Shelley, 2008).

$$P(Y=1) = \frac{1}{1+e^{-z}}$$

$$z = \ln(odds) = \ln\left\{\frac{P(Y = 1)}{1 - P(Y = 1)}\right\} = \text{logits} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \dots + \beta_n X_n + \epsilon$$

Z = latent variable for logistic regression (for  $e^{-z}$ )

$\beta_0$  = constant (if all other independent variables are 0)

$\beta_1$  = regression coefficient of logit  $X_1$

$X_1$  = independent variable 1

$\epsilon$  = error term

Example

$P(\text{individual office} = 1) =$

$$\frac{1}{1 + e^{-(\beta_0 + \beta_1 * GDP_{regional} + \beta_2 * GDP_{capital} + \beta_3 * structural_{funds} + \beta_4 * regional_{auth} + \beta_5 * regional_{party} + \beta_6 * member_{state} + \epsilon)}}$$

For interpretation:

$$\text{odds ratio} = e^{\beta_n} = \exp(B)$$

$\exp(B) > 1 \rightarrow P(Y=1)$  increases

$\exp(B) = 1 \rightarrow P(Y=1)$  remains the same

$\exp(B) < 1 \rightarrow P(Y=1)$  decreases

### 5.3.2 Reliability

In order to test hypotheses and make a contribution to the scientific discourse about regional representation offices, the reliability of the data analysis is a crucial criterion for the quality of our findings. Firstly, to ensure reliability and objectivity, the used data must be from trustworthy and transparent sources. Therefore, for this thesis, we fall back on data from official sources of the EU institutions (Eurostat, Commission, CoR), scientifically reliable and widely used measurements such as the Regional Authority Index, as well as the inclusion of the most recent available data. The paragraphs before indicate how these data are operationalized for the research purpose. Moreover, with regard to reliability of the research method, we have chosen for an analysis method that fits the collected data in order to perform an appropriate and effective data analysis (logistic regression). In order to analyze the findings, we make use of different statistical instruments (e.g. -2 log-likelihood/deviance, Nagelkerke's Pseudo- $R^2$ ) to assess, whether the model has an appropriate degree of goodness of fit to reliably explain the observed variance (Field, 2013).



### 5.3.3 Validity

Together with reliability, internal and external validity are also a crucial quality criterion for this thesis. In order to ensure internal validity, we follow the four hurdles by Kellstedt and Whitten (2013:83f.). A plausible and proceeding relationship between the chosen explanatory variables and our dependent variable is based on the literature review and the arguments formulated in the theoretical framework. In those paragraphs, the frequent and widespread use of the explanatory variables throughout the literature is shown and conceptualized in the population ecology theory. With regard to the third hurdle of examining a potential co-variation between an independent variable and the dependent variable, we make use of statistical instruments. Therefore, we use the  $p$ -value in order to evaluate if an independent variable has a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable (Field, 2013; Long, 1997). Finally, to take the fourth hurdle about potential confounding factors into account, which might have an impact on the dependent variable, we control for resources-related factors in our analysis. This enables us to scrutinize whether the impact of our explanatory variables on the organizational form of the regional representation offices is exclusive or partially also caused by other factors we need to control for (Kellstedt & Whitten, 2013).

However, it is essential to reflect on the fact that a cross-sectional study design assesses a potential relationship between the variables to a single point of time. Therefore, a proceeding relationship between X and Y is hard to demonstrate. Moreover, without a temporal dimension, there is no evidence for a causal relationship if we assess co-variation between an explanatory variable and the outcome. The co-variation must then be theoretically contextualized. Implications related to the measurement of the independent variables can be found in the previous paragraphs. Due to the use of secondary data, we have to rely on the reliability and validity of the sources we use. Based on this, we are not able to control for the accuracy conditions during the initial collection process of the secondary data (Carlson & Morrison, 2009).

Concerning the validity of the thesis, we need to reflect on a potential selection bias during the collection process of the sample. Since we take the official list of registered regional representation offices of the CoR as a basis for the definition of our sample, we consider this as a way to take an objective list of an EU institution. However, due to the abovementioned selection criteria applying to the regions, we excluded some EU Member States and their respective regions from our study (quota sample). This exclusion of some countries might have implications for the findings and their interpretation. For instance, regarding the independent variable ‘New Member State’, we excluded some states of the EU10. This limits the group size of the regions of the EU10, which might have implications for the reliability of the results for this variable. Moreover, for the control variable of financial support based on structural funds allocated to regions, the sample does not include EU Member States that are heavily depending on structural funds (e.g. Cyprus, Lithuania). In order to account for this, during the formulation of conclusions based on our findings, we need to be aware that the results are based on the selection of regions, which correspond with the given criteria. With regard

to external validity, we also need to take this into consideration when we aim to draw conclusions about a broader population of regions based on our results. Moreover, it is necessary to ponder upon the fact that due to the selection process, some Member States are fully included, whereas others are not. If each region in the respective Member State maintains an office (e.g. Germany), or all regions are represented collectively by a national association (e.g. Finland), then the state is fully represented in the sample. In contrast to that, in some states not every region has an office in Brussels and the regions are not collectively represented either (e.g. Croatia, Hungary); therefore these states are not fully represented in the sample. The estimations are consequently based on the data of the included regions. Consequently, the asymmetric distribution might have implications for the interpretation of the results as the weight of some states in the sample is higher compared to others since all regions of a state have been included.

We consider a sample, which entails 193 regions throughout the EU, as a sufficient threshold for a quantitative study (within the scope of this thesis) in order to draw appropriate conclusions on a broader population of subnational entities in the EU.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, the hypotheses in our study are based on theoretical frameworks that have been applied in similar ways in the literature. To assess external validity, we need to take the abovementioned implications into account. Furthermore, as our sample includes regions within their domestic context in the EU policy system, our conclusions about a broader population are limited to EU regions. Thus, we cannot draw conclusions about regions maintaining offices in other policy systems (e.g. State representations in Washington, DC).

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<sup>13</sup> According to Field (2013), it is essential for a logistic regression to have large sample sizes since the regression method is based on maximum likelihoods to an outcome occurring. However, we need to be aware that the number of regions with an office is finite.

## 6. Results

In the following sections, the results of the performed logistic regressions will be presented. Before the results for each dependent variable will be discussed, some descriptive statistics will be presented.

### 6.1 Descriptive statistics

The following sections provide closer insights into the distribution of the data.

#### 6.1.1 Multiple organizational characters

The thesis concentrates on the different types of regional representation offices that can be mapped in Brussels. In our data, we have included 193 European regions that are represented via any form of regional representation office (Table 3). Our data shows that 124 regions maintain an individual office in Brussels (64.2%<sup>14</sup>), another 54 regions are engaged via a shared office (27.9%), and 48 regions in the data set are engaged via a national association (24.9%).

Table 3  
*Sample distribution of office types*

Type of office	Total number of regions	Percentage of N=193
Individual office	124	64.2
Shared office	54	27.9
National association	48	24.9

As explained before, the types of office a region runs are not mutually exclusive, meaning that some regions have multiple organizational forms in Brussels. Besides their individual office in Brussels, five regions<sup>15</sup> are simultaneously engaged in a shared office. These five regions represent four per cent of the total amount of regions with an individual office. Based on that, we can argue that it is rather rare to be engaged in a shared office while also maintaining an individual representation office. With regard to maintaining an individual office and being engaged in a national association, we can see that eight regions<sup>16</sup> with an individual office are also member of a national association (6.5 per cent of all regions with an individual office). We can as well conclude that it is also rather rare that a region maintains an individual representative office and is simultaneously engaged in a national association. In our data set, 20 regions<sup>17</sup> with a shared office are also part of a national association. This number represents 37 per cent of the total amount of regions with the characteristic of being

<sup>14</sup> Percentage of N=193.

<sup>15</sup> Subcarthia, Lublin, Warmina Masuria, Podlaskie and Holy Cross Province (all Poland).

<sup>16</sup> Uusimaa-Helsinki, Pirkanmaa, Southwest Finland (all Finland), Skåne, Ostergötland, Vamland, Stockholm and Vastra Gottland (all Sweden).

<sup>17</sup> South Ostrobothnia, Central Finland, Ostrobothnia, Satakunta, Central Ostrobothnia, Kainuu, Lapland, North Karelia, North Ostrobothnia, North Savo, South Savo (all Finland), Jamtland, Vasternorrland, Norrbotten, Vasterbotten, Blenkinge, Halland, Kalmar, Jonkoping and Kronoberg (all Sweden).

member of a shared office. According to this, we can conclude that some regions with a shared office are also simultaneously engaged in a national association. However, with regard to the regions that fulfill to this characteristic of having multiple types of representation offices, we need to take into account that these regions all are from Poland (for association individual – shared office), from Finland and Sweden (for associations individual – shared; shared – national association). Following from that, we can conclude that the fact of maintaining more than one type of regional representation office in Brussels is limited in our data to these abovementioned Member States. A potential explanation for running multiple types of offices by the regions of these states might be found in country-specific historical and institutional aspects that might have had an influence on the decisions of some regions to maintain multiple forms of offices. However, the available literature does not provide general insights on this and focuses on specific national factors (e.g. Gorzelak & Tucholska, 2010; Lidström, 2010).

#### 6.1.2 Country-wise distribution of data

In the previous paragraph, we have seen the total distribution of office types across the data set. In order to get more insights into the distribution of the offices' organizational characters, we focus now on the distribution within the Member States. As illustrated in figure 6, we can see that there is no general pattern of office types across the study-relevant Member States. In some countries one type of regional representation office is predominant. For instance, in Austria, Belgium, or Spain, all respective regions are maintaining individual offices in Brussels; we cannot find any regions being engaged in shared office or national association. Moreover, in the Netherlands, all regions are maintaining only shared regional representation offices, and in Ireland, all regions are collectively maintaining only a national association. In other Member States we can find two types of regional offices. For instance in Croatia, Germany, Hungary or Poland, the relevant regions either have individual representation offices, are engaged in shared offices or both (Poland), however we cannot find any regions that are represented via a national association. In Finland and Sweden, we identify all three types of offices. In those states, regions are represented via individual representations, shared offices and collectively via a national association. As seen in the previous paragraph, for those Member States, the organizational forms of their representation offices are not mutually exclusive since some regions are represented via an individual office *and* also via a shared office or a national association.

Based on this distribution, we can see that there is no uniform manner of regional representation offices in the respective EU Member States. To fully understand, why in some states one organizational form of office is dominant, whereas in other states multiple types of offices are run in Brussels, we would need to include the specific historical and institutional aspects as well developments of each Member State that have contributed to the manner of regional representation in Brussels. Since this thesis is based on cross-sectional differences and does not take a development over time into account, we do not focus on the country-specific developments. However, it is still

interesting to evaluate, whether domestic political factors, which will be taken into account in a later stage, serve to understand the presence of different types of offices of regional representation offices better.

