An organisational perspective on the staff in the European Parliament

–Why and how change occur

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Department of Political Science

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II

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Summary

The European Parliament was from the start viewed and treated as the Weaker part in the EU in comparison to the Council and the Commission. But the power and influence of the European Parliament has been rising step by step to the position it holds today. This study puts the searchlights on the organisation and organisational changes that has happened to the staff in the European Parliament during the last three treaties. It focuses especially on the changes regarding the staff that provides assistance to the MEPs, and in that sense are connected to the treatment of the political decision-making. The previous research in this area are not extensive, but the results has pointed in the direction of that the staff plays an important role in supporting the MEPs and helping them to handle the informational deficit that they might face when making policy choices. The staffs' role in supporting the parliaments position in relation to its executive has also been lifted.

The aim of this study to investigate changes in the structure of the administrative support in the European Parliament, and also look at the explanations for these changes; what caused the changes to happen and why the EP-administration was designed in the way it is. By using the same analytical framework as is used for government administrations in nation states I argue that we can see interesting patterns that help us understand more about these questions. The explanatory factors have been drawn from two core theoretical perspectives on organisations, the instrumental and the institutional perspective. I have used process tracing as method to look at two main reform processes and the snowball method has been used to find the investigated documents.

The main conclusions is that there has been both intentional changes and changes that comes as consequences of decisions that are not entirely up to the parliament itself. As regards the assistance to MEPs the organisation of the administration has changed significantly towards providing faster and more qualified support to ensure the quality of the legislature and meet the needs of the MEPs. The reform processes has been characterised by that the parliament is a strongly institutionalised organisation and by negotiations between the relevant stakeholders, rather than a rational design approach. The proposals put forward in the reform process was motivated from dissatisfaction amongst the MEPs, and also from that the parliament needed to adapt to a new situation

with greater powers and an enlarged EU. The negotiations, as well as political compromises, have restrained a rational design of the Parliament.

Foreword

My interest for the EU goes back many years so it was natural for me to choose a subject within that area. To work with this master thesis has been interesting already from the first meeting with my advisor Åse Gornitzka in the spring of 2012 when I got the idea to study this subject from one of her lectures. Åse has been a great support throughout this project.

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Stockholm, 21 October 2013

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Table of Abbreviations

EP	European Parliament
EC	European Commission
Council	European Council
MEP	Member of Parliament
EPP	European Peoples Party
S&D	Socialists and Democrats

When politicians are presented I will put their nationality and party affiliation in brackets after their name. For example James Provan is a British MEP, affiliated with the European Peoples Party, I will therefore write; James Provan (UK, EPP).

1   A European legislative assembly

The history of the European Union (EU) starts with the establishment of the Coal and Steel Community in 1952. It established all the four main institutions that we today know as The European Commission (EC), Union Council (Council), The European Parliament (EP) and The European Court of Justice (ECJ) (Cini & Pérez-Solórzano Borragán 2010). For a long time, the EP has been viewed and treated as the weaker part of the EU, much because of the limited powers that were assigned to the EP in the first treaties of the EU. The gradual and stepwise way which the EPs power was increased in did not change this much. Today the situation has changed radically: The EP has developed into a real force within the EU's legislative and budgetary processes, and one of the leading advocators for greater democratic legitimacy in the process of European integration (Hayes-Renshaw & Wallace 2006, p. 207 and Neunreither 2003:54).

With the Lisbon treaty the former co-decision method was turned into the ordinary legislative procedure and also extended to almost all regulatory fields of the EU, the procedure now covers eighty-five of the Treaty articles (Neuhold & Dobbels 2012, p. 1). Some 80 % of all EU legislation needs Parliaments consent (Kreppel 2003, p. 906). The ordinary legislative procedure makes the parliament co-legislator together with the Council by giving the two institutions the same weight in the legislative process (European Parliament 2013d). The two institutions can therefore be described as parts of a bicameral legislature.

Whilst the EP gradually has gained more power; the scholarly interest for the parliament has also been growing. However, there has not been much research about the staff in the EP. We do however know that the structure and behaviour of staff matters and influences the decision-making. There has not been particularly much scholarly attention paid to legislative staff in general either, even though there are some studies, as we will see. This is what I want to make a contribution to change. This study aims to investigate changes in the structure of the administration in the EP, and especially their role in supporting the MEPs. The research question is about the organisation of change; how the structure of an organisation changes, why it does so, and the factors that shape organisational change processes. I will study this in the context of the EP.

It is important to note that the EP is the only directly elected transnational representative institution in the world. In that sense the chosen case in this study is unique, a sui generis. The scope of this study could, as we will see, be understood in a range of settings. The first is in the setting of administrative change in general, and in public organisations in particular. The EP-administration does, despite its unique features, in many ways share the same organisational features as other administrations. And many of the general assumptions of how organisations work and change can be applied also to the EP-administration as well. Secondly, the EP-administration is a parliamentary administration and could be related to other parliaments in other organisations and also to parliaments in nation states. One could therefore also see the changes in the EP-administration as an example of parliamentary change and relate it to other similar cases. Thirdly, the EP-administration can be related to administrative services within the other institutions. As we will see, the EU has one common European Civil Service for all the EU institutions. This and other factors lead to close contacts between the institutions.

Today the EP's administrative support structure is organised in three main parts. 1) The General Secretariat 2) the staff of the EP's political groups, and 3) the MEPs' personal assistants. The General Secretariat is the main part of the EP-administration and its organisational design is elaborate. Since the EP was established there has been a dramatic growth in its General Secretariat, which employs the larger part of the EP staff. The number of posts increased from 37 in 1952, almost 2000 in 1979, nearly 3000 posts by 1984, to the around 6000 officials currently working for the General Secretariat (Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton 2011, p. 226). The second group of the EP-administration is the staff of the political groups, currently about 900 posts (Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton 2011, p. 113). The expansion of the EP-administration has come in the wake of increase in the number of MEPs (from 78 to 785), nationalities (six to 27) and working languages (four to 23), as well as the major task expansion of the EP (Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton 2011, p. 219).

The parliament staff could be seen as a source of alternative competence for the MEP's vis-à-vis the executive power, the Commission, which has the greatest expert competence. The MEPs have, as we will see, always tried to form their own opinions based on other information sources, rather than relying on the expertise of the executive. The quality of assistance provided by the parliament is therefore a key

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element of the legislative process in the parliament (Neunreither 2002, p. 45). Some have also argued that the EP staff has played an important role as *institutional defenders*, not least because MEPs can be seen as *temporary* participants - whilst the EP staff has represented continuity and managed knowledge and understanding of the EU decision making system (Neunreither 2002, pp. 45-47).

1.1 State of the Art: Previous research

How a legislature is organised differs on some important factors from the organisation of bureaucracies. Legislatures have the power to organise themselves, no outside authority can decide upon their organisation. The members of a legislature are formally equal to each other and they do not stand in the relationship of authority or subordination of each other, as members of hierarchical organisations. Loewenberg and Patterson (1979, p. 164) argues that legislatures rely extensively on precedents, customs, and informal norms, and relatively little on formal rules. Even so, all legislatures have appointed leaders with specified tasks and are therefore hierarchical organisations (Judge & Earnshaw 2008, p. 159). But as Judge and Earnshaw (2008, p. 159) explain, this is not the full story when it comes to the EP. The EP is a co-legislator together with the intergovernmental Council, which in turn, also is part of what one can see as a dual executive together with the Commission (even though most executive power still lies within the Commission). This means that the parliament has got a special relationship to these institutions. Many of the unique features of the EP will be presented in depth later, but several of them are associated with that, as stated above, the EP is a sui generis in the sense that it is the only directly elected transnational representative institution in the world.

Together with the EPs growing power in EU decision-making, the EP has also gained greater attention from scholars. However, as mentioned above, little research has looked on the internal organisation of the EP, and the literature on its administrative apparatus remains even thinner (Egeberg et al. 2011, p. 5). Whilst the number of employees in the EP has been growing, there has not been much research made about their organisation or role in the parliament. There has been some research on legislative staff in the US Congress that can be relevant when looking on the context of the EU as well. The research has shown how the staffing of the legislatures varies in terms of size

and organisational setup – From the US Congress where each MEP and committee have a vast body of professional staff at their disposal, to parliamentary committees that borrow staff from their executive's bureaucracies. The variation has generally been explained by different constitutional principles of the political systems. The separation of powers has explained the elaborated organisation of the staff in the US Congress (Egeberg et al. 2011, p. 3). The European Union does not have the same clear principle of separation of powers as the US, so we will have to look for other explanations for the growth of parliament staff in the EP. Andrea Pegan (2012, p. 20) examined the growth of the legislative staff in the EP, showing that organisational complexity, rather than increasing workload is likely to increase the number of administrative (AD-category) staff in the secretariat and the political groups of the EP. Pegans quantitative study concludes that the EP has not increased its staff when a new treaty, giving the EP more power, has entered into force, but rather when membership and the number of political committees have increased. It also shows that the organisational complexity of the secretariat, here operationalised as number of Directorate-Generals, has a negative influence on the number of staff. These conclusions support my interest in studying the organisational structure of the EP-staff.