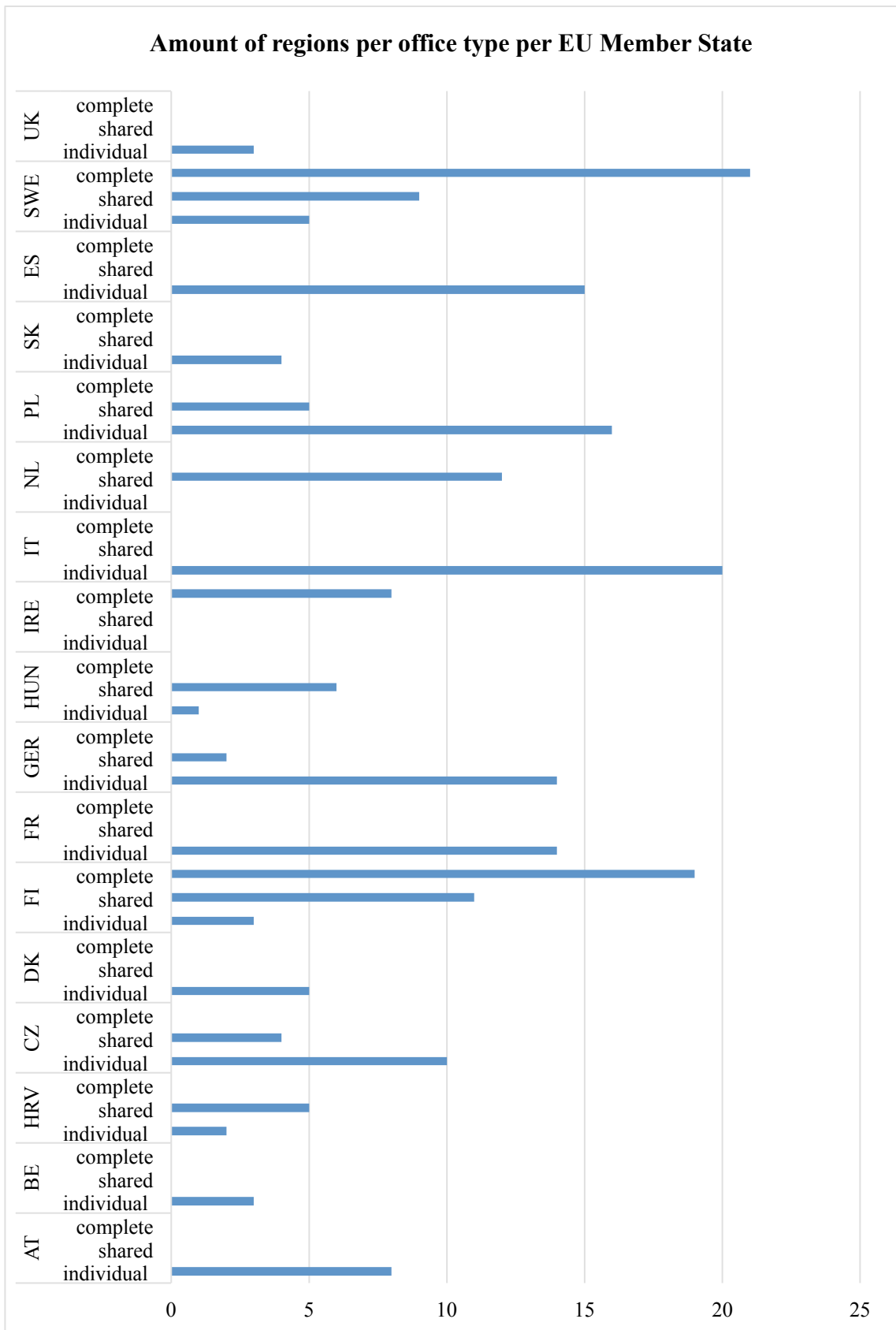


Figure 6. Office types per Member State.

### 6.1.3 Independent variables

In the following section, we will take a closer look into the distribution of the data for the explanatory variables. The data can be found in tables 4/5 and the relevant figures in Appendix IV.

#### 6.1.3.1 Regional authority

In order to account for the level of regional authority of a region, we use the RAI by Schakel and Hooghe (2010, 2016). This index is based on different dimensions of regional authority and assigns values between 0 and 30 to regional levels of government.<sup>18</sup> In our data, the values of the RAI range between 3.0 for the Irish regions (lower whisker) and 27.0 for the German *Bundesländer* (upper whisker). The general mean is 13.622 and the median is 12.0. 50 per cent of the observations are spread between 8.0 and 18.0. Since the distances between the median and the ends of both whiskers are not similar, the data is skewed (Field, 2018:192f.). There is more variation in the upper quartile than in the lower one. As we also use the distinction between EU15 and EU10 as independent variable, it is interesting to see how the observations for regional authority is spread taking this distinction into consideration.<sup>19</sup> It becomes visible that the data is much more varied for regions from the EU15 than for regions from the newer Member States (EU10). Whereas the observations for regions from the EU15 range between 3.0 and 27.0 (17.5 as median), the data for regions from the EU10 is spread only between 8.0 (for regions of Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) and 9.0 (for regions of Croatia and the Czech Republic), with a median of 8.0. This means that the regional levels in the group of states of the EU15 are spread on a wider range of regional authority. For instance, it includes the purely federal states Austria, Belgium and Germany with very strong regional levels, but also for example France or Sweden with moderate levels of regional authority. In contrast to the regional levels of the EU10, in which the regional levels do not spread over a wide range. We can see that the regional levels in these Member States are generally weaker. This observation fits to the findings in the literature that, as regional levels of government in the Eastern Member States were only introduced incrementally after the end of the communist rule, they are not as strong as those in the majority of Western Member States.

Based on the differences between the levels of regional authority in regions with and without a regionalist party, it becomes visible that regions that harbor a regionalist party are often also regions with higher levels of regional authority, as the median of regional authority for the group of regions with regionalist parties is 19.0, whereas the median for the group of regions without regionalist parties is 9.5. Hence, we can conclude that regional parties are in the most cases found in regions that have a higher level of regional authority at their disposal.<sup>20</sup> We could explain this by taking into account that these regions might be more able to determine their own strategy and objectives due to their policy

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<sup>18</sup> For further information, see research design.

<sup>19</sup> There is a moderate to strong negative correlation between these two variables:  $r = -.419$  ( $p < .001$ ), Pearson via point-biserial.

<sup>20</sup> There is a moderate positive correlation between these two variables:  $r = .345$  ( $p < .001$ ), Pearson via point-biserial.

competences. This might give room to regionalist parties to demand for a more region-focused use of the policy competences (Masseti, 2009; Hepburn & Detterbeck, 2013).

In order to get a better insight into the distribution of the data, it is also relevant to take a closer look into the observations on a Member State level. In some states, every region has the same level of regional authority. For instance in Austria, Poland or Sweden, every region has an equal extent of regional authority. However, in other Member States that were taken into account for this thesis, regions have different levels of regional authority. For instance, the Island of Åland (Finland) was assigned a value of 25.0 to account for the *room for manoeuvre* in terms of self-governance, whereas the other Finish regions are assigned the value of 6.0 for their regional authority<sup>21</sup>. These divergent values for some regions within a Member State could be seen as concession of the respective central government to account to cultural or geographical divergence with the main territory of the state (Swenden, 2013). However, in most cases, all regional levels of one Member State have the same level of regional authority at their disposal. Different levels within one state are rather an exception.

#### 6.1.3.2 Regionalist parties

To be able to later understand the potential impact of the presence of regionalist parties on the type of office a region maintains in Brussels, the sheer presence of those parties has been coded as 1 if the region is a home to a regionalist party, and 0 if not. In our data, there is an asymmetrical relationship between regions with and without regionalist parties: 152 regions (78.8% of N=193) were coded without a regionalist party, and 41 regions (21.2%) with such parties. Therefore more than three quarters of the sample regions do not harbor a regionalist party. One reason for this asymmetric relationship could be that only regionalist parties were coded and not regional branches of statewide parties, which could also aim for more regional policy competences. Within our sample, almost every Member State has at least one region that is home to a regionalist party except for Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Slovakia and the UK. The most regions with regionalist parties were found in Italy (13) and in Spain (9).

Following the EU10 and EU15 categorization, we find more regions without regionalist parties: 4 (out of 48) regions from the EU10 and 37 (out of 145) regions from the EU15 harbor regionalist parties in the sample.<sup>22</sup> We could explain this by taking into account that the EU15 entails large states with a high population of regionalist parties as found in plurinational states such as Italy and Spain.

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<sup>21</sup> The region of Kainuu was assigned a value of 7.

<sup>22</sup> We find a small negative correlation between ‘New Member State’ and ‘regionalist party’:  $r = -.182$  ( $p < .05$ ), Pearson via point-biserial.



### 6.1.3.3 New Member State

In order to group the regions according to their Member States status as EU15, or as EU10, we have coded a region belonging to the EU10 with 1, and a region belonging to the EU15 with 0. After this distinction, we can also see an asymmetric relationship in the sample: 48 regions (24.9% of N=193) were therefore found as belonging to the EU10, whereas 145 regions (75.1%) were identified for the EU15. We can explain this asymmetry by taking into account that regional levels of government were only incrementally established in the EU10 that have been included in the sample and therefore not every region runs a representation in Brussels. Moreover, some of the included Member States of the EU15 are large countries like France, Spain, Germany, Italy, Finland or Sweden. These states have high number of regions due to their large size.

Table 4  
Operationalization of the independent variables, N=193

<b>Independent variable</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Operationalization</b>
Regional authority	3.0	27.0	13.622	12.0	7.143	Regional Authority Index, Schakel & Hooghe, 2016, data from 2010
Regionalist party	0	1	0.21	-	-	Dichotomous, presence of regionalist party (1=yes, 0=no), EFA (2018); Massetti (2009); Schakel & Massetti (2016)
New Member State	0	1	0.25	-	-	Dichotomous, EU10=1, EU15=0, European Commission (2016)
Absolute resources	446,000,000	680,717,000,000	63,866,170,984.46	21,628,000,000	107,095,722,635.158	Regional GDP (€), Eurostat (2016)
Absolute resources (natlog)	6.10	13.43	5.976	9.982	1.457	Regional GDP (natural log)
Resources per capita	5,908	66,245	28,634.59	30,043.0	13,434.873	Regional GDP per capita (€), Eurostat (2016), own calculation
Structural funds per capita	60	2,527	732.52	239.0	805.258	Amount of allocated support to a Member State per capita (€), European Commission (2014), own calculations
Structural funds per capita (natlog)	4.09	7.83	5.976	5.477	1.127	Amount of allocated support to a Member State per capita (natural log)

Table 5  
Frequencies of nominal independent variables, N=193

<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No regionalist party	152	78.8
Regionalist party	41	21.2
EU15	145	75.1
EU10	48	24.9

## 6.2 Explanatory analysis

After having discussed the descriptive statistics in the previous sections, we will now focus on the logistic regression models in order to test the formulated hypotheses per dependent variable. For each dependent variable, standard and multilevel logistic regression models were performed in SPSS and STATA.

In the first stage, the data is analyzed neglecting a potential nesting of the data at Member State level (standard multivariate models). At first, only the political factors are entered into the logistic regression analysis. In a second step, control variables (resources-related factors) are added. Due to this procedure, we are able to evaluate whether the political factors also have a significant effect when additional factors are added, and how the model fit changes by the inclusion of additional factors. During the model building process in this two-step approach, we have identified problems with inflated odds ratios and large standard errors. This might be linked to strong correlations between the explanatory variable ‘New Member State’ and the resources-related control variables.<sup>23</sup> Since these correlations might constrain the reliability of the results, we exclude ‘New Member State’ in model 3; for transparency reasons, model 2 is still reported in the tables. However, as a consequence, an interpretation based on model 3 does not allow us to scrutinize if our hypothesis for this variable is supported by the results.

As we use data from regions, we have to acknowledge that the regional dimension cannot be scrutinized without taking their Member State context into account since our data might be clustered per national context. With that, we might violate the assumption of independence of observations and the estimation parameters might be inefficient, leading to spurious significance effects (Maas & Hox, 2004). In the second stage, we therefore also control for potential clustering at Member State level in model 4 (multilevel binary logistic regression with country-clustered standard errors). This model will constitute the basis for the discussion of the results.

### 6.2.1 Individual office

The logistic regression was conducted according to the abovementioned approach with a sample size of N=192 (Table 6).<sup>24</sup> Without the inclusion of any explanatory variables, the model would predict 64.6 per cent of the cases correctly. Moreover, it has a deviance (-2LL) of 249.595. We take the deviance (-2 log likelihood) as an indicator for the model fit, as it shows how much unexplained information is left due to the model (Long, 1997, Sieben & Linssen, 2009). After the inclusion of the explanatory variables in model 1, we can see that the model would now predict 72.4 per cent of the cases correctly. Moreover, the deviance has reduced to 200.535 (AIC: 1.09)<sup>25</sup>. According to Nagelkerke’s  $R^2$  ( $R^2=.310$ ), the model can explain 31 per cent of the variance. When taking a look at

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<sup>23</sup> For correlation coefficients, see Appendix V.

<sup>24</sup> For assumptions testing and outliers, see Appendix VI. Case 72 (Schleswig-Holstein) was excluded due to high studentized residuals (-12.085), therefore N=192.

<sup>25</sup> Akaike’s Information Criterion (AIC): Indicator for the goodness-of-fit for comparing models, including the amount of predictors and the sample size, for which a smaller value represents a better fit (Long, 1997).

the explanatory variables, it becomes visible that all three variables are significant ( $p < .05$ ). In the second step, the resources-related control variables are added. Compared with the first model, the inclusion of the additional control variables has improved the fitting of model 2 and 3, as the deviance and AIC have become smaller, what can be interpreted as a better fit (Field, 2013). With regard to reliability, it would however not be appropriate to interpret model 2 due to the identified strong correlations between ‘New Member State’ and the control variables that might affect the results. In order to make a reliable interpretation possible, we have excluded ‘New Member State’ in model 3.

Based on model 1, the political factors have a significant effect on individual offices. Taking a look on the variables in model 3, we can see that the political factors from the first model are still significant ( $p < .05$ ), even though their level of significance has slightly reduced.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, ‘GDP regional’ as well as ‘Structural funds per capita’ are also significant ( $p < .001$ ). Taking potential clustering per Member State not into account would lead to the result that increases of regional authority, the presence of regionalist parties, as well as the regional GDP and the amount of funds per capita are significant factors that increase the likelihood that a region maintains an individual representation office in Brussels.<sup>27</sup> As explained before, we can however not ignore the clustered structure of the data. Therefore, when controlling for contextual variation at Member State level, we see that regional authority and the funds per capita are becoming non-significant factors, whereas the presence of regionalist parties and the regional GDP remain significant, and GDP per capita becomes significant. Based on these differences, we consider the results of the standard multivariate models without controlling for clustering as rather less robust.

We use the odds ratio ( $\exp(B)$ ) of the respective variables to draw conclusions about the strength of the impact on the dependent variable, as the odds ratio express the predicted change in odds of the dependent variable for a one-unit change of the independent variable (holding all other variables constant in order to examine the effect of each predictor individually) (Long, 1997). The odds of a region with a regionalist party to maintain an individual office are 28.580 times higher compared to regions without regionalist parties. For an increase in regional GDP of a 2.72-fold<sup>28</sup> change, the odds for a region to maintain an individual office are increasing by a factor of 24.779. Moreover, for an €1000 increase in GDP per capita, the odds for a region to run an individual office are decreasing by 14.7 per cent.

With regard to our formulated hypotheses, when performing a multilevel analysis, we do not find support for our first hypothesis. The second hypothesis that regions, which are home to a regionalist party, are more likely to maintain an individual office, is supported by the results, as the presence of a regionalist party in a region is positively related to an increase of the odds to maintain an individual

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<sup>26</sup> We controlled for potential too high correlations between ‘regional authority’ and ‘regionalist party’ respectively with the control variables, see Appendix V.

<sup>27</sup> Model 3 was also tested without the exclusion of case 72 (Appendix VI). Hereby, regional authority and regionalist party would become non-significant. We consider this as a potential undue influence of the unusual studentized residual of case 72.

<sup>28</sup> We need to take a 2.72-fold change (Euler’s number) instead of a one-unit change since this control variable is natural log transformed.

office. Moreover, we see that the resources-related control factors of the regional GDP and GDP per capita are also significant determinants in the organizational environment of a region with regard to running an individual office in Brussels.

Table 6  
Results individual office

Model	Binary logistic regressions								Multilevel binary logistic regression							
	1				2				3				4			
	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)	B	S.E. <sup>29</sup>	Sig.	Exp(B)
<b>Regional authority</b>	.127	.030	.000	1.135	.100	.049	.040	1.105	.086	.042	.040	1.090	.175	.139	.207	1.119
<b>Regionalist party (1)</b>	2.338	.763	.002	10.359	2.214	1.129	.050	9.155	2.372	1.053	.024	10.717	3.353	1.145	.003	28.580
<b>New Member State (1)</b>	1.226	.405	.002	3.406	-4.416	1.852	.017	.012								
<b>GDP regional (nat log)</b>					1.984	.355	.000	7.271	1.725	.286	.000	5.613	3.210	.899	.000	24.779
<b>GDP per capita</b>					-.085	.033	.011	.919	-.052	.028	.061	.949	-.159	.064	.013	.853
<b>Structural funds per capita (nat log)</b>					2.380	.669	.000	10.806	1.066	.316	.001	2.903	1.139	1.147	.321	3.121
<b>Constant</b>	-1.619	.453	.000	.198	-30.305	5.545	.000	.000	-22.339	3.706	.000	.000	-33.373	11.740	.004	.000
-2 log likelihood	200.53				110.99				118.54				41.813			
AIC	1.09				.650				.680				-			
Nagelkerke's $R^2$	.310				.707				.680				-			
Correctly predicted	72.4				86.5				85.9				-			

Dependent variable: individual office, N=192

<sup>29</sup> Clustered robust standard errors.

### 6.2.2 Shared office

The analysis has been conducted according to the abovementioned approach (Table 7).<sup>30</sup> The baseline model has a deviance of 226.425 and would already predict 72.4 per cent of the cases correctly. Due to the inclusion of the explanatory variables, the fitting of the model improves. However, the model would still predict 72.4 per cent of the cases correctly and 18.9 per cent of the variance could be explained (Nagelkerke's  $R^2=.189$ ). Based on that, the model might be considered as a poor fit, as the predictive power has not improved due to the inclusion of our explanatory variables (Field, 2013).

In model 1, we see that 'Regional authority' and 'New Member State' would not be significant predictors ( $p_{RA}=.234$ ;  $p_{NMS}=.235$ ), while 'Regionalist party' is significant ( $p<.05$ ). With the inclusion of the control variables (model 2 and 3), the goodness of fit of the model improves substantially. However in model 2, we can see a potential consequence of the strong correlations since the variable 'New Member State' became highly significant and the odds ratio is highly inflated. This might be an indicator for unreliable results due to the strong correlations. According to the substantial contribution of the control variables in terms of goodness of fit, we can already draw the conclusion that the political factors as explanatory variables would not be sufficient alone, to reliably predict if a region is more likely to be engaged in a shared office or not.

Not controlling for clustering per Member State (model 3) would lead to the result that the presence of regionalist parties as well as the regional GDP and the amount of funds per capita are significant predictors with regard to a region being engaged in a shared office. However, if we take the state dimension as clustered structure of the data into account, we see that the results change substantially. Only the regional GDP remains as a significant predictor, whereas all other predictors become non-significant. This leads to the conclusion that the data of the standard multivariate models without controlling for nesting are not robust. We therefore base the interpretation of the results on model 4. We can see there that for a 2.72-fold increase of regional GDP, the odds of a region for being engaged in a shared office are decreasing by 67.6 per cent. Based on this, we do not find support for any of our hypothesized relationships, as the results suggest that the political factors are non-significant predictors.

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<sup>30</sup> For assumptions testing, see Appendix VI.

Table 7  
Results shared office

Model	Binary logistic regressions								Multilevel binary logistic regression							
	1				2				3				4			
	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)	B	S.E. <sup>31</sup>	Sig.	Exp(B)
<b>Regional authority</b>	-.033	.028	.234	.967	.005	.041	.909	1.005	.000	.034	.998	1.000	-.045	.077	.559	.955
<b>Regionalist party (1)</b>	-2.052	.759	.007	.128	-1.434	.936	.126	.238	-1.708	.823	.038	.181	-1.289	1.142	.259	0.315
<b>New Member State (1)</b>	.461	.388	.235	1.586	5.746	1.478	.000	312.801								
<b>GDP regional (nat log)</b>					-1.058	.232	.000	.347	-.864	.190	.000	.421	-1.128	.205	.000	.324
<b>GDP per capita</b>					-.005	.031	.881	.995	-.038	.029	.181	.962	-.010	.037	.795	.990
<b>Structural funds per capita (nat log)</b>					-2.515	.570	.000	.081	-.797	.309	.010	.451	-.556	.647	.390	.573
<b>Constant</b>	-.396	.427	.353	.673	22.701	4.404	.000	7223074847	13.495	3.131	.000	726078.840	13.721	5.484	.012	909746.3
-2 log likelihood	206.769				150.875				172.443				77.437			
AIC	1.11				.850				.960				-			
Nagelkerke's $R^2$	.155				.478				.365				-			
Correctly predicted	72.0				80.8				77.2				-			

Dependent variable: shared office, N=193

<sup>31</sup> Clustered robust standard errors.