Attention has also been drawn to how the *institutional resources* affect the parliaments influence over policy and how the MEPs handle the informational deficit they might face when making policy-choices and in their voting behaviour. Some studies have pointed in the direction of the administrations' role in supporting the parliament's power in relation to the executive. More explicit, a change in the role for the EP-administration has been noted; this supports the research question that this study seeks to answer. The growth in the administrative support should however not be seen as a sign of increasing administrative power within the parliament (Egeberg et al. 2011, pp. 3-5). An interview study on the EP committee staff and MEP's, concluded that interviewees stressed the importance of the staff when it comes to drafting reports or opinions and shaping the informational foundations of the policy making. Yet the boundaries of their role seem fluid and their autonomy is under the hierarchical constraints of political superiors (Winzen 2011, p. 40). Egeberg et al. (2011, pp. 19-21) has showed that officials in the EP perform tasks that might involve policy-shaping, such as providing background information and various kinds of advice, drafting documents, facilitating compromises, etc. The organisational structure that surrounds the individual

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official has been stressed as the most important factor when explaining their behaviour. Egeberg et al. point out that their study is one of the first to focus explicit on the EP staff as such and therefore argues that more scholarly attention should be drawn to the parliament officials (Egeberg et al. 2011, pp. 19-21).

A study made by Kreppel has drawn attention to the relationship between treaty reform and the internal development of the EP. Keppel's study is focusing on "the balance between required Rules [of Procedure] reforms and internally and externally oriented strategic reforms" (Kreppel 2003, p. 884). The Rules of Procedure, however, mostly concerns the 'political' side of the EP, that is procedures and organisation of the work of parliamentary committees, the President, political groups etc., and will therefore not be playing a significant role in my study as such. Nevertheless, the study shows some interesting results and therefore deserves a presentation here. Kreppel underlines the importance of understanding the role that the treaty-changes have had in providing opportunities for strategic internal reforms, however not directly and explicit linked to the treaties. She clearly links the revisions of the Rules of Procedure to the treaty-reforms and also stresses their importance in governing the relationships between the actors within the EP. At every possible opportunity the EP has "used treaty reform as an opportunity to thoroughly review and revise its internal structures to adapt to the new political realities created by the various treaties" (Kreppel 2003, p. 904). But the EP did more than just modify its RoP to narrowly deal with the new realities created by treaty reform; it also consistently attempted to make the most of the new situation. The EP has used two strategies to achieve this:

- *The first tactic has been externally oriented, focused on unilaterally asserting its own powers and rights or by placing new obligations on the other EU institutions/organisations by incorporating them into the RoP.*

- *The second strategy has been to focus internally and 'streamline' its procedures and organisational structures to maximize efficiency (i.e. its ability to wield influence), often through the centralization of many powers and activities.*

(Kreppel 2003, pp. 904-05)

The first of these tactics was most commonly used by the EP up until the mid-1990s, because the Parliament then was dissatisfied with its own position among the EU institutions. Together with the Parliaments rising status and influence, its focus has shifted towards the second strategy: improving its ability and efficiency to act within the

legislative process to make the most of its newly acquired legislative power. But these increases in efficiency do not come without a price. "These costs and benefits are quite clear in the [political] debates [in the EP], particularly those during the Amsterdam and Nice revisions" (Kreppel 2003, pp. 906-907). It is obvious that there is a general consensus that the reforms in the Rules of Procedure has led to a significant concentration of power to the two largest party groups in the parliament, especially in the plenary sessions and in the Leadership of the parliament, but also in the committees. Kreppel argues however for the necessity of these reforms; "Formal treaty revisions, in and of themselves, would have been insufficient to transform the EP from a chamber of debate into an efficient legislative body" (Kreppel 2003, pp. 906-07). This conclusion clearly shows how the internal power balance in the EP has shifted towards the two large party groups. This is an important factor to bring with in my study as well. The obvious question is whether one can see the same development when it comes to the decision-making on changes in the administrative support.

The most recent and far-reaching administrative reform in the General Secretariat of the EP is the so called 'Raising the Game'- reform. In a short article, Kungla analyses what factors that has "triggered and shaped" (Kungla 2007, p. 71) this reform, which also will be part of my study and its content will be further presented later. Basically, the reform covers the scientific support given to MEPs from the General Secretariat (Kungla 2007, p. 75). Both external factors, which are changes in the environment, and internal factors, which are distribution of power and resources and the presence of policy entrepreneurs in the organisation, explains this reform according to Kungla (2007, p. 74). The debate on the scientific support to MEPs goes back to the end of the 1990s and a series of steps had built up to the final reform. These are for example internally produced investigations on the scientific support as well as internal and external reports with a broader scope on the working methods in the parliament in general (Kungla 2007).

All of these studies are good examples of the rising scholarly interest in the EP-administration. One of the lessons from their studies is that different types of organisational changes in the parliament can have different origins and motives.

1.2 Research question

We know that the staff in parliament's matters and also that the number of employees in the EP has been growing ever since the parliament was established. Generally, studies have shown that organisational structure matters for how members of an organisation act and for how institutions act. We also know how the EP-administration is organised today and where the formal power to decide upon the internal organisation lies. However there are no systematic expositions on how the organisation of the staff has changed over time or how and why the decisions about the organisational changes have been made (Pegan 2011, p. 4). This is what this study contributes to. Therefore my research question is:

How has the formal organisational structure of the European Parliament-administration changed over time and how can these changes be explained?

The study will be limited to the period from 1999, when the Treaty of Amsterdam was about to enter into force and until 2012. The time frame are chosen because it ensures the possibility to study the development under the last three treaties, and as we will see, the EP-administration remained basically unchanged until that time (Neunreither 2002, p. 55 and Kungla 2007:77). As the question indicates, the formal organisational structure is the dependent variable in this study. The main explanatory factors are drawn from two core theoretical perspectives on organisations, these will be presented in the theory chapter hereunder.

An important demarcation to stress is that this study focuses on the organisation of the administration in the EP, and especially on the administrations role of assisting the Parliaments Members. This means that the study does not cover the whole organisational structure in the EP. As we have seen example of in Keppel's study, many changes has happened to the 'political side' of the parliament during the last two decades. Changes have also happened in what role that organised interests and lobby groups play in the day to day life in the EP (see for example Neunreither 2002, p. 53). These changes will not be covered in this study, but are factors to keep in mind. The demarcation is made based on an analysis that, the assistance to Members of Parliament

is the most interesting part of the administration, since it is directly connected to the 'product' that the Parliament produces, namely the political decisions.

The following parts of this thesis will be structured as follows: First I will present the theoretical framework for answering both parts of my research question. This will include a framework for analysing organisational key variables, and the perspectives on how organisations work and why they change. Moving on, there will be a discussion about methodology, reliability, and validity and how I as researcher relate to the data sources that are used in this study. The following chapter will present the empirical findings, including first a presentation of the formal structure of the parliament's internal organisation as of today, and how decisions about it are formally made. Secondly the chapter will go in depth with the identified reform processes and trace the steps in these processes that have led to a decision about the formal organisational structure. Finally, an analysis of the findings will be presented where the findings are related to the theoretical perspectives to try to make the patterns more visible. The thesis will end with a summary and presentation of my key conclusions.

2   Theory: Organisational perspectives

There are many theoretical approaches to use when analysing how an organisation has changed and trying to explain these changes. I argue that the most fruitful way of analysing the EP administration is to review it under the same kinds of theories and approaches that are used for analysing government structures in the nation states. Tallberg (2010, p. 634) formulated a good analytical point when he wrote "that 'institutions and matter' is not a claim in this literature; it is an analytical starting point."

The organisational perspective is based on the notion that the bureaucratic structure matters and affects the actual decision behaviour in an organisation. By changing the organisational structure of the bureaucracy, one can affect the policy process and eventually also shape its outputs (Egeberg 2012, pp. 69-72). Ullström (2011, p. 37) explains this argument further when she writes that the fundamental idea is that the organisational position of an employee determines what they do. The position is the most important factor for what the employee does, and other factors such as personal values and cognitive perceptions also play a smaller role (Ullström 2011, p. 37). This argument goes back to Allison and Zelikow (1999, p. 307) famous research on the Cuban Missile Crisis, where he writes that "where you stand depends on where you sit".

The organisational perspective is based on the idea of bounded rationality. Hence, it starts from the notion that a decision maker is unable to attend to everything at the same time, and to consider all possible alternatives and their consequences (Egeberg 2012, p. 116). Organisations are made up by several relations that are predefined through positions, job descriptions and rules for what different actors should do, who should decide how, when and in what speed things should be done, and who to speak with whom about different things, as Ahrne (2007, p. 32) puts it. All of this can be seen as filters and selection mechanisms that sorts in and out what information that comes in to the organisation and how the information is treated.

Applying this type of organisational perspective on public organisations, Egeberg (1992) identifies some *organisational key variables* that from a public policy-perspective are manageable and affect the actual decision behaviour. These factors are divided into three main parts: the organisation's formal structure, its demography and locus (Egeberg 1992). When studying how the EP-administration is structured today and how

it has developed over time I will put emphasis on these organisational key variables. The variables should be seen as a specification of the dependent variable in the study, they are a way of categorising the kinds of organisational changes that this study wants to describe and explain.

2.1 Organisational key variables

An organisational perspective draws attention to the role of a decision maker's organisational context by paying attention to an organisation's formal structure, demography and locus. The argument is that the organisations are capable of endowing individual actors with goals and interests through these organisational key variables (Egeberg 2012, p. 67).

The first organisational key variable is *formal organisational structure*, which is a normative structure made up by rules and roles specifying, for instance working/operational instructions, impersonal norms etc. Hence, these rules and expectations define the interests and goals that are to be achieved, and which alternatives and considerations that are to be treated as relevant. The search process is thereby controlled and it also biases the information exposure. Given the restrictions of bounded rationality there seems to be a match between the decision makers need for simplification and the selection and filter that organisation provides, as Egeberg (2012, p. 70) puts it, referring to Schattschneiders (1975, p. 30) argument that "the structure of an organisation can therefore never be neutral, it always represents a mobilisation of bias in preparation for action".

More specifically there are some main indicators that can be used when looking at the organisational structure; the *size* of the organisation, such as number of employees, can be an indicator of the organisations capacity to initiate policies, develop alternatives or to implement final decisions. *Horizontal specialisation* defines how issues and policy areas are linked together or separated from each other, for instance transportation and environmental protection. There are four main principles that can be used in horizontal specialisation: territory, purpose (sector), function (process) or clientele served. Which one of these principles organisations are organised according to, matters for which conflict lines that will be lifted up to different levels. If the political-administrative institutions are mainly organised among territorial lines, there will mainly come up

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conflicts about this to the political level, but if the political-administrative institutions instead are organised according to the sector-principle, conflicts that deals with this will be lifted up to the political level. This is explained by the fact that those areas that are covered by the same organisational unit are more likely to be coordinated than those that belong to different units. It has been shown that cooperation and information flows usually follows the formal structure of the organisation (Egeberg 1992, pp. 193-196). *Vertical specialisation* deals with the intended division of labour across hierarchical levels within or between organisations, as Egeberg (2012, pp. 74-75) puts it. Method of coordination is expressed through the organisational structure, and it can be hierarchical or collegial. A collegial structure implies that decisions usually are made through bargaining, arguing or voting rather than through command. Government organisations are usually hierarchically organised even though collegial bodies, such as committees, to a greater degree are used to complement the hierarchical structures. Studies from the mid-1990s and onwards have shown that organisational units are more and more woven together, which has led to a kind of network administration.

Most committees engage people from many different organisational units. This means the participants have their *secondary affiliation* in the committees. There is reason to believe that the participants in the committees are affected to some degree by the agendas, alternatives and actors that they meet in the committees, even though we can expect the impact to be less profound than from the organisation where they have their *primary affiliation* (Egeberg 2012, pp. 74-75). In the case of the EP it is more relevant to differentiate between *permanent* actors like the staff, and more *temporary* actors like the MEPs. It is known that the EP has got a higher turnover rate than the European national parliaments in general (Hagemann 2009, p. 12). This fact can imply that the staff in the parliament might have a more long-term perspective on the evolution of the EP, whilst one could imagine that the shifting of MEPs might affect their capacity to get involved in the process of shaping the parliaments functioning.

Organisational *demography* refers to the composition of the personnel as regards to age, gender, ethnicity, nationality, education, length of service within the studied case etc. These types of factors are usually expected to have some impact on decision behaviour. The strength of the impact, however, is dependable on the characteristic of the organisational structure, and studies show that they generally do not have a strong impact, except for education.

Organisational *locus* is the least covered part in political science literature. However, you can assume that the actual physical setup to some degree has influence over decision behaviour since it can help separate or bringing different organisational units together. Studies have shown that physical distance has a negative impact on contact and coordination between ministries. This is probably due to that the decision maker usually has to make choices in a stressful environment, it is then understandable that information that are easier to get, for instance from persons that are in the office next by, plays a role in the decision-making (Egeberg 2012, pp. 76-77).

These key variables in organisational studies play an important role in this study since they can be used to specify the dependent variable, structure my analysis of the organisational changes and how the parliament has organised itself. As we will see in the following section, organisation does matter for how reorganisation takes place; this is an important analytical point for this study.

2.2 How do changes happen?

The aim of this study is to analyse how the organisational structure of the EP-administration has developed over time, and also to look at what caused the changes to happen and why the EP-administration was designed in the way it was. To do this, the EP-administration will be looked upon using two main perspectives on how public organisations work; the instrumental and the institutional perspective. These perspectives highlight different kinds of factors to explain organisational design and change, and they specify the way I will look at the administration, they form the spectacles that will be used in the study. The overall theme of the perspectives is on how organisations work on a fundamental level and also how they change. It is important to stress that the perspectives have different assumptions of how public organisations work, which actors that are relevant, on what basis they act and where the driving force of change comes from. Despite their differences, I argue, it is not necessary to see the perspectives as contradictory to each other, they are rather perspectives that help us analyse and understand how complex organisations like the public administration work from different angles. Changes may come as a result of conscious attempts to reorganise the institution to respond to changing circumstances and changes in the environment. That is for example when the EU grows and gets more and more member states, the

institutions might feel a pressure to become more effective in order to be able to work also in the new setting. But one might also find indications on that changes are incremental and path dependent, and that changes happen in a more organic way. As Thelen (2003, p. 212) writes; "[I]f institutions rest on and reflect a particular foundation (whether efficiency-based, or power-based, or cultural) then they should change as a result of shifts of these underlying conditions". Hence, there are changes in these factors I want to investigate, but also what the process that leads up to changes in the formal organisational structure looks like.

"Change is a constant feature of institutions and existing arrangements impact how institutions emerge and how they are reproduced and changed" (March & Olsen 1984, p. 11). However, it is important to note the difference between reform attempts and actual change in the formal organisational structure; "many changes are not the result of reforms and many reforms never result in changes" as Brunsson and Olsen (1993, pp. 3-4) note. This study aims to look into both actual changes and the conscious reform projects themselves; what background they have, what intentions reformers might have had and how the reforms has been shaped.

2.2.1 The instrumental perspective

The first perspective is an instrumental perspective on change, and hereunder two versions; one emphasising instrumental design as an analytical/problem solving tool and one emphasising the role of bargaining/negotiations when making decisions about organisational design. The instrumental perspective views the organisations as tools or instruments that are designed to achieve certain goals that are considered important. This is reflected in that a public organisation and its members acts instrumentally rational in relation to the goals and means when executing the tasks, and that the desired goals are achieved. Instrumentality is strongly associated with the use of organisational key variables as the ones I specified above. The members of the organisation are assumed to evaluate the available options from the consequences they have in relation to the goals that are set, make wilful choices between the available alternatives, and achieve the desired effects through these choices (Christensen et al. 2009, p. 33). But the instrumentality can also be manifested in that the design of the organisational structure is based on means-ends assessments, and further that this

shapes the way which tasks are carried out in. Hence, instrumentality may affect both the organisational structure and the process in which the organisational structure is shaped and determined (Christensen et al. 2009, p. 33).

The first version of the instrumental perspective, often called the hierarchical variant, views the organisation as homogenous and one assumes that the leadership, or the ones for whom the organisation is a tool for, has a clear picture of the connection between means and ends (Christensen et al. 2009, p. 34). Stacey and Rittberger (2003, p. 864) formulates this in what they call a functional version of rational choice institutionalism, which is similar to my perspective. The authors write: "The functional perspective stress that actors draw the joint gains from solving certain collective problems mainly by coordinating on a specific outcome". From this version, organisational changes happens when the environment and reality around the organisation changes. This can be changes either in what goals the organisations is set to achieve or changes in the surroundings that causes a need to change the organisations way of working to achieve the same objectives as earlier. Hence, "change [...] results from repeated interactions and 'updating' (learning effects), 'as individuals "craft tools" – including rules – to improve the structure of the repetitive situations they face'" (Stacey & Rittberger 2003, p. 865).

This also raises the question about for whom the EP-administration is a tool– the MEPs, heads of the administration or other actors. As previously mentioned, legislatures have the power to organise themselves in the sense that they do not have any authority above them that decides on their organisation. However this does not mean that it is clear who actually has the formal or the actual power to control the organisation of a legislature. Furthermore, Christensen et al. (2009, p. 34) writes that explanations that springs from this perspective focuses on the logic of consequences – the goals and means-end conceptions of the organisation and its members, which choices of action they make, and how the result of these choices harmonises with what was desired. The logic of consequences, is in this perspective seen as the fundamental logic of action, implies that the organisations have the capacity to carry out rational actions. These kinds of action, as Christensen et al. (2009, p. 35) has defined them, consist of four elements:

- *Goal or problem*: What does one want to achieve and what is the distance between that and the current state of affairs?

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- *Alternatives*: What actions are possible?
- *(Expectations about) consequences*: What future consequences in relation to the goals might follow from each alternative, and how likely are these consequences – assuming that the alternative is chosen?
- *Decision-making rules*: How to make the choice between alternatives?

From this logic, all actions within an organisation are based on a rational calculation of the possible consequences that different actions would lead to. This includes both the day-to-day business in the organisation as well as more complex processes such as a reorganisation. As many empirical studies have shown, and as I have described above, one cannot expect organisations or its members to act according to full instrumental rationality. One can instead assume that the actions are based on bounded rationality. This concept implies that the organisation does not have a complete picture of all available alternatives and consequences. An organisation has limited recourses and therefore has to make decisions based on limited information and uncertain knowledge of means-ends relations. From this it follows "that the organisation chooses an alternative that yields good enough, or an acceptable degree of, goal achievement. In other words, the organisation will have a decision-making rule built upon achieving satisfactory rather than maximum results, whereby satisfactory, but not necessarily optimal, solutions are chosen. It must be underscored, nevertheless, that even actions based on bounded rationality are marked by logic of consequences". (Christensen et al. 2009, p. 36)

The second version, often referred to as the *negotiation-based instrumental perspective*, differentiates from the first version in the way that it does not view the organisations as uniform actors that make wilful choices based on agreed or common goals. As mentioned above this might not always be the case, and one reason for this can be that different individuals and groups within the organisation can be committed to different and partly conflicting goals and interests. Organisations or its individual parts must also relate to other organisations that might have other goals and interests. From this version of the instrumental perspective, organisations can be understood as coalitions, where individual actors or groups act based on their different interests (Christensen et al. 2009, p. 43). Negotiations between the actors within an organisation get a central role in understanding how the organisation works. Interest distribution may be rooted in the formal organisation structures, for example related to that actors

carry out specialised tasks. The resources they have to articulate their own interests can also be rooted in the formal structure, for instance in sub- or super-ordination, or in relation to horizontal coordination (Christensen et al. 2009, p. 44). Stacey and Rittberger (2003, pp. 864-65) explains this argument further when they write; "the distributional perspective [of rational choice institutionalism] emphasizes that the joint gains from cooperation may be unevenly distributed. Consequently, institutions reflect different actors' bargaining power rather than, say, the mutually perceived attractiveness of an efficient solution to a given collective action problem". This also means that the negotiation-based version has other assumptions about how change in organisations happen, as Stacey and Rittberger writes: "Institutional change can be induced either by a change in the distributional implications of existing institutions, for example by splitting dominant change-resistant actor coalitions (see Tsebelis 1990: 110–15), say, through the actions of skilful 'herestheticians' (see, e.g., Riker 1984, 1986; McLean 2001) or modifications in the bargaining power of the actors due to change in their resource-holding power (Knight 1992)" (Stacey & Rittberger 2003).