### 6.2.3 National associations

In the baseline model without the inclusion of any explanatory variables, the model has a deviance of 213.712 and would be able to correctly predict 75.5 per cent of the cases.<sup>32</sup> With that, the model can already correctly predict more than three quarters of the cases just by taking the intercept into account. This might be an indicator for a too deterministic model fit (Table 8).

With the inclusion of the explanatory variables, the deviance reduces to 101.225 (AIC: .620). Moreover, according to Nagelkerke's  $R^2$  ( $R^2=.66$ ), the model can explain 66 per cent of the variance, and is able to correctly predict 80.2 per cent of the cases. Taking a look into model 1, we would identify regional authority and the presence of regionalist parties as significant predictors ( $p<.05$ ). The status of being a new Member State would be a non-significant predictor ( $p=.997$ ). With the inclusion of the control variables, the model fits improve further (see model 2 and 3).<sup>33</sup> Not controlling for nested data according to the state level would lead to the result that regional authority as well as the regional GDP and the GDP per capita are significant predictors for a region being engaged in a national association, whereas the presence of regionalist parties<sup>34</sup> as well as the amount of funds per capita would not be significant predictors.<sup>35</sup> When taking a clustering at the Member State level into account, we can see that our results do not change substantially, as regional authority, regional GDP and GDP per capita remain significant predictors. Based on this, we consider the data of the standard multivariate models as rather robust.

For a one-unit increase of regional authority, the odds of for a region to be engaged in national associations are decreasing by 38.2 per cent. Moreover, for a 2.72-fold increase in regional GDP, the odds decrease by 94.9 per cent. For an increase by €1,000 in GDP per capita, the chance of a region to be engaged in a national association are increasing by 38.7 per cent. Based on this, we can conclude that we find support for our first hypothesis, as we can find a negative relationship between an increase in regional authority and the likelihood of a region being engaged in a national association. Furthermore, we acknowledge that the regional GDP and GDP per capita are also significant predictors.

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<sup>32</sup> For assumptions testing, see Appendix VI. Case 37 (Copenhagen) was excluded due to unusual high studentized residuals (-8.318) and a Cook's distance clearly above 1, leading to N=192.

<sup>33</sup> For 'New Member State' in model 1 and 2, we can see large standard errors, this might be an indicator for complete separation of the variable (Field, 2018), what also constrains the reliable interpretation of the variable.

<sup>34</sup> We controlled for potential high correlations between 'regionalist parties' and the control variables. Those were not found, see Appendix V. However, we have to be cautious with the interpretation of this explanatory variable, as all regions being part of a national association belong to only three Member States and do not harbor any regionalist parties (with exception of Åland). Due to this, there might be a lack of variance that might lead to a non-significant predictor (Schäfer, 2012).

<sup>35</sup> Model 3 was also tested with N=193: the significance levels of the explanatory variables remain stable (see Appendix VI).

Table 8  
Results national associations

Model	Binary logistic regressions								Multilevel binary logistic regression							
	1				2				3				4			
	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)	B	S.E. <sup>36</sup>	Sig.	Exp(B)
<b>Regional authority</b>	-.280	.051	.000	.756	-.685	.293	.019	.504	-.481	.116	.000	.618	-.481	.179	.007	.618
<b>Regionalist party (1)</b>	-1.715	.833	.039	.180	-1.471	1.584	.353	.230	-.627	1.600	.695	.534	-.627	2.289	.784	.534
<b>New Member State (1)</b>	-22.006	5752.598	.997	.000	-29.683	4694.024	.000	.995								
<b>GDP regional (nat log)</b>					-3.043	.815	.000	.048	-2.973	.701	.000	.051	-2.973	.470	.000	.051
<b>GDP per capita</b>					.320	.102	.002	1.376	.328	.077	.000	1.388	.328	.055	.000	1.388
<b>Structural funds per capita (nat log)</b>					3.332	1.865	.074	27.988	-.882	.539	.101	.414	-.882	.790	.264	.414
<b>Constant</b>	3.243	.640	.000	25.617	9.185	8.227	.264	9748.723	27.011	6.902	.000	5.382E+11	27.011	7.173	.000	5.38E+11
-2 log likelihood	102.771				27.262				45.212				22.606			
AIC	.580				.210				.300				-			
Nagelkerke's $R^2$	.660				.927				.872				-			
Correctly predicted	80.2				96.9				95.8				-			

Dependent variable: national associations, N=192

<sup>36</sup> Clustered robust standard errors.

## 7. Discussion of the findings:

### Explaining variance across different types of regional representation offices

In the following chapter, the results of the logistic regressions will be discussed per explanatory variable. By doing so, the chapter aims at providing possible explanations for the variance across different organizational characters of the regional representation offices. The aim of the research has been to scrutinize how domestic political factors shape the organizational character of the regions' Brussels offices. Therefore, these factors were tested per type of office, using standard multivariate and multilevel logistic regression models. In general, we can conclude that political factors are only partially able to shape the organizational character of an office, however, the findings also suggest taking resources-related factors into account in order to fully capture the determinants in the organizational environment of the regions (see Table 9).

Table 9  
*Effect directions of the explanatory variables*

	<b>Individual office</b>	<b>Shared office</b>	<b>National associations</b>
<b>Regional authority</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	-
<b>Regionalist party (1)</b>	+	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<i>New Member State (1)</i>			
<b>GDP regional</b>	+	-	-
<b>GDP per capita</b>	-	<b>0</b>	+
<b>Funds per capita</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

#### 7.1 Regional authority

As suggested by the findings, the level of regional authority of a region is solely a statistically significant predictor for a region being engaged in a national association. Hereby, we find that an increase of the level of regional authority decreases the chance that a region is part of a national association. As further suggested by the findings, we do not find a significant relationship between regional authority and individual offices and shared offices respectively. Therefore, we find support for the first hypothesis only with regard to national associations. Based on this we can conclude that stronger regions are less likely to be engaged in a regional office, where all regions of a state are represented collectively.

Results of previous studies (e.g. Marks *et al.*, 2002; Tatham, 2017) suggest that stronger regions in terms of their domestic institutional competences are involved in more specific and extensive activities in Brussels. Based on this, one could expect that these regions might rely on their individual representation office instead of collective organizational forms to coordinate the activities and gather information about upcoming EU legislation. With regard to this reasoning, we cannot find a statistically significant relationship between regional authority and individual offices. However, our

results suggest that regions with higher levels of regional authority are less likely to make use of a national association, which is considered as a collective organizational form. This partially supports the reasoning of the previous literature.

Regions with lower levels of regional authority might have to act collectively to seek policy influence in Brussels. Since their domestic competences are limited, they might not be able to act as autonomous as regions with higher levels of regional authority and make therefore more likely use of a national association, in which all regions of a respective Member States are collectively represented to seek policy influence and gather information about upcoming legislation.

Glancing around the data, we see that running an individual office is the most common organizational form for regions to represent themselves, as 124 out of 193 regions in the sample maintain an individual representation in Brussels. What becomes also clear is that regions from different levels of regional authority are having their own offices in Brussels. Therefore, we find regions with high levels like the Austrian and German *Bundesländer*, but also for instance the Polish *Voivodeships* and the Czech *Krajes* that do not have high levels of regional authority at their disposal and still maintain individual representations. Moreover, we can also see that for instance the Dutch *Provincies*, even though they have a moderate high level of regional authority at their disposal, do not maintain individual offices in Brussels. Only for the regions that are part of a national association, we can see that they are assigned to lower levels of regional authority, as the example of the Irish regions shows.

With regard to the population ecology theory, we can conclude that the level of regional authority can be considered as a partially determining factor in the organizational environment of regions that shapes the organizational character of a region's office in Brussels. However, this is only valid with regard to national associations.

## 7.2 Presence of regionalist parties

In the findings, we see that the presence of a regionalist party in a region increases the odds for maintaining an individual office. Therefore, our hypothesized relationship is partially supported by the findings, as the model predicts that regions with regionalist party are more likely to maintain individual offices. However, we cannot make any statement about shared offices and national associations, as there is no significant relationship.

A possible explanation for the positive relationship between the presence of regionalist parties and running an individual office can be found in taking the character of these parties into account. The parties plead for more regional autonomy and more recognition of the cultural and political distinctiveness of the region, bring these topics into the regional political debate and are eager to also represent their interests at the European level (Hepburn & Detterbeck, 2013; Massetti, 2009). Therefore, with regard to the findings, regions with a regionalist party might be more likely to maintain an individual office in Brussels to exclusively advocate for these objectives, to lobby solely

for the region's interests, bypass their central government and to account on European level for the regionalist striving in the domestic political debate (Hepburn & Detterbeck, 2013; Tatham, 2010). Moreover, due to their separate regional identity, regions that are home to a regionalist party might not aim for collective action, as they have the interests of their own region as highest priority. In collective action, this region-focused priority might get vanished. With a glance around the sample, we can see that most regions that do harbor a regionalist party, also maintain an individual office in Brussels. Based on these findings, the factor of having a regionalist party in the region can be seen as another determinant in the organizational environment of a region that is able to shape the organizational character of the region's representation office (with regard to individual offices).

However, we have to be cautious, as the non-significant results for shared offices and national associations can also be based on a lack of variance in the group of regions with regionalist parties, as the vast majority of them is having individual offices and only few regions in this group is part of a shared office or national association.

### 7.3 New Member State

The exclusion of this explanatory variable when adding the control variables to the model does not allow us to draw any conclusions about whether our hypothesized relationships are confirmed or not, and if the status of the state as new Member State is a significant determinant in the organizational environment of a region. However, in model 1 of the regressions, we can see that the variable would be a significant predictor (without the inclusion of the control variables) for an individual office. For shared office and national association, there would be no significant relationship.

### 7.4 Resources-related control variables

As suggested by the comparisons between the different models, we have seen that the standard multivariate models that included the resources-related control variables next to the explanatory political factors have a substantial better model fit in terms of their deviance, AICs, explained variance and correctly predicted cases compared to the models without the control variables. Based on this, we can conclude that solely considering the political factors in the organizational environment of the regions would not be sufficient enough to capture the impact of factors in the organizational environment on the organizational character of the regions' representation offices.

The findings suggest that the total GDP of a region (as indicator for the resource endowment of a region) is a significant predictor for the organizational form of a representation office, as an increase in regional GDP increases the chance for a region to maintain an individual office, and decreases the chance for a region to be engaged in either a shared office or national association. Therefore, it is more likely for regions with a higher GDP to maintain an individual office and less likely for them to maintain collective offices. A possible explanation could be that resource-rich regions (in terms of

total GDP) have enough resources at their disposal to determine an own European strategy that includes a fully equipped regional representation in Brussels with enough budget and professional staff (Blatter *et al.*, 2008; Donas & Beyers, 2012; Tatham, 2010). Following the resource mobilization theory (McCarthy & Zald, 1977), we consider regions with a high GDP as regions with economically successful sectors (as the GDP expresses the monetary value of the produced goods and services in the region) that benefit from the Single Market. The striving to keep these economic conditions in the EU favorable for the own regional economy as well as the size of, and demands from the regional economy could serve as a mobilization for these regions to run individual offices. With these offices, the regions aim to keep the resource endowment level advanced (McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Van Houten, 2013) and to represent their interests towards the officials in the institutions as well as to engage themselves into more complex and policy influence seeking activities (Tatham, 2010, 2017). This reasoning would be supported by our findings.

In contrast to this, less-wealthier regions (in terms of total GDP) are according to the findings more likely to be engaged in collective forms of regional representation, as the limited resources might constrain them in maintaining an individual office that is considered as the costliest option for regions (Rowe, 2011). Based on our findings, we therefore might draw the conclusion that these regions rather engage in collective forms, where they can share representation costs instead of running an individual office that would not be sufficiently equipped.

In the sample, we see that especially those regions with high regional GDP (based on the sample mean) maintain individual offices in Brussels, whereas regions with lower regional GDP are engaged in collective forms. However, we can find examples for regions having a lower GDP and still maintaining an individual office (e.g. some Polish regions) and regions with high GDP not maintaining an individual office (e.g. the Dutch provinces). This could be seen as an indicator that there must be certain factors in these regions that have led to this kind of office in Brussels that cannot be explained by the models.

According to the findings, an increase in GDP per capita decreases the likelihood of a region to maintain an own office, and increases the chance for a region to be engaged in a national association. Therefore, we can conclude that more prosperous regions in terms of GDP per capita are more likely to be part of a national association. Although one could imagine that a group of regions with similar high GDP per capita within one state could work together via a shared office (e.g. five Swedish regions with a similar GDP per capita working together via the South Sweden Office), the level of GDP per capita does however not serve as a significant predictor being engaged in shared offices.

Glancing around the sample, we see that the Finish, Irish and Swedish regions as regions having a relatively high GDP per capita (based on the sample mean) are indeed engaged in national associations. However, we can also identify regions with a relative high GDP per capita being not engaged in such an association (e.g. Copenhagen Capital Region runs an individual office). A

potential explanation for this could be that the effect of an increase of the GDP per capita decreases the likelihood of running an individual office by only 14.7 per cent.

Nevertheless, the results of GDP per capita fit to the findings of regional GDP, as regions with a higher total GDP are more likely to run an individual office, whereas regions with higher GDP per capita are more likely to be part of a national associations, as for them an individual office might be too costly and sharing the representation infrastructure serves therefore as possible option.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that the amount of structural funds per capita is not a significant predictor for the different types of offices we can identify in Brussels. When controlling for Member State clustering, we cannot find a statistically significant relationship with any of the dependent variables. Even though the structural funds of the EU are in the literature considered as a major financial incentive and pull-factor for regions to engage in Brussels (Marks, Salk, Ray, & Nielsen, 1996; Rodriguez-Pose & Courty, 2018), in our study, we do not find support for this reasoning. One could for instance expect that regions with high amounts of funding would be more likely to maintain an individual office in Brussels to gather exclusive information about funding opportunities, as they find themselves in a competition with other regions for funding (Rodriguez-Pose & Courty, 2018; Tatham, 2017). In contrast, our findings suggest that the amount of funding does not have an effect on the likelihood of a region to maintain a certain kind of representation office in Brussels. We could explain this by taking into account that for instance regions with very different amounts of funding run similar forms of offices in Brussels. In the sample, we see that for instance the Polish *Voivodeships* receiving high amounts of funds per capita, and the Danish *Regioner* receiving little amounts of funds, both run individual offices in Brussels. Likewise, the Hungarian *Megyes* receiving high amounts of funds, and the Dutch *Provincies* receiving little amounts, but the regions from both Member States are engaged in shared offices.

## 8. Conclusion

The conclusion constitutes the final part of the thesis and aims to answer the research question, summarize the main results and to provide a critical analysis of the study as well as suggestions for future research.

### 8.1 Summary

Acknowledging different organizational forms of regional representation offices in Brussels, our research goal has been to scrutinize how regional political factors shape the organizational form of a representation office a region is most likely to maintain in the European capital. Seeking to answer this question, we have discussed various research foci and theoretical angles of regional representation in the literature review. Applying the population ecology theory in the theoretical framework, we have derived three testable hypotheses in order to scrutinize how regional authority, the existence of regionalist parties as well as the status of being a new Member State (EU10) serve as predictors for the type of office a region is most likely to run. Moreover, we have additionally controlled for resources-related factors such as the regional GDP, the regional GDP per capita as well as the amount of structural funds per capita. The data has been analyzed using standard multivariate and multilevel logistic regressions. The multilevel approach is considered as effective since regions are embedded in their respective 'parent' Member State. Therefore, it would have been not appropriate to solely conduct standard logistic regressions neglecting the clustered structure of the data.

We have seen in the results section that in model 1, our explanatory variables have a certain extent of predictive power. Moreover, the model fit is improving when resources-related control variables have been added (models 2 and 3). This has made clear that we also need to take these into account in order to draw conclusions about what factors might be of relevance in the organizational environment of regions with regard to the different types of office. At the stage when we control for clustered structures of the data, we acknowledge that our initial results of the standard logistic regressions are only robust to a limited extent, as we have seen that some predictors turned to be statistically non-significant when taking contextual variation at Member State level into account. Since we cannot use regional data without this state dimension, we consider it as more appropriate to use the results of the multilevel logistic regressions (model 4) as basis for the discussion of our findings.

By following this approach, the results reveal the limited predictive power of the political factors we have used as explanatory variables, as regional authority and the presence of regionalist parties are only partially statistically significant predictors for the type of office the region is most likely to maintain. As a consequence, we find solely partial support for our hypotheses for two types of offices. For all other hypothesized relationships, the statistically non-significant results do not support our expectations. Furthermore, the results make it clear that the regional GDP and GDP per capita are suitable and significant factors in the organizational environment of regions that are able to shape the



organizational form of the regions' Brussels offices. Given the fact that the model fits have substantially improved in the standard logistic regression models when resources-related factors were added, we need to take political *and* resources-related factors into account to fully capture the factors in the organizational environment of regions that have the power to shape the type of office a respective regions is most likely to run. Therefore, with regard to the main research question, we can conclude that political factors are only to a limited extent able to shape the organizational character of a regional representation office in Brussels, as regional authority and the presence of regionalist parties respectively are each only statistically significant for one type of office (when controlling for the clustered structure of the data). Resources-related factors such as the regional GDP have a higher predictive power for the type of office a region is most likely to run, as this factor is significant for all three tested types of offices, and the results make a clear direction of effect visible.

Based on our results, we could draw the conclusion that it is more a resources-based mobilization that impacts the organizational form of the regional representation office, instead of domestic political conditions. Moreover, we have also seen that the predictions of the models in some cases do not match with the reality. We consider this as an indicator that each state has a set of individual determinants that has shaped the way the regions of this state are represented in Brussels.

## 8.2 Reflections on results

According to the findings, we cannot draw conclusions about the complete set of factors applying to a certain region based on the models. However, we need to keep in mind that this was also not the aim of the thesis, as solely conducting a single-region case study can reveal the distinct set of determinants for one specific region. Our conducted models aim firstly at scrutinizing, if and how the selected determinants in the organizational environment of regions are having the power to shape the organizational character of the regions' representation offices in Brussels. Moreover, with regard to internal validity, taking data from a single point of time does not allow us to draw conclusions about the proceeding relationship between the independent and dependent variables. As many regions established themselves in Brussels some time ago, our data from 2016 cannot explain what factors have led to a certain kind of office. Moreover, this does also not allow taking prior changes of organizational forms into account. However, the models serve as an approach to understand, how certain factors in the organizational environment might be able to shape the type of office the regions are most likely to maintain.

Concerning the external validity of our study, we can now draw conclusions about the predictive power of the variables in the context of a certain type of office. Nevertheless, it is essential to keep in mind that our results are based on a sample of selected regions of the EU that are firstly enshrined in their own individual national context, and secondly embedded in the polity system of the EU, in which specific regulations and conditions apply. Hence, this does not allow us to draw conclusions about a

broader population of regional representation offices outside the EU context (e.g. representations of US States in Washington, DC).

Moreover, our models cannot take the development into account if one region of a state opens up a certain office in Brussels, and other regions of the same state follow the example of this region ('group pressure'), no matter what conditions are present in the respective regions.

### 8.3 Reflections on methodology and data

It is essential to a thesis to critically reflect on the decisions made in the research design process and the applying limitations of the study.

#### 8.3.1 Sample limitations

With regard to our sample size (N=193), available literature suggests that to perform a sound logistic regression, sample sizes above N=500 are appropriate, as the method is based on maximum-likelihood estimations (Long, 1997). However, we need to keep in mind that firstly the number of regions in the EU is finite, and secondly we applied some selection criteria in the sample selection process in order to have a set of regions that can be used in a cross-sectional observational study.<sup>37</sup>

Hereby, we further need to reflect on these criteria, which might cause a selection bias. We have excluded some Member States completely and some partially. The respective regions in those states do not run offices in Brussels or the offices are not maintained by regions, but by cities or metropolitan areas instead. This does not correspond with the first level below the central government. Moreover, in some cases, regions do not maintain the offices on their own, but with companies (private-public partnerships), which makes it hard to decide whether these offices are instances of the regional government or purely business-driven interest organizations.<sup>38</sup> This exclusion affects the external validity of our study, as the results are based on selected regions.

#### 8.3.2 Limitations of operationalization

We have used variables that have been applied in various contexts in the field of regional representation. For the Regional Authority Index, we need to keep in mind that the most recent data is from 2010. As we controlled for variation in the years before, we included the level of regional authority based on 2010. With regard to regional authority, 'New Member State' and the amount of structural funds per capita, we need to reflect on the fact that these data are assigned to regions on a state level. Therefore, we might find less variation between the regions of one state since for instance the level of regional authority is in most cases the same for all regions of one state. Likewise, the amounts of funding assigned to one state: as there is no reliable information available about the amount of funding a region receives, we have opted for a state-based amount per capita. This might constrain the power of the results, as the regression analysis is based on these predictors with less

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<sup>37</sup> For selection criteria, see section 5.2 Operationalization.

<sup>38</sup> For further implications, see section 5.2 Operationalization.

variation compared to data that is different per region. Moreover, the state-based data for regions also violated the assumption of independence of the observations, as one could infer for instance the level of regional authority from one region of a certain state to another of this state. In the analysis, we therefore control for the clustered, state-embedded data of the regions with multilevel regression models.