When looking at the way organisational reforms are organised, the instrumental perspective emphasises how the leadership in an organisation choses to structure this work. Organisational questions can be put in a separate unit that gets its own budget and can build up its own competence in the area, or it can be assigned to an already existing unit or position that also handles other issues. It can be organised in a hierarchical structure where the leadership has got a firm control and choses which interests to include in the formal process and which to opt out. There may also be other organisational forms for designing the reform process that substitutes or supplements to a hierarchy. Experts can be involved in working groups or producing their own organisational reports commissioned by the organisation's leaders. If reforms are wide-ranging or the patterns of interest and conflicts are complex, one usually sets up a broad commission that includes many of the interests that then comes with recommendations to the leadership. Participation from others than the leadership means a more negotiation-based process. In the case of organising and re-organising the administrative support in the EP this would imply that the existing structure and its capacities do matter for how the process is carried out, how information is filtered or biased and what alternatives that are evaluated etc.

The negotiation-based perspective raises some questions as regards to what conflict patterns or diverging interests that can be identified in the reorganisational processes in the EP; Does the EP-administration/ EP Leadership control the reform process? Can one see that different groups of actors have different interests? I will here present a set of different expectations about what conflict lines one could expect to find in such an organisation as the EP:

First; as mentioned earlier, one division that has been argued for is the one between the long term participants in the EP, the administrators, versus the short term or temporary participants, the MEPs. A conflict between these groups could instance that the bureaucrats wanting to match the structures of the commission - which is the institution that they have most contact with - or to maximise their own budgets and responsibilities, whilst the MEPs that want supporting staff and helping hands.

Secondly; an probable conflict line is a partisan political division between the political groups in the parliament, for instance between the centre-right EPP (European Peoples Party) group and the centre-left S&D (Socialists and Democrats) group, or one could also imagine a division that puts those two big groups on one side and the smaller groups on the other, as we have seen example on in Kreppels study.

Thirdly; there could be conflicting interests between the different organisational groups within the parliament, for instance between the EP staff and the political group staff. Strengthening the General Secretariat might be perceived as a threat to the legislative support from the political group secretariats.

Fourthly; there might be interest conflicts between the leadership in the parliament and the employees, probably aggregated through unions.

As mentioned earlier, the negotiation-based perspective assumes that changes either comes from changing alliances between the stakeholders or changing bargaining power between them in terms of distribution and resources. From a negotiation-based instrumental perspective, this study aims to analyse how these interests are organised in the reorganisation processes, at what stages they come in and in what way they are included. In this context it is also relevant to analyse and what standpoints these different actors take and how they articulate them, as we have seen before when studying public organisations; the structure matters.

2.2.2 The institutional perspective

The second perspective on change is focusing on the role of the organisational history and culture, often referred to as the cultural or institutional perspective. Philip Selznick (1957) draws a line between what he calls the organisation, the formal and instrumental as it is described above, and the institutional, the informal norms and values that gradually and almost organically grows within an organisation. This perspective emphasises the institutionalisation of organisations, this means that the organisations develop its own norms, values and identities that have an independent influence on the actual political and administrative behaviour. Selznick describes the institutionalisation as a process where "an organisation acquires a self, a distinctive identity, it becomes an institution. This involves the taking on of values; ways of acting and believing that are deemed important for their own sake. From then on self-maintenance becomes more than bare organisational survival; it becomes a struggle to preserve the uniqueness of the group in the face of new problems and altered circumstances." (Selznick 1957, p. 21)

The perspective starts from the notion that actual behaviour is influenced by earlier choices, experiences, institutional identity and history. This relates to the informal norms and values that grow in an organisation and form the way people act and connect with each other (Christensen et al. 2009, pp. 52-54). The fundamental logic of action from a institutional perspective is what March and Olsen calls the logic of appropriateness. This can be described as in the members of an organisation follow a logic where there actions are shaped by what is seen as "natural, rightful, expected and legitimate". "Members of an institution are expected to obey, and be guardians of, its constitutive principles and standards" (March & Olsen 2006, p. 7). Members of an organisation gets socialised into the identities as to belonging to that organisation, and also to the specific position that they hold in the organisation. Because of this, they act to fulfil the expectations that follow with these identities rather than rationally calculate consequences of their actions (March & Olsen 2006, p. 9). A strong organisational culture might constrain the possibility for decision-makers to control and change how the organisation works, a kind of path-dependency (Christensen et al. 2009, pp. 52-54). One of the challenges is therefore to explain how the institutionalisation processes can be "stabilised or destabilised, and which factors that sustain or interrupt on-going

processes" (March & Olsen 2006, p. 5). In other words, the challenge is about how to explain how changes do happen in political institutions, like the EP. One of the most used models for explaining institutional change is Stephen Krasner's model of "punctuated equilibrium". As Thelen, Steinmo and Longstreth (1992, p. 15) summarises:

> *Briefly, Krasner's model posits that institutions are characterised by long periods of stability, periodically "punctuated" by crises that bring about relatively abrupt institutional change, after which institutional stasis again sets in. Institutional arrangements help explain policy outcomes during periods of institutional stability, since these arrangements structure political conflicts in distinctive ways. In Krasner's version, institutional crises usually emanate from changes in the external environment. Such crises can cause breakdown of the old institutions, and this breakdown precipitates intense political conflict over shape of the new institutional arrangements.*

However, as Thelen, Steinmo and Longstreth (1992, pp. 15-16) notes, the model of punctuated equilibrium only focuses on how external shocks creates opportunities for change. This can indeed be a very useful analytical point, but research has shown that institutional change also can happen as a result of more gradual learning and adaptation processes. As mentioned, the logic of appropriateness means that individuals in the organisation connect certain expectations with their identity. From a institutional perspective, reform happens slowly and stepwise in an incremental process. One can describe it as an evolution rather than a revolution. The connection between the formal parts of a reform and the actual change might not be entirely clear. The way reform processes are organised will affect what solutions and actions that are deemed good and appropriate, but it is still the informal norms linked with organisational forms and methods of change that are most important (Christensen et al. 2009, p. 155).

From this perspective, it would be relevant to ask if the different actors in the EP have different expectations about what practice that is the best. For instance, the MEP's come from a national context and many of them have been members of their national parliaments before they come to the EP. This might lead to a cultural clash between different groups that come from institutions where what is seen as appropriate might look different. This means that they bring with them their own expectations about how the administrative support of a parliament should work and what support they should be provided with. Historically the EP has had a very strong and independent General Secretariat because in the first two decades of the parliament's history they did not have

any politicians working permanently in the parliament (Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton 2011, p. 219). We know that what is considered appropriate behaviour is assumed to be conditioned by the norms and values that were formulated in an organisations early, formative years (Christensen et al. 2009, p. 62). Since the EP, compared to national parliaments in the EU, has got a rather different organisational background in this sense one could expect some norms and traits remaining from that time. There are also three clearly different types of administrative personnel working in the EP, and one might expect that a change in the formal organisational structure of the EP administrative support might imply different things for these groups and that they would try to lobby their own interests in a reform process. The institutional perspective can seem to be similar to the negotiation based instrumental perspective, but there are differences; In the instrumental perspective, groups are expected to make their choices based on a rational evaluation of different alternatives, whilst in the institutional perspective they rather base their decisions on what is perceived as appropriate based on the norms and ideals in the group. However, this distinction is hard to make in a document-based study. Often, in a document based study like this one, one has to content oneself on to note that the actors have different positions and, to the extent that it is possible, analyse what arguments that the actors uses as argument for their standpoint.

As mentioned, the theories have some fundamentally different assumptions about how organisations work as regards to the logic of action and how change happens. The theories are to be treated as complimentary to each other, rather than competing. Some of the relevant aspects that these theories tell us about, and give us tools to analyse, are; when we can expect change, which actors that are relevant in the process and what the organisational thinking look like. The research question of this study is asking how the *formal* organisational structure of the EP-administration has developed over time and how can these changes be explained. Hence, the instrumental perspective and organisational key variables will be dominating in answering the first part of this question. To answer the second part of the question I will focus on using both perspectives to analyse how the changes has been designed, what the process looked like and why the changes came about.

3   Method and data sources

To answer my research question I will use a single case study-approach, where the administrative support structure in the EP is the case. I will mainly use qualitative data processing where my main sources are official documents, minutes of meetings etc. According to Gerring (2007, p. 7) the strength of the case study approach is that it gives you the possibility to go deep into a case to understand and investigate; "the product of a good case study is insight". George and Bennett (2005, p. 31) explains this argument further when they write that "case study researchers are more interested in finding the conditions under which specified outcomes occur, and the mechanisms through which they occur, rather than uncovering the frequency with which those conditions and their outcomes arise." In other words, they are aimed at understanding the empirical conditions or reasons for a given outcome, and the mechanism or process that leads from cause to consequence. In this context it is important to stress George and Bennett's argument that "there is no single case study design. Rather different case study research designs use varying combinations of within-case analysis, cross-case comparisons, induction and deduction for different theory building purposes" (George & Bennett 2005, p. 49).