The identified strong correlations between ‘New Member State’ and the control variables during the model building process make also part of the critical analysis of the thesis. Due to strong correlations, it would not be appropriate to have the explanatory variable and the control variables in one model. We therefore excluded ‘New Member State’ in model 3 and 4. This however does not allow us to make any statements, whether the data supports the hypothesis or not. As a consequence, we consider this as a serious limitation to the study, as we focus on political factors applying to regions (we consider the status as new Member State as a contextual political factor for regions) with regard to their type of office they maintain in Brussels. Due to the exclusion of the variable, we cannot draw any conclusions about this factor and the support for our hypothesis. This limits the power of the study.

In the descriptive statistics, we see that the group sizes of regions with regionalist parties, and from the EU10 might be too small. Even though in some literature, a minimum group size of 25 is considered as sufficient (Schäfer, 2012; UZH, 2018), we might find less variation in our sample as 41 out of 193 regions harbor a regionalist party, and 48 regions are from the EU10. Combined with the distributions along the organizational characters as dependent variables, we see that for some organizational form, there are only few regions that fulfill the criteria of having a regionalist party or coming from the EU10. As seen in the results, this entails a risk of a complete separation.

Moreover, some organizational characters such as national associations are limited to regions of only three (out of 17) Member States in the sample. This is however based on the structure of regional representations in the EU and our selection criteria, as not many states have complete national associations of regions in Brussels at their disposal. Nevertheless, this might also cause less variation throughout the data as well as too deterministic models.

#### 8.4 Future research

To evaluate what configuration of factors are applying to a certain region in terms of what organizational form of regional representation office is maintained in Brussels, builds the culture medium for future research in form of single-region case studies. Conducting case studies focusing on one region or a group of regions from one state would offer the opportunity to grasp the applying domestic institutional and economic conditions in the organizational environment of a region. Moreover, due to conducted interviews, it would be possible to understand the motives firstly to establish a representation in Brussels in general, and secondly, why and with what aim a certain organizational form for the regional representation was chosen. This would contribute to get more

insights into the individual conditions and pivotal factors for the organizational form of their regional representation in Brussels. Moreover, it would be interesting to get more insights into regional representation offices of regions from states outside of the EU, as different motivations to establish themselves might apply to them since they are for instance not eligible for EU funding. With regard to the *Brexit*, future research should observe the developments of regional offices from the UK, as – depending on the outcome of the negotiations between the EU and the UK – the policy structures in terms of seeking policy influence and gathering information for British regions in Brussels might alter substantially.

To provide a link to the introduction, in this thesis we have seen that regional actors have a similar set of activities and objectives they aim to achieve in Brussels; however, the regions differ in the way they run an office, as we identified different organizational forms of these offices. Based on our results, we have seen that domestic political factors are only to a limited extent, and resources-related factors to a larger extent able to shape the type of office a region is most likely to maintain in Brussels.

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## 10. Appendices

Appendix I: List of regions

Appendix II: List of regionalist parties

Appendix III: Frequencies

Appendix IV: Boxplots

Appendix V: Correlations

Appendix VI: Results logistic regressions

Appendix I: List of regions

EU Member State	Region
<b>Austria</b>	Burgenland
	Carinthia
	Lower Austria
	Salzburg
	Styria
	Tyrol
	Upper Austria
Vienna	
<b>Belgium</b>	Brussels Capital Region
	Flanders
	Wallonia
<b>Croatia</b>	Brod-Posavina
	Dubrovnik-Neretva
	Istria
	Osijek-Baranja
	Pozega-Slavonia
	Virovitica-Podravina
	Vukovar-Srijem
<b>Czech Republic</b>	Central Bohemian Kraj
	Moravia-Silesian Kraj
	Liberec Kraj
	Vysocina Kraj
	Zlin
	Ustecky Kraj
	Hradec Kralove
	Karlovy Vary
	Olomouc Kraj
	Paradubice
	Pilsen
	Praha
	South Bohemian Kraj
South Moravian Kraj	
<b>Denmark</b>	Central Denmark
	Copenhagen Capital
	Northern Denmark
	Southern Denmark
	Zealand
<b>Finland</b>	Åland
	Central Finland
	Central Ostrobothnia
	Kainuu
	Kanta Häme
	Kymenlaasko
	Lapland
	North Karelia
	North Savo
	Northern Ostrobothnia
	Ostrobothnia
Päijänne Häme	
Pirkanmaa	
Satakunta	

<b>France</b>	South Karelia
	South Ostrobothnia
	South Savo
	Southwest Finland
	Uusimaa-Helsinki Region
	Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes
	Bourgogne-Franche
	Comté
	Bretagne
	Centre
Corse	
Grand Est	
Guyane	
Hauts de France	
Île de France	
La Réunion	
Normandie	
Nouvelle Aquitaine	
Occitane	
Pays de la Loire	
Provence-Alpes-	
Côte d'Azur	
<b>Germany</b>	Baden-Württemberg
	Bavaria
	Berlin
	Brandenburg
	Hansestadt Bremen
	Hansestadt Hamburg
	Hessen
	Lower Saxony
	Mecklenburg-
	Vorpommern
	North-Rhine-Westphalia
	Rhineland Palatinate
	Saarland
	Saxony
Saxony-Anhalt	
Schleswig-Holstein	
Thuringia	
<b>Hungary</b>	Baranya
	Budapest
	Hajdu-Biher
	Jasz-Nagykun-Szolnok
	Somogy
	Szabolcs-Szatmar-Bereg
Tolna	
<b>Ireland</b>	Border
	Dublin
	Mid-East
	Mid-West
	Midland
	South-East
	South-West
	West

<b>Italy</b>	Abruzzo	<b>Sweden</b>	Canarias Islands
	Basilicata		Castilla-La-Mancha
	Calabria		Cataluña
	Campagna		Extremadura
	Emilia Romagna		Galicia
	Friuli Venezia Giulia		La Rioja
	Lazio		Madrid
	Liguria		Murcia
	Lombardy		Naverre
	Marche		Valenciana
	Molise		
	Piedmont		Blenkinge
	Puglia		Dalarna
	Sardegna		Gävleborg
	Sicily		Gotland
	Trentino-Alto Adige		Halland
	Tuscany		Jämtland
Umbria	Jönköping		
Vallee d'Aoste	Kalmar		
Veneto	Kronoberg		
	Norrbotten		
<b>The Netherlands</b>	Drenthe	Örebro	
	Flevoland	Östergötland	
	Fryslan	Skåne	
	Gelderland	Södermanland	
	Groningen	Stockholm	
	Limburg	Uppsala	
	Noord-Brabant	Vämland	
	Noord-Holland	Västerbotten	
	Overijssel	Västernorrland	
	Utrecht	Västmanland	
	Zeeland	Västra Götaland	
	Zuid-Holland		
<b>Poland</b>	Holy Cross Province	<b>United Kingdom</b>	West Midlands
	Kujawsko Pomorskie		East of England
	Lebos		London
	Lodz		
	Lower Silecia		
	Lublin		
	Malpolska		
	Masovia		
	Opole		
	Podlaskie		
	Pomorskie		
	Silecia		
	Subcarpathia		
	Warmina Masuria		
West Pomerania			
<b>Slovakia</b>	Bratislava		
	Kosice		
	Nitra		
	Presov		
<b>Spain</b>	Andalucia		
	Aragon		
	Asturias		
	Balearic Islands		
	Basque Country		

## Appendix II: Regionalist parties

Regionalist party	Region	Source
Ålands Framtid	Åland (FI)	EFA
Aralar	Basque Country (ES)	EFA
Eusko Alkartasuna	Basque Country (ES)	EFA
Autonomie-Liberté-Participation-Écologie	Vallee d'Aoste (IT)	EFA
Bayernpartei	Bavaria (GER)	EFA
Bloc Nacionalista Valencia	Valenciana (ES)	EFA
Bloque Nacionalista Galicia	Galicia (ES)	EFA
Chunta Aragonesita	Aragon (ES)	EFA
Die Friesen	Lower Saxony (GER)	EFA
Enota Lista	Carinthia (AT)	EFA
Esquerra Republicana Cataluña	Cataluña (ES)	EFA
Fryske Nasjonale Partij	Friesland (NL)	EFA
Lausitzer Allianz	Saxony (DE)	EFA
Lausitzer Allianz	Lower Silecia (PL)	EFA
Liga Veneta	Veneto (IT)	EFA
Moravane	South Moravian Kraj (CZ)	EFA
Mouvement Région Savoie	Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes (FR)	EFA
Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie	Flanders (BE)	EFA
Partit Occitan	Occitane (FR)	EFA
Partitu di a Nazione Corsa	Corse (FR)	EFA
Partito Sardo d'Arizone	Sardegna (IT)	EFA
PSM-Entesa Nacionalista	Balearic Islands (ES)	EFA
Ruch Autonomii Ślaska	Silecia (PL)	EFA
Südschleswigscher Wählerverband	Schleswig-Holstein (GER)	EFA
Schleswig Partei	South Denmark (DK)	EFA
Südtiroler Freiheit	Trentino-Alto Adige	EFA
Union Démocratique Bretonne	Bretagne (FR)	EFA
Unser Land	Grand Est (FR)	EFA
Kaszebsko Jednota	Pomorskie (PL)	EFA
L'Atro Sud	Puglia, Umbria, Campagna (IT)	EFA
Nueva Canarias	Canarias Islands (ES)	EFA
Pro Lombardio Indipendenza	Lombardy (IT)	EFA
Partie Furlane	Friuli Venezia Giulia (IT)	EFA
Unión des Pueblo Navarro	Naverre (ES)	Massetti (2009)
Lega Nord	Piedmont, Vallee d'Aoste, Liguria, Lombardy, Emilia Romagna, Veneto, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Trentino-Alto Adige (IT)	Massetti (2009)
Partido Riojano	Rioja (IT)	Massetti (2009)
Movimento per l'Autonomia	Sicily (IT)	Massetti (2009)
Skåne Partiet	Skåne (SWE)	Schakel & Massetti (2016)

Appendix III: Frequencies

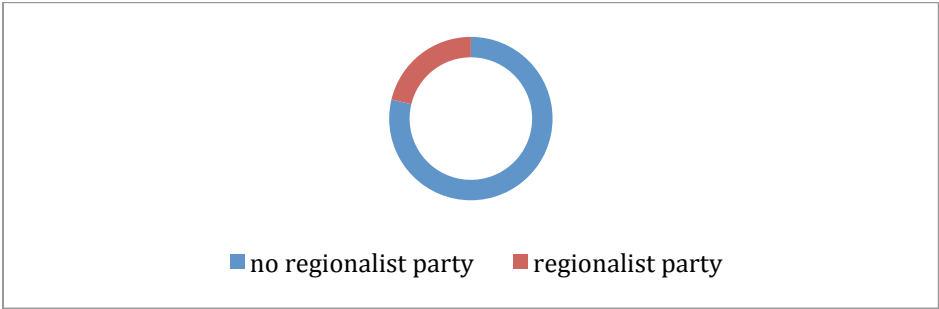


Figure IIIa. Frequencies regionalist parties.