Furthermore, George and Bennett list the main strengths with the case study approach: *First*, the case study does not require all variables to be clearly identified and defined before the study starts. This gives us the possibility to inductively identify new variables, generate new hypothesises and go in depth with the causal mechanisms behind a phenomena (George & Bennett 2005, p. 46). *Second*, singe case studies can test individual cases regarding claims made about causal mechanisms, like the ones presented in the two theoretical perspectives on change in this study (George & Bennett 2005, p. 46). To answer the research question I will focus on structuring the changes that has happened to the formal organisational structure of the administration according to the organisational key variables, using documents from the political process in the parliament. Since the research question also is about how the changes can be explained, a process tracing approach would be sufficient.

3.1 Process tracing

The chosen theories present some assumptions on how the causal mechanisms work in public organisations, e.g. which factors that are central in causing an organisation to change and what that change will look like. George and Bennett (2005, p. 205) argue that process tracing is the most appropriate method for uncovering such causal mechanisms. The authors write: "In process tracing, the researcher examines histories, archival documents, interview transcripts, and other sources to see whether the causal process a theory hypothesizes or implies in a case is in fact evident in the sequence and values of the intervening variables in that case" (George & Bennett 2005, p. 6). Different types of evidence are often used to explain a certain outcome and long causal chains are often constructed (Gerring 2007, pp. 172-173). Each types of evidence are sampled from a different population, and this means that the evidence is non-comparable in its nature (Gerring 2007, p. 179). The strength of process tracing lies in its basic assumptions. The foundations of the study is formalised through the outlined causal relationships. Checkel (2008, pp. 2-3) writes about the use of mechanisms when tracing processes. "Mechanisms operate at an analytical level below that of a more encompassing theory", they are the factors that under certain circumstances connects cause with its effect and thereby an outcome on the dependent variable. The aim of process tracing is to identify these mechanisms in the process (Checkel 2008, pp. 2-3). In this study, the mechanisms can be said to be e.g. the specified organisational key variables, but also other concrete examples of how the behaviour of individuals, groups and organisations are controlled according to the theoretical perspectives, for instance how the logic of action works.

One of the strengths with process tracing is that of identifying a causal chain and present stronger evidence for causality than what statistical analysis or other methods are able to do. Process tracing means that you need to identify as many variables and observations as possible in that process. This helps narrowing the list of potential causes for a certain outcome, but even so it may be difficult to eliminate all other explanations but one. "But process tracing forces the investigator to take equifinality into account [...] and it offers the possibility of mapping out one or more potential causal paths that are consistent with the outcome and the process tracing evidence in a single case" (George & Bennett 2005, p. 207). By identifying as many steps as possible in the causal process,

one can also put these in to a causal diagram. This "forces the author to make a précis and explicit statement of her argument", and combined with a description in prose it makes one of the strengths with process tracing (Gerring 2007, p. 182). The strength is also the pitfall of process tracing. If you cannot present consistent and well-founded assumptions about the correlations of variables and what mechanisms that has been operative in the predicted cases, the risk is that the analysis becomes weak (George & Bennett 2005, pp. 208, 222). Process tracing is a method that requires a lot of time and it is therefore also costly because it means that you need to collect and analyse a great amount of data. One of the great risks when processing the data is that you lose the big picture and focus too much on the details. It is therefore crucial to keep the broader structural context in mind to be able to sort out what is relevant and not. However, even if you need to collect much data, the strength of this method is also that itself defines when enough data is collected (Checkel 2008, pp. 10-13). This argument is important to keep in mind. In this study, the list of source documents from the EP is around 80, and in total they make up hundreds of pages. It is impossible to account for and describe all details in these documents, given the limits in time and space. Therefore it is crucial to be able to pick out the essential pieces, the ones that really affected the reform processes in a significant way.

In a process tracing case study, the presumed context of the case constitutes the frames for both what kind of data one need and how it is obtained (Gerring 2007, p. 181). As shown in the theory chapter, the instrumental and institutional perspectives have different assumptions of how public organisations work, which actors that are relevant, on what basis they act and where the driving force of change comes from, in other words, they frame the study differently. The purpose of this study is not to test which of these perspectives that are the most relevant, but rather to be able to answer my research question by applying these elaborate perspectives on the changes in the formal structure of the EP-administration.

3.2 Data sources

The relevant documents to structure and analyse the evolvement of the organisation of the EP-administration are annual reports/activity plans from the EP, the EU-budget, internal audit reports, the parliament's establishment plan, minutes from

relevant bodies, investigations and reports as well as other documentation from the political processes that lead to the changes that has been made in the EP-administration. The data from the EP itself will, when applicable, be supplemented by research made by others. To answer my research question, I have collected as much documentation about the organisation and re-organisation processes in the EP administration as possible. The studied time period covers the time from 1999 and until 2012, however the data are mostly focusing on the period from 1999-2003. Bigger changes in the organisational structure in the parliaments administration happened during this time.

There is no consolidated document that can be studied when describing the changes in the parliament's organisational structure. Consequently I searched in depth in the archives and registries of the EP to find documents that can describe the organisational changes and the process behind them. To find the data I have red a first set of reform documents and relevant scientific articles, and from these I have found links and references to other documents, a kind of snowball method. In a larger study it would have been preferable to be able to study all minutes from the Bureau, which is the competent body within the EP that has the formal responsibility for administrative reform. However, this is a task too big for this study. I have therefore chosen to use the snowball method. This has lead to the focus on the period between 1999-2003 were Vice-President Provans Working documents were processed, as well as the following 'Raising the Game'-proposals from the Secretary General. These two reform processes will be central in this study. A larger study would have made it possible to follow up all changes that have happened after 2003 as well, I hope other researchers will do this in the future.

The documents studied includes minutes from the bureau meetings, some of them, mostly from the first period, are going in depth and directly referrers what the bureau members has said in the meetings, but others only refers the actual decisions that were made and nothing more than that. Other documents are internally and externally produced studies and working documents of the organisation, official rules of procedure and the official website of the EP. I will analyse the documents by reading them both out from the theoretical perspectives presented above, and according to the process tracing method. This means that the content of the documents will be related to the organisational key variables and the perspectives on change, with emphasis on changes in the organisational structure. The documents will also be presented

chronologically to uncover causal mechanism and identify relevant actors, their behaviour and logic of action, to the extent that this is possible through the reading of these documents.

As Tansey argues, "particularly in political science, process tracing frequently involves the analysis of political developments at the highest level of government, and elite actors will often be critical sources of information about the political processes of interest" (Tansey 2007, p. 766). Since the organisation of the EP-administration is a matter decided by the political leadership in the parliament, it would be relevant to complement the document analysis with elite interviews. However, due to the limits of the scope, time, and their availability, as well as to the fact that this is a rather new case to study, I have chosen not to perform interviews, but rather put more emphasis on the formal processes and how the organisation has developed during the studied period. Formal documents are a common source of information when performing process tracing and especially when focusing on the formal process and the formal organisational changes as this study does. This also means that this study does not provide much evidence of the type that you need to analyse the institutional perspective in depth. These theories do however serve as angles of approach also when analysing and explaining the formal process. Traces of restraint to change one's own organisational unit can be part of a path dependency, an attitude to do as one always have done. This is the way that these perspectives are used empirically and therefore these perspectives are included in this study.

I argue that the documents used in this study can be used to reveal relevant information of the formal processes in the EP, which and how different actors played a role in these processes, how the outcome was shaped, and what the outcome looked like. Hence to investigate how the formal organisational structure of the EP-administration has changed over time and how these changes can be explained. As mentioned earlier, the EP-administration has not gained much attention by the academic sphere earlier. Therefore, many more studies than this one would be required to cover all sides and perspectives on such a complex and elaborate institution as the world's first and only supranational and directly elected legislative assembly.

3.3 Validity and reliability

As in all social studies it is important to value and discuss the validity and reliability of the study. A good validity is achieved when the examination corresponds with what we really want to study. Therefore, the purpose of the study, research question and operationalisation must be strongly connected with the choice of method to avoid systematic errors. Reliability means that the study should be able to be repeated at another time by another person, but with approximately the same results. Therefore, we carefully have to describe how the research process is carried out to avoid unsystematic errors (Essaiasson 2002, p. 13; see also Adcock and Collier 2001:231; Babbie 2001, 144-5; Carmines and Zeller 1979, 14–5; Yin 45).

Yin draws up the concepts of validity into three different types of tests; construct validity, internal validity and external validity. All these are commonly used tests to establish the quality of empirical social research (Yin 2009, p. 40). Construct validity is defined as "identifying correct operational measures for the concepts being studied (Yin 2009, p. 40). This is in line with Adcock and Collier (2001, p. 230), that organises the discussion around measurement validity in to four levels, and claims that the task is to refine the validity through these four levels. The authors define the levels:

At the broadest level is the background concept, which encompasses the constellation of potentially diverse meanings associated with a given concept. Next is the systematized concept, the specific formulation of a concept adopted by a particular researcher or group of researchers. It is usually formulated in terms of an explicit definition. At the third level are indicators which are also routinely called measures. This level includes any systematic scoring procedure, ranging from simple measures to complex aggregated indexes. It encompasses not only quantitative indicators but also the classification procedures employed in qualitative research. At the fourth level are scores for cases, which include both numerical scores and the results of qualitative classification (Adcock & Collier 2001, p. 230).

Adcock and Collier (2001, p. 231) further argues that the discussion about measurement validity should "focus on the relation between observations and the systematized concept; any potential disputes about the background concept should be set aside as an important but separate issue". As regards to this study, the background concept is changes in formal organisational structure, which also is a rather well defined concept. The indicators that it is operationalized to are the organisational key variables

and the causal mechanisms of the theoretical perspectives as they are defined in the theory chapter. The theoretical perspectives all have a unique definition of what that is the logic of action for that perspective. To identify these in the formal documents, one has to look into the arguments of the actors and also put them in relation to background factors and the actors' organisational position. These indicators are of a qualitative nature and therefore not measurable in the sense that you can quantify them or put in scores on a scale. It is important that researchers are aware that in a qualitative analysis such as this one, one has to make interpretations and "read between the lines" in order to capture the essence of the data. An obvious pitfall with this is that there is misinterpretation. Consequently it is crucial to have a clear theory and methodology where you anchor the interpretations in the work of the empirical analysis (Runfeldt & Wramner 2009, p. 4). I argue that the method of process tracing is best suited for this study because it is a method to identify the complete causal process and identify the operative causal mechanisms. The chosen indicators come from a well-tested and established theoretical framework in organisational studies, and I will therefore argue that they are well suited to measure the chosen concept.

Internal validity, Yin defines as "seeking to establish a causal relationship, whereby certain conditions are believed to lead to other conditions, as distinguished from spurious relationships" (Yin 2009, p. 40). This is a general problem in social sciences, and therefore important to be cautious of. However, as discussed above, the ability to identify and come close to the causal mechanisms is one of the strengths with the process tracing case study. That is because it focuses on identifying all relevant steps in a process and addresses both rival explanations and use a logic model to explain outcomes. Together with the well-established theoretical framework used in this study I therefore argue that this study has got tools to deal with many of the pitfalls when it comes to internal validity.

Some of the authors to the scientific articles and texts that are used as a second source of information in this study does or did, at the time of their writing, also work inside the EP administration. The strength of these texts is also their weakness. The fact that the authors have worked inside de EP-administration provides them with closeness to the studied object in this study in a way that wouldn't be possible otherwise. The closeness is strengthening the validity because it means that the authors have seen the parliament in action and can therefore easier identify the causal mechanisms from their

perspectives. These circumstances also opens for a risk for biased texts because of the loyalty these persons might have towards their employer. However, the texts are written for and published in scientific books and settings.

External validity is the task of "defining the domain to which a study's findings can be generalised" (Yin 2009, p. 40). Generalisation in this case should not be seen as the statistical sense "in which a sample is intended to generalise to a larger universe". In analytical generalisation, Yin writes, "the investigator is striving to generalise a particular set of results to some broader theory" (Yin 2009, p. 43). In this study, the set of theories that are used are broad theories on public organisations in general, therefore it would be easy to think that the results of this study could be generalised into such a broadly defined concept. However, there are some restrictions that makes generalisation more difficult. The first one is that parliaments have some quite unique features in terms of its organisation. Legislatures have the power to organise themselves, no outside authority can decide upon their organisation. The members of a legislature are formally equal to each other and they do not stand in the relationship of authority or subordination of each other, as members of hierarchical organisations do (Loewenberg & Patterson 1979, p. 164). Secondly, the case in this study is not just any parliament; it is the EP, which is the first and only directly elected supranational representative institution in the world. This means that the EP has got some features that might restrict the possibility to generalise the results of this study. One must be cautious about these restrictions and keep them in mind. However, I still argue that some generalisation is possible since there are connections to the situation that other legislative assemblies face, and that the administrative side of the EP is structured in similar ways as administrative organisations in general, which in turn are formal organisations.

4 Organising the European Parliament staff

This chapter will present the empirical results from the study. The chapter will start with an overview of the evolution of the EP from 1999-2012, together with a presentation of the general structure in the EP, with emphasis on the administration and the bodies that takes decisions on its structure. Following, the roles that the different types of administrative units play in the EP and its legislative process will be presented. The recruitment and staffing policies are then presented. The starting point for this first part of the chapter is the organisational key variables. The changes to the formal organisational structure will be presented in this part as two strikes in the history; how the structure was in 2000 and how it was in 2012.

Moving to the second part of this chapter, I will go through the identified reform processes, where as we will see, many of the structural changes happened. The findings from the process tracing will form the basis of this part of the chapter. Emphasis is on how these processes were initiated, shaped and carried out, which actors that played an important role and how they did so.

4.1 The structure of the EP staff

The MEPs have three types of assistance available for their service; from the EP itself (General Secretariat & Committee secretariats), from the political groups and from the MEPs own personal assistants. The first of these categories was clearly dominant for many years, but this position has changed since the mid-1990s (Neunreither 2002, p. 46). In spite of the major changes that have happened to the EP as regards to its political role in the EU system, the EP-administration remained basically untouched until around the turn of the millennium. (Neunreither 2002, p. 55 and Kungla 2007:77).

In a dichotomy between a more European administrative system based on an impartial professional service, distanced from political interference, on one hand, and on the other is an American 'spoils' system based on majority rule, the EP system clearly places itself in an European tradition. The EU administrative system "was built according to French traditions and conceptions. The backbone of this system is recruitment on the basis of general competition, high degree of tenure, and a broadly

objective promotion system with a tendency to favour seniority over merit" (Neunreither 2002, p. 46).

The EP administrative support has developed to a non-partisan and respected service with a strong General Secretariat. One of the reasons for this goes back to the time before the MEPs was elected directly by the people in the member states (Neunreither 2002, p. 46). "Before the first EP elections in 1979, the chamber was an unelected assembly composed of delegated members of the national parliaments who had to split their time between their original mandate and the EP (and in some cases also the Council of Europe). This provided for considerable independence of the secretariat during MEPs' absence and for 'desk officers' to become experts on legislative files, with little chance for the members to acquire comparable knowledge" (Neunreither 2002, p. 46).

When the direct elections were introduced, the number of MEPs was doubled and most of them worked full-time in the parliament. This made it possible for the MEPs to acquire more knowledge and to "become proficient in policy matters" themselves. The independence of the General Secretariat has however never been reduced or limited by this, mostly because of the security of tenure of its senior officials. Career-movements in the EP tend to happen rather slowly; many of its senior officials have worked in the GS for some 30-40 years before receiving a high-ranked position. This has provided for a good breeding ground where the staff has been integrated and institutionalised step by step into the unwritten rules that are important for an independent and non-partisan service (Neunreither 2002, pp. 46-47).

As a result of a political compromise, the activities of the EP is spread to three European cities; Strasbourg in France is the formal seat and the place for the Parliaments plenary sessions that are held one week every month. During the other weeks, the political work is located to Brussels, were the EPs committees and political groups meet and extra sessions can also be held here. Finally, the greater part of the General Secretariat is located in Luxembourg (Tallberg 2013, p. 91).

4.1.1 The leadership of the EP administration

The leadership of the EP consists of an elected president, and 14 Vice-Presidents, that oversee all the work of the Parliament and its constituent bodies (the Conference of

Presidents and the Bureau), as well as the debates in plenary. The president and the Vice-presidents are nominated and elected directly by the parliament. After electing those, the parliament elects five so called Quaestors, that are responsible for administrative and financial matters directly concerning MEPs (European Parliament 2012b Rules 20-25).

The Conference of Presidents is the political body in Parliament responsible for the organisation of Parliament's business and legislative planning, deciding the responsibilities and membership of committees and delegations and the external relations of the EP, such as other EU institutions, the national parliaments and non-EU countries. The Conference of Presidents consists of the President of the Parliament and the political group chairmen (European Parliament 2012b Rules 20-25).

The Bureau is the regulatory body that is responsible for taking financial, organisational and administrative decisions on matters concerning the internal organisation of Parliament, its Secretariat and its bodies. The Bureau therefore plays a central role in the change processes within the EP-administration. Members of the Bureau are the president and the 14 vice-presidents, also the Quaestors may participate in the Bureau, but they do not have the right to vote. All of the members have one vote each, and if the voting results in a tie, the President shall have the casting vote (European Parliament 2012b Rules 22-33).

Table 1   Main duties of the Bureau

- Takes financial, organisational and administrative decisions on matters concerning the internal organisation of Parliament, its Secretariat and its bodies.
- Takes decisions on matters relating to the conduct of sittings.
- Decides the establishment plan of the Secretariat and lay down regulations concerning the administrative and financial situation of officials and other servants.
- Draws up Parliament's preliminary draft budget estimates.
- It is the authority responsible for authorising meetings of committees away from the usual places of work, hearings and study and fact-finding journeys by rapporteurs.
- Appoints the Secretary-General.
- Lays down the implementing rules relating to Regulation (EC) No 2004/2003 of the EP and of the Council on the regulations governing political parties at European level and the rules regarding their funding.

Source: (European Parliament 2012b Rules 22-33)

As seen in table 1, the Bureau decides the so called *establishment plan* for the Secretariat, however there is no consolidated process for doing so. On the contrary, the procedure of deciding on the structure of the Secretariat is made case by case. For instance, if a new Directorate has to be created, the Secretary General submits a proposal to the Bureau and the Bureau decides on the proposal. This does not mean that the Bureau adopts an updated establishment plan every time the structure of the EP changes, but rather makes a decision to establish that particular directorate or unit (Caus Galvez 2012).

4.1.2 The General Secretariat

The General Secretariat (GS) is the decidedly largest part of the EP-administration and its organisational design is elaborate. Its tasks are wide-ranged and include coordinating legislative work and organising plenary sittings and meetings. It also provides technical and expert assistance to parliamentary bodies and Members of Parliament to support them in the exercise of their mandates, and managing the finances and budget of the EP. (European Parliament 2012c)

The EP establishment plan provides the General Secretariat with 5647 posts (figures as of 01.01.2012, (European Parliament 2012a, p. 8)); compared to national parliaments the GS is much bigger. This, according to Corbett et al., can to a large degree be explained by two facts; first the GS has to ensure that all parliamentary bodies can operate in all 23 official working languages of the EU, and secondly that the EP is spread over three main places. These two facts account for around half of the annual EP budget. Of all the GS-staff just above 90% of the posts are divided almost equally between Brussels and Luxembourg, the rest work in either Strasbourg or in the information offices that the parliament have in all member states (Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton 2011, pp. 218-219). Translation and publishing is a big task for the General Secretariat, and about one third of the staff is translators (IOHRPU 2009, p. 8). The political groups and MEPs have relatively little influence over the appointment of new staff, except for the top positions (Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton 2011, pp. 219-220).