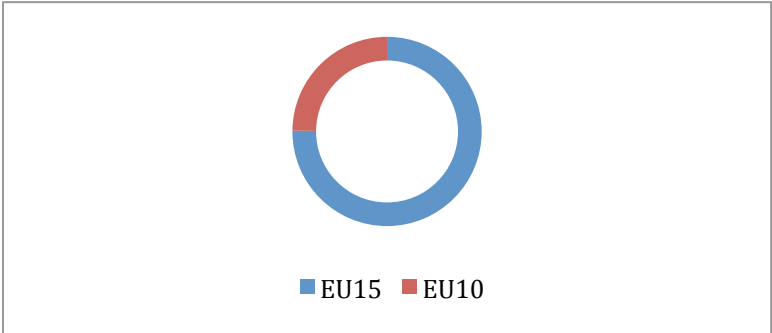


Figure IIIb. Frequencies Member State Status.

Appendix IV: Boxplots

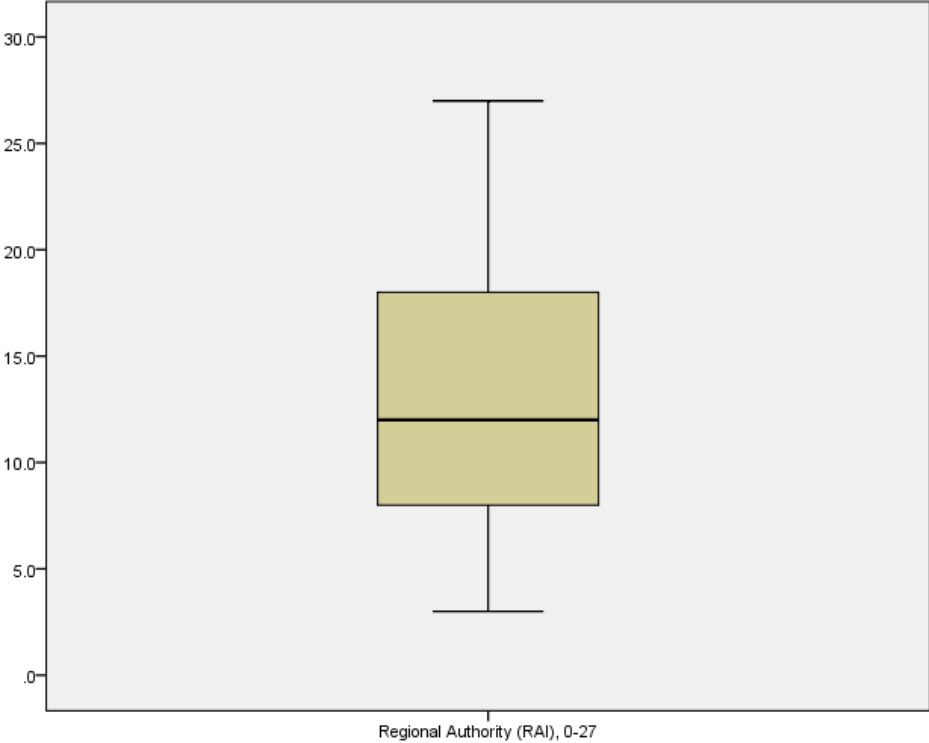


Figure IVa. Boxplot Regional Authority.

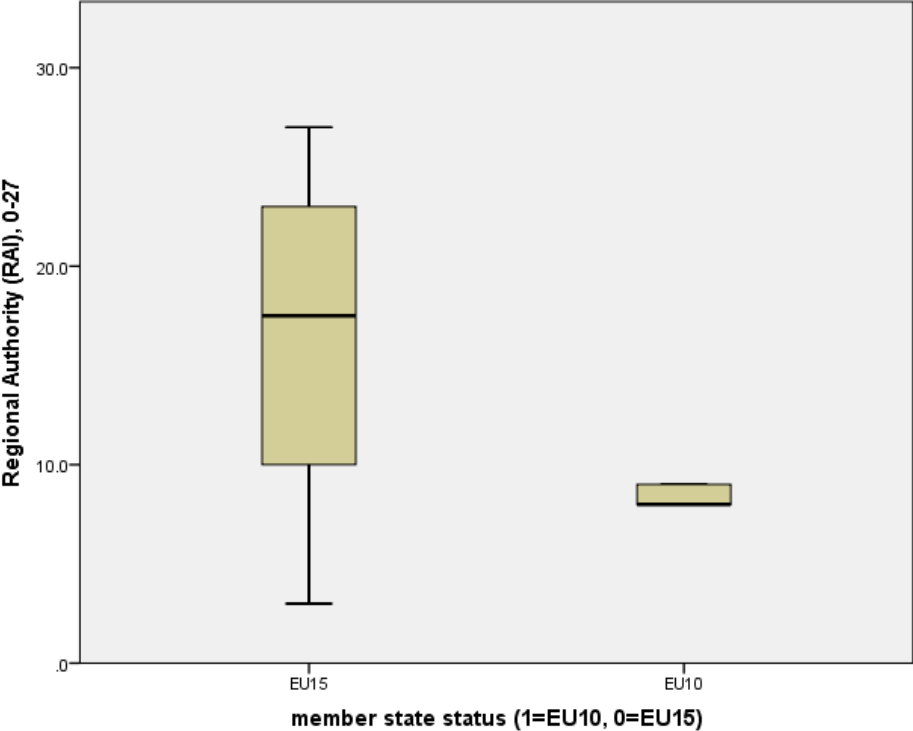


Figure IVb. Boxplot Regional Authority and Member State status.



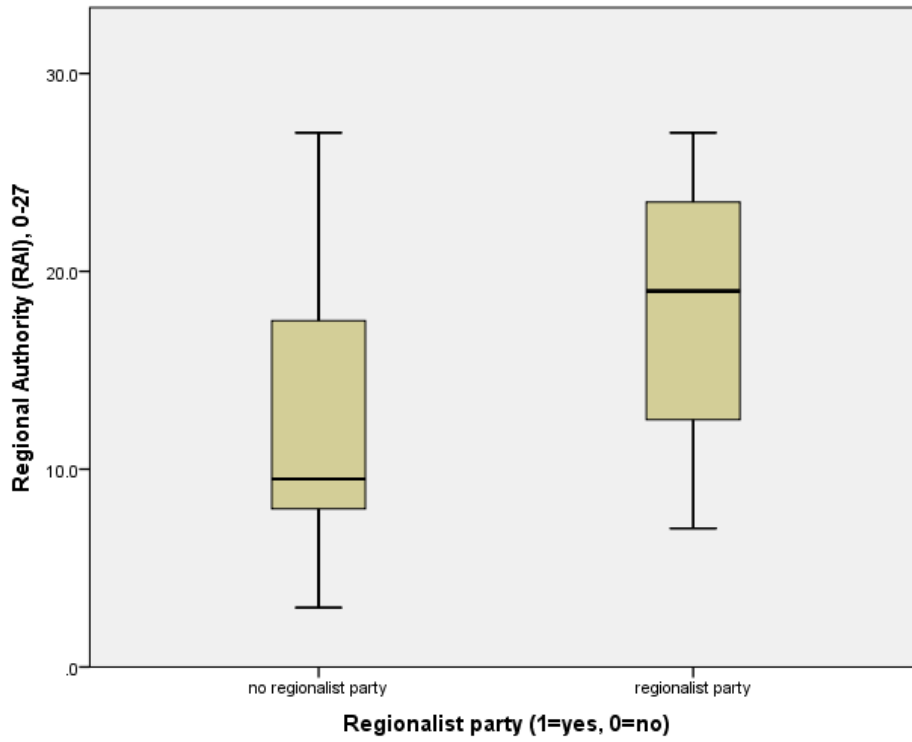


Figure IVc. Boxplots Regional Authority and regionalist party.

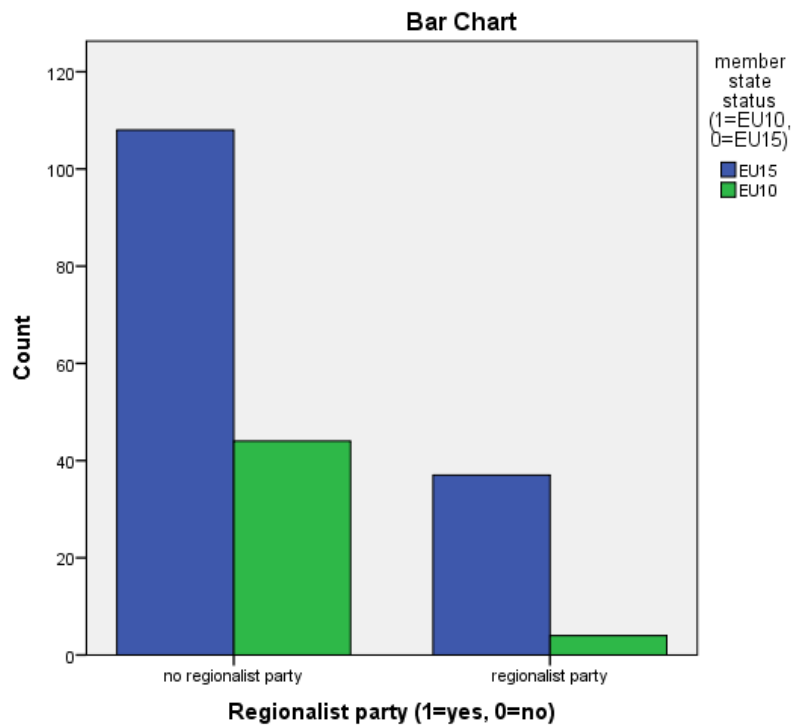


Figure IVd. Bar chart Member State status with regionalist party.