Secretary-General and his Cabinet

The head of the organisation is the Secretary-General, who is also the most senior official of the parliament. To perform his tasks, the Secretary-General has a Private Office that supports him in coordinating the work of the secretariat. In the parliament's 60 year old history, there have only been seven secretaries-general (Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton 2011, p. 222). The Secretary-General performs all his tasks under the political leadership of the President, the Bureau of the EP and the Conference of Presidents of the EP. In order to carry out his tasks, the Secretary-general is supported by the Cabinet, which is organised in various teams. In addition to this, a few sensitive services come under the direct supervision of the Secretary-General. The organisation of the Secretary-General and his Cabinet had not changed in any of the reform processes that this study covers. However, as we will see, the Secretary-General plays an important role in the making of these reforms.

Table 2 Units and services under the Secretary-General	
Cabinet teams	**Services under SG supervision**
• Head of Cabinet and his Team • Private Office of the Secretary General • Personnel Management Team • Resource Management Team • Policy Management Team • EP2025 Team • Internal Organisation Team	• Secretariat of the Bureau and Quaestors • Secretariat of the Conference of Presidents • Directorate for Relations with Political Groups • Internal Audit Service • Risk Management • Cost and Quality Control Unit • Data Protection Officer

Source: (European Parliament 2012c)

The Directorates-General

As of today, the GS is divided into ten Directorates-General, the EP Legal Service and the Secretary General's office (Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton 2011, pp. 222-223). The division of tasks between them are mainly made on sectorial and functional grounds. While the Secretary-General has the leader role in the GE, the vast majority of the work

in the General Secretariat is made by the Directorates-General, or DGs. Before 1973, there were only four DGs, but this has grown gradually and today there are ten DGs, plus a separate Legal Service (Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton 2011, p. 222). The DGs play a central role in supporting the MEPs in their work. This is especially valid for the DGs for Internal and External policies, where the committee secretariats and policy support for all political committees in the EP are organised.

Table 3   The directorates

- Directorate-General for the Presidency (DG PRES)
- Directorate-General for Internal Policies of the Union (DG IPOL)
- Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union (DG EXPO)
- Directorate-General for Communication (DG COMM)
- Directorate-General for Personnel (DG PERS)
- Directorate-General for Infrastructure and Logistics (DG INLO)
- Directorate-General for Translation (DG TRAD)
- Directorate-General for Interpretation and Conferences (DG INTE)
- Directorate-General for Finance (DG FINS)
- Directorate-General for Innovation and Technological Support (DG ITEC)

Source: (European Parliament 2012c)

4.1.3 The staff of the EP's political groups

The EP's budget allocates money to the Political Groups, both as direct financial support, and as staff entitlements, office space, meeting rooms and technical facilities. The EP has established precise rules regarding the amount of financial support as well as the number of staff to which Political groups are entitled. The most important criterion is the number of members in each Group, but the number of working languages also plays a role (Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton 2007, p. 99). The number of staff in the Groups has grown greatly in recent years. In 2012, 1015 post were budgeted for the Groups as compared with 285 in 1982. This represents a far higher increase than that for the Parliament's permanent staff (Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton 2007, p. 100 and European Parliament 2012a, p. 8). The majority of Political Group staff are hired as temporary staff and are therefore not hired under the inter-institutional rules that cover the permanent staff (Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton 2007, p. 100 and Staff Regulations 2004 Section II, Title I, Article 2). The staff are recruited directly by the Groups (with the

national delegations playing an important role) and therefore they do not need to pass the open competitions that apply for Parliament's permanent officials. They do however enjoy de facto if not de jure job security as relatively few are dismissed as a result of election defeats, political disappointments or Group reorganisations. The recruitment process is sometimes based on political and personal contacts, but especially the larger groups has established more objective methods with oral and written exams as well as language tests, however, naturally, political affinity and political experience are taken into account (Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton 2007, p. 100).

The groups have the right to choose by themselves how they should be organised and therefore has it's own internal structure. Some general patterns do however occur. They have a Bureau composed of a chair, vice-chairs, treasurer and others. In the larger groups, the bureau plays a more important role in preparing and coordinating discussions, positions etc. Group chairs are the political leadership and represent the group both outside the parliament and inside, in major debates, the Conference of Presidents and in informal Group chair meetings, where many deals are made (Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton 2007, p. 101).

The political groups have historically played a rather technical role, even though their focus on the work in the committees has been rising and nowadays they are used to coordinate their members in the committees and work out possible amendments to reports in the name of the political groups (Neunreither 2002, p. 49). According to insiders, the level of coordination from the different political groups vary quite much, where the S&D group has a larger degree of central party coordination than the EPP-group has, where the different MEPs more clearly votes according to their home country (Nordmark 2013).

The work in the Groups are organised both based on functions and sectors, for instance administrative or press work, or responsibility for urgency debates in plenary or a specific policy area. In the large groups there can be as many as three staff following the same committee, whilst in the small groups the same person might have to follow three committees at once. The staff help prepare Group meetings and Group positions before the plenary sessions. They may also prepare background information, draw up whips both in committee and plenary as well as rounding up Group members from other Committees to help in tight votes. They contribute to maintaining contacts with national parties, national governments where the party is in power, Commissioners of their own

tendencies as well as other organisations. They must also take account of the various national, sectoral, or constituency considerations that are of importance to individual members. Group staff often go on to political careers as MEPs both in the EP and in national parliaments (Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton 2007, pp. 100-101).

4.1.4 The MEPs' personal assistants

The MEP's personal assistants are the third component of the EP administration, besides the General Secretariat and the political groups. They are hired by the individual MEPs as part of their secretarial allowance, and the MEPs can to a large degree decide over their assistants' terms of employment and how they are used. This staff tends to be junior personnel with high turnover (Michon 2008; Egeberg et al. 2011, p. 3) The MEPs have a large degree of freedom to decide how to use their allowances, some MEPs prefer to have only one or two highly qualified (and better paid) assistants while others have less qualified assistants, but then can afford to hire more. They can be placed either in Brussels, the MEPs constituency or in the national capital. In some cases, the national delegations from a party decides to hire the assistants together and use them as a unified office where the assistants can help different MEPs depending on their competences and the MEPs needs.

Typical tasks include arranging meetings with Commission officials, organisations and lobbyists, handle correspondence (including several hundreds of e-mails a day), draft letters, articles or reports. Some assistants are also used to draft and write proposals to the parliament, and are in that sense directly included in the legislative process (Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton 2007, pp. 67-68). The assistants can play a very important role in their function to filter information from external sources and their possible impact on legislative proposals (Neunreither 2002, p. 51)

4.2 Roles in the EP

To understand the EPs internal life and the roles of the three sources administrative support to MEPs, one must know some things about what the normal political law-making processes look like, the so called "Ordinary Legislative Procedure", as well as the documents that regulates this. In this context the Rules of Procedure (RoP)

plays an important role. It is the EPs "constitution" and structures the internal organisation of the Parliament, the relationship between individual members, the various party groups and increasingly the relationship and interactions between the EP and the other institutions of the EU both formally and informally. The RoP also establishes the hierarchical structures that govern the EP and serve to structure the day-to-day activities of the Parliament including all activities related to the policy-making process. Because of the importance of this document, the EP has also made it hard to change its content, both formally and practically. Any modification to the RoP requires an absolute majority of component members voting in support (currently 378 votes out of 754). The practical problem is that the EP has a high level of absence among its MEP's. Hence, to change the RoP, the two largest party groups, the EPP (European Peoples Party, centre-right) and the S&D (Socialists and Democrats, centre-left) must work together. The two party groups share a common interest in the sense that they are so dominating in the European party landscape. Ever since the first direct elections took place in 1979 the two groups has controlled 60-70percent of the seats in the EP, while neither of them has controlled an absolute majority by itself (Kreppel 2003, pp. 893-894).

The Ordinary Legislative Procedure works in the way that the European Commission proposes new laws, in fact it is the only body that can do that, and then the Parliament and Council adopt them. The Commission and the member countries then implement them. The Commission also has the role of ensuring that the laws are properly applied and implemented. In the legislative process, this means that the EP, Commission and Council must come to an agreement on the content of a new law in order to adopt it. Inter-institutional negotiations are therefore necessary. In order to coordinate the negotiations inside the EP, the committee that is responsible for a new proposal from the Commission always elects a rapporteur for each legislative act. The rapporteur is one of the MEPs in the committee in question, and his or hers role is to coordinate and write the committees amendments to the act, together with motivations for these amendments (European Parliament 2013d and European Parliament 2012c Rules 45-74). This gives the rapporteur a central role in the legislative process.

In order to carry out his or her work, the rapporteur, as well as the other MEP:s, needs assistance, which can be provided from various places, as Neunreither (2002, pp. 49-50) writes: "The rapporteur selects his assistants himself, and he can choose

between various options – some of whom are more expert-orientated and non-partisan than others. If he cooperates closely with someone from the committee's secretariat he opts for professionalism, assuming that possible personal differences of political opinions will not hamper loyal services". Historically, the dominant choice has been to cooperate closely with the committee secretariats. No official figures exists, but an internal study from the early 1990s shows that this was the case in around 80 per cent in all parliamentary reports. "Insiders agree that direct assistance via the committee secretariats has decreased over the last decade. A rough guess for the main legislative committees might see their involvement now at about 50 per cent" (Neunreither 2002, pp. 49-50).