## Appendix V: Correlations

<b>Correlation</b>	<b>Coefficient (Pearson)</b>
Regional authority + regionalist party	.345**
Regional authority + New Member State	-.419**
New Member State + regionalist party	-.182 (Pearson's Phi)*
Regional authority + GDP regional	.442**
Regional authority + GDP per capita	.218*
Regional authority + structural funds per capita	-.250**
Regionalist party + GDP regional	.292**
Regionalist party + GDP per capita	-.016 (ns)
Regionalist party + structural funds per capita	.040 (ns)
New Member State + GDP regional	-.412**
New Member State + GDP per capita	-.717**
New Member State + structural funds per capita	.854**

\* $p=.05$ , \*\* $p=.001$

## Appendix VI: Results logistic regressions

### **(a) Individual office**

In order to conduct a logistic regression analysis, we need to ensure that the assumptions of this method are fulfilled. To test for a linear relationship between the continuous independent variables and the logit of the dependent variable, we have conducted a Box-Tidwell-Test, which tests whether the interaction term between the independent variable and its log transformation are significant (Field, 2013). In order to meet this assumption, it has been necessary to transform the control variables of 'regional GDP' and 'structural funds' into their natural log. Moreover, a test for multicollinearity has been conducted to test whether the explanatory variables are highly correlated with each other. This assumption has also been met, as the values for VIF have been in their range of tolerance. Furthermore, we have also tested for significant outliers that might have an impact on the fitting of the model. For that purpose, we have checked the studentized residuals and Cook's distance. For the case of the Schleswig-Holstein, a studentized residual of -12.085 and a Cook's distance above 1 has been identified. These values are a concern since this case could have an influence on the model, leading to a potential undue interpretation of the results (Field, 2013). While taking a closer look on this case, it has become visible that this case has these high values since the model would have predicted another outcome for the region. According to the model, the region would maintain an individual office (also probably due to the presence of a regionalist party in the region), however, it was observed that Schleswig-Holstein is engaged in a shared office together with Hamburg. Those two regions represent an extraordinary case, as all other German regions maintain their own individual representative office in Brussels. Due to the abovementioned high values of studentized residuals and Cook's distance, we have decided to exclude this case from the analysis, leading to a sample size for this model (individual office) of N=192.

## Box-Tidwell-test for linearity

		Variables in the Equation					
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	Natlog_GDPreg	12.777	11.188	1.304	1	.253	354008.004
	GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded	-.212	.404	.274	1	.601	.809
	Natlog_Funds	17.886	16.684	1.149	1	.284	58602500.510
	Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27	1.038	.570	3.313	1	.069	2.825
	Regionalist party (1=yes, 0=no)(1)	1.444	.988	2.139	1	.144	4.239
	New Member State (1=EU10, 0=EU15)(1)	-.810	3.899	.043	1	.835	.445
	Natlog_GDPreg by ln_Natlog_GDPreg	-3.314	3.398	.951	1	.329	.036
	GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded by Natlog_GDPcap	.030	.088	.120	1	.729	1.031
	Natlog_Funds by ln_Natlog_Funds	-6.006	6.371	.889	1	.346	.002
	Natlog_regaut by Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27	-.269	.159	2.859	1	.091	.764
	Constant	-92.945	44.854	4.294	1	.038	.000

- a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Natlog\_GDPreg, GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded, Natlog\_Funds, Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27, Regionalist party (1=yes, 0=no), new member state (1=EU10, 0=EU15), Natlog\_GDPreg \* ln\_Natlog\_GDPreg, GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded \* Natlog\_GDPcap, Natlog\_Funds \* ln\_Natlog\_Funds, Natlog\_regaut \* Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27

## Test for multicollinearity

		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					Collinearity Statistics	
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients				
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-2.371	.328		-7.222	.000		
	Natlog_GDPreg	.209	.021	.634	9.862	.000	.664	1.506
	GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded	-.006	.003	-.171	-1.928	.055	.350	2.857
	Natlog_Funds	.154	.036	.361	4.275	.000	.385	2.599
	Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27	.012	.004	.173	2.929	.004	.785	1.274

- a. Dependent Variable: Individual office

Test Model 3, with N=193

**Variables in the Equation**

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
								Lower	Upper
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27	.072	.039	3.424	1	.064	1.075	.996	1.161
	Regionalist party (1=yes, 0=no)(1)	1.599	.857	3.484	1	.062	4.948	.923	26.527
	Natlog_GDPreg	1.594	.265	36.210	1	.000	4.922	2.929	8.271
	GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded	-.046	.027	2.981	1	.084	.955	.906	1.006
	Natlog_Funds	1.017	.302	11.346	1	.001	2.764	1.530	4.995
	Constant	-20.800	3.447	36.416	1	.000	.000		

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27, Regionalist party (1=yes, 0=no), Natlog\_GDPreg, GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded, Natlog\_Funds.

-2LL: 129.609

R<sup>2</sup>=.643

86% correctly predicted

Multilevel logistic regression (model 4)

Clustered robust standard errors

```
Mixed-effects logistic regression
Group variable:      country

Number of obs      =      192
Number of groups   =      17

Obs per group:
    min =          3
    avg =         11.3
    max =          21

Integration method: mvaghermite
Integration pts.   =          7

Wald chi2(5)       =      14.67
Prob > chi2        =      0.0119
Log pseudolikelihood = -41.813056
(Std. Err. adjusted for 17 clusters in country)
```

	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]	
indoffi						
regaut	.1751679	.1388845	1.26	0.207	-.0970408	.4473766
regpart	3.352699	1.144807	2.93	0.003	1.108918	5.596479
Natlog_GDPreg	3.209986	.8994785	3.57	0.000	1.44704	4.972931
GDPcap_thousand	-.1593727	.0639298	-2.49	0.013	-.2846728	-.0340725
Natlog_Funds	1.13826	1.147008	0.99	0.321	-1.109833	3.386353
_cons	-33.37392	11.74074	-2.84	0.004	-56.38535	-10.3625
country						
var(_cons)	18.38618	28.42486			.8882641	380.5757

**(b) Shared office**Test for linearity

		Variables in the Equation					
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	Natlog_GDPreg	1.649	8.307	.039	1	.843	5.203
	GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded	-.707	.396	3.192	1	.074	.493
	Natlog_Funds	-13.780	15.965	.745	1	.388	.000
	Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27	.549	.551	.995	1	.319	1.732
	Regionalist party (1=yes, 0=no)(1)	-1.339	.953	1.974	1	.160	.262
	New Member State (1=EU10, 0=EU15)(1)	1.204	3.542	.116	1	.734	3.335
	Natlog_GDPreg by In_Natlog_GDPreg	-.837	2.566	.106	1	.744	.433
	GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded by Natlog_GDPcap	.156	.086	3.241	1	.072	1.168
	Natlog_Funds by In_Natlog_Funds	4.372	6.103	.513	1	.474	79.240
	Natlog_regaut by Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27	-.154	.154	.992	1	.319	.858
	Constant	39.289	36.553	1.155	1	.282	1155764676342912
							80.000

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Natlog\_GDPreg, GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded, Natlog\_Funds, Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27, Regionalist party (1=yes, 0=no), new member state (1=EU10, 0=EU15), Natlog\_GDPreg \* In\_Natlog\_GDPreg, GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded \* Natlog\_GDPcap, Natlog\_Funds \* In\_Natlog\_Funds, Natlog\_regaut \* Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27.

## Multilevel logistic regression (model 4)

### Clustered robust standard errors

```

Mixed-effects logistic regression      Number of obs   =      193
Group variable:      country          Number of groups =      17

Obs per group:
      min =      3
      avg =     11.4
      max =     22

Integration method: mvaghermite      Integration pts. =      7

Wald chi2(5)      =     32.42
Prob > chi2      =     0.0000
Log pseudolikelihood = -77.43726
(Std. Err. adjusted for 17 clusters in country)
  
```

sharoffi	Robust		z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]	
	Coef.	Std. Err.				
regaut	-.0453939	.0777505	-0.58	0.559	-.197782	.1069942
regpart	-1.289156	1.142249	-1.13	0.259	-3.527924	.9496113
Natlog_GDPreg	-1.127617	.2054306	-5.49	0.000	-1.530253	-.72498
GDPcap_thousand	-.0096475	.0371344	-0.26	0.795	-.0824296	.0631345
Natlog_Funds	-.5561658	.6467697	-0.86	0.390	-1.823811	.7114794
_cons	13.72092	5.484535	2.50	0.012	2.97143	24.47041
country						
var(_cons)	3.043159	2.949517			.4553191	20.33918

### (c) National associations

Case 37 (Copenhagen) was excluded due to unusual high studentized residuals (-8.318) and a Cook's distance clearly above 1, leading to N=192.

### Test for linearity

		Variables in the Equation					
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	Natlog_GDPreg	252.590	41346.924	.000	1	.995	4.996E+109
	GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded	57.013	5599.802	.000	1	.992	5761330815956 684000000000. 000
	Natlog_Funds	2222.516	453831.609	.000	1	.996	.
	Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27	-23.297	1679.575	.000	1	.989	.000
	Regionalist party (1=yes, 0=no)(1)	-11.664	2569.261	.000	1	.996	.000
	New Member State (1=EU10, 0=EU15)(1)	-252.834	142153.628	.000	1	.999	.000
	Natlog_GDPreg by ln_Natlog_GDPreg	-86.041	12521.575	.000	1	.995	.000

GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded by Natlog_GDPcap	-11.075	1133.673	.000	1	.992	.000
Natlog_Funds by ln_Natlog_Funds	-820.659	179263.148	.000	1	.996	.000
Natlog_regaut by Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27	3.586	432.515	.000	1	.993	36.098
Constant	-5238.865	551448.056	.000	1	.992	.000

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Natlog\_GDPreg, GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded, Natlog\_Funds, Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27, Regionalist party (1=yes, 0=no), new member state (1=EU10, 0=EU15), Natlog\_GDPreg \* ln\_Natlog\_GDPreg, GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded \* Natlog\_GDPcap, Natlog\_Funds \* ln\_Natlog\_Funds, Natlog\_regaut \* Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27.

Test without exclusion outlier, N=193

		Variables in the Equation					95% C.I. for EXP(B)		
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	Lower	Upper
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27	-.401	.095	17.922	1	.000	.670	.557	.806
	Regionalist party (1=yes, 0=no)(1)	-.524	1.418	.137	1	.712	.592	.037	9.534
	Natlog_GDPreg	-2.667	.607	19.318	1	.000	.069	.021	.228
	GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded	.271	.062	19.051	1	.000	1.311	1.161	1.480
	Natlog_Funds	-.887	.500	3.148	1	.076	.412	.155	1.097
	Constant	25.114	6.322	15.780	1	.000	80710919405		
							.115		

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Regional Authority (RAI), 0-27, Regionalist party (1=yes, 0=no), Natlog\_GDPreg, GDP per capita in € (GDP total/population), rounded, Natlog\_Funds.

-2LL: 54.925

$R^2=.841$

94.8 per cent correctly predicted



Multilevel logistic regression (model 4)

Clustered robust standard errors

Logistic regression		Number of obs	=	192		
Log pseudolikelihood = -22.606044		Wald chi2(5)	=	61.60		
		Prob > chi2	=	0.0000		
(Std. Err. adjusted for 17 clusters in country)						
Natoffi	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]	
regaut	-.4808624	.1794719	-2.68	0.007	-.8326209	-.1291039
regpart	-.6272902	2.288959	-0.27	0.784	-5.113567	3.858986
Natlog_GDPreg	-2.972678	.4702338	-6.32	0.000	-3.894319	-2.051036
GDPcap_thousand	.3275638	.055992	5.85	0.000	.2178215	.4373061
Natlog_Funds	-.8824399	.7895234	-1.12	0.264	-2.429877	.6649975
_cons	27.0114	7.172635	3.77	0.000	12.9533	41.06951