Neunreither explains this decrease with the "increased availability of documentation and background material, especially via electronic means, and the more focused action of interest groups that have appeared on the scene as voluntary legislative assistants". The higher use of interest groups and lobbyists has strengthen the role of the assistants in their function to filter information from external sources and their possible impact on legislative proposals. "This can strengthen the position of a rapporteur while keeping the option of close co-operation with internal EP services open", Neunreither (2002, p. 51) writes.

4.3 Staffing and recruitment

The permanent officials in the EP are employed under the same conditions as all staff working in other EU institutions (Official Journal of the European Union 2010 Article 298 and 336). Consequently, the EU has developed an administration in the form of a European Civil Service where the officials of the EP are covered by the same statue as the ones in for instance the Commission and Council. This leads to an easy mobility between the institutions, but on the other hand it does not distinguish the executive and the legislative services of the EU. Binding the officials to a specific institution, such as countries like France and Great Britain does, would be in line with the separation of powers theory (Pegan 2011, pp. 2-3). In Western Europe the development of a comprehensive legal framework over public administrations has indicated professionalisation and been a way to guarantee against clientelism and corruption

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(Pegan 2011, p. 2). The EP has followed in this tradition by developing such a legal framework in the form of Staff regulations and Rules of procedure.

The most recent version of the Staff Regulations for the EU was implemented in 2004. According to the Staff regulations, the officials working in the EU can be divided based on two aspects: group and function (Staff Regulations 2004). The staff working in the General Secretariat is permanent officials whilst the staff working for the political group secretariats and the personal assistants to the MEP's are temporary officials. All staff working in the EP have some important aspects in common: 1) They assist MEPs and other political figures in the EP 2) they form the internal source of information within the EP, compared to external sources such as the Commission, national or local government, NGOs and interest groups 3) they are financed from the budget of the EP (Pegan 2011, p. 2).

The second aspect that characterise the staff in the EP is "the nature and importance of the duties to which they relate" (Staff Regulations 2004 Article 5). The regulations divide the staff into two categories: administrators (AD) and assistants (AST). The AD category staff perform administrative, advisory, linguistic and scientific duties, i.e. translators, interpreters, economists, lawyers, medical officers, scientists, researchers, financial officers and auditors. Executive, technical and clerical duties are carried out by AST officials, i.e. personal assistants, filing clerks, technical attendants, IT attendants, parliamentary ushers, IT operatives and technicians (Staff Regulations 2004 Article 5 and Annex I).

Compared to the US, where each committee has its own employment policy, the EP has got a centralised system for all these issues (European Parliament 2000a, p. 225). The committee staff in the US may have very strong partisan preferences, as recruitment is left to the committee chairmen, whilst the recruitment in the EU is built up to guarantee non-partisanship and independence (Pegan 2011, p. 2). All secretariat officials are, as the general rule, since 2010 recruited through the common European Personnel Selection Office, which arranges yearly open competitions, common for the European Civil Service in all main EU Institutions (EPSO 2013).

The recruitment process is based on strategic human resource (HR) planning in all EU institutions, meaning that the institutions and units must report a forecast of its staffing needs for the coming 3 years. The competitions and testing are supposed to evaluate the thousands of applicants against a competence framework. The framework

includes testing of skills like analysis and problem solving, communication, prioritising and organisation, leadership and team work etc. This means that EU-specific and domain-specific knowledge is only of secondary importance. The exams are announced and arranged on a yearly cycle and the duration of each cycle, from announcement to the presentation of the reserve list, should not exceed 9 months. The reserve list is a list of all candidates that has passed the testing and thereby is validated for a job in the EU. From this list, the candidates' competence profiles are then matched against the actual needs of the EU institutions. The recruitment system is mainly based on merit and competence; the Staff Regulations however provides that officials are to be "recruited on the broadest possible geographical basis from among nationals of Member States of the Communities. No posts shall be reserved for nationals of any specific Member State" (Staff Regulations 2004, Title III, Chapter 1, Article 27). This explains why some recruitment aimed specifically towards new or underrepresented member states is announced some times. Yet, there are no hard-coded quotas for any nationality (Baneth 2012, pp. 13-20). Personal assistants to the MEPs and political group officials are recruited directly by the individual MEPs and political groups. The practice for employment differs between the different MEPs and the political groups. Common is that political ties and loyalty is taken to consideration, but also professional and technical competences count (Pegan 2011, p. 2). The assistants are however employed and paid directly by the EP. The assistants are hired as temporary staff and do not need to pass any official recruitment competition, but the selection is entirely up to the MEP in question (Baneth 2012, pp. 5-6).

4.4 Overall organisational changes

During the studied period there has been several changes as regards to the formal organisational structure of the EP. These changes will here be presented and structured according to the organisational key variables.

4.4.1 Formal structure

Within the General Secretariat there has been changes made as regards the organisation and horizontal specialisation of the Directorate-Generals. The changes

themselves and the ideas and processes behind them will be further investigated and presented in chapter 4.5, but I will here present them on an aggregated level.

The old DG 2 – Committees and Delegations and the DG4 – Research has been transformed into DG for Internal policies and DG for External policies (Secretary-General 2003, pp. 1-2). The DG for internal policy organises the secretariats for the committees regarding for example budget, economy, environment, employment, agriculture, and internal affairs. Whilst the DG for external policy organises the secretariats for the committees regarding for instance security, foreign affairs, trade, and development aid. (European Parliament 2013c and European Parliament 2013a). The idea by doing this has been to "bring together all those who can contribute to improving all aspects of drafting quality of texts, and at the earliest stage" (Secretary-General 2003, p. 1). This was made through merging the committee staff from DG2 and the more research-focused experts from DG4 into new, policy-based, directorates. These changes aimed at pooling the experts closer and make them more involved, and easier available to the MEPs, in the parliamentary reading of the proposals on an earlier stage than before.

One other change is that the DG6 – Administration has been split into two DG:s, one for Infrastructure and Logistics and one for Innovation and Technological Support. Hence, the DG for Infrastructure and Logistics now handles the "management of Parliament's buildings in Brussels, Strasbourg and Luxembourg and the information offices in the Member States", as well as "management of equipment and practical arrangements for meetings" (European Parliament 2013a). The DG for Innovation and Technological Support, on the other hand, "provides the EP with information and communication technology services as well as printing and distribution services. It implements Parliament's policy of transparency and access to information [...]" (European Parliament 2013b).

The old DG for Translation has been divided into one DG for Interpretation and Conferences and one DG Translation. The new DG for Translation ensures that Parliament's documents are available in all the 23 official languages of the European Union. This means translating documents out of and into the official languages of the EU, thus the new DG for Translation only works with the translation of written text. The DG for Interpretation and Conferences, on the other hand, works with the organisation of interpretation for all Parliaments' meetings in and outside the three places of work.

Figure 1   General Secretariat 2000
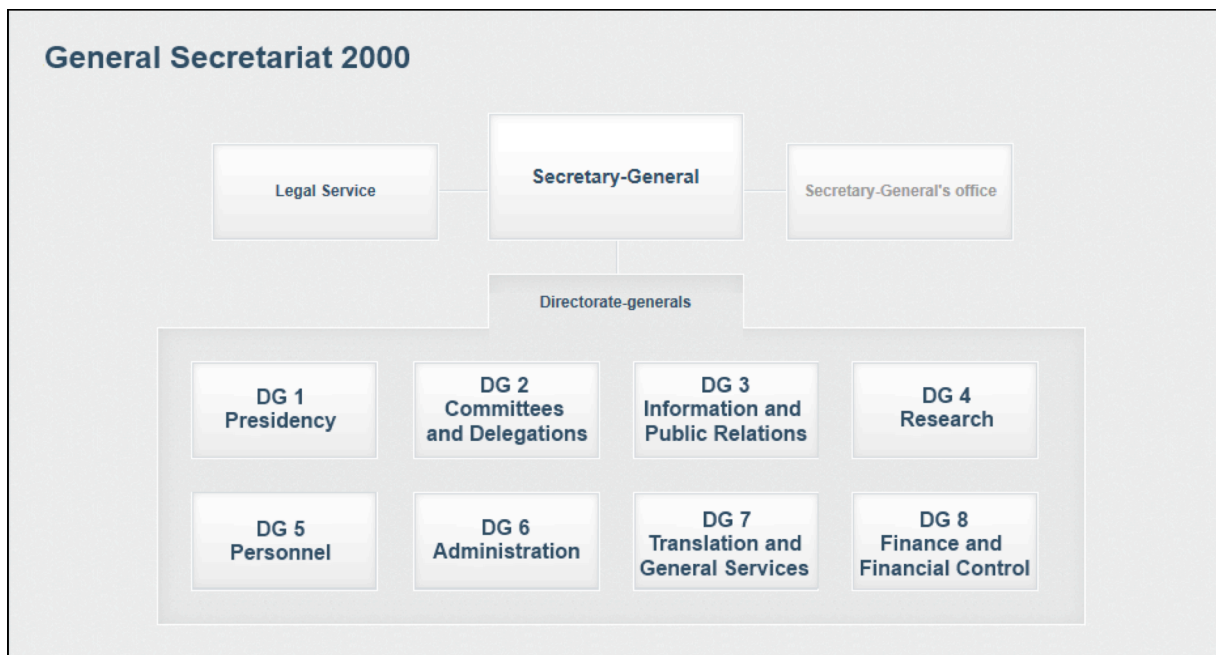
Figure 2   General Secretariat 2012

These horizontal changes to the structure of the GS has been motivated as a way to adapt to a "changing environment" that had "resulted in a situation where that administrative location of certain services [was] not optimal" (Secretary-General 2003,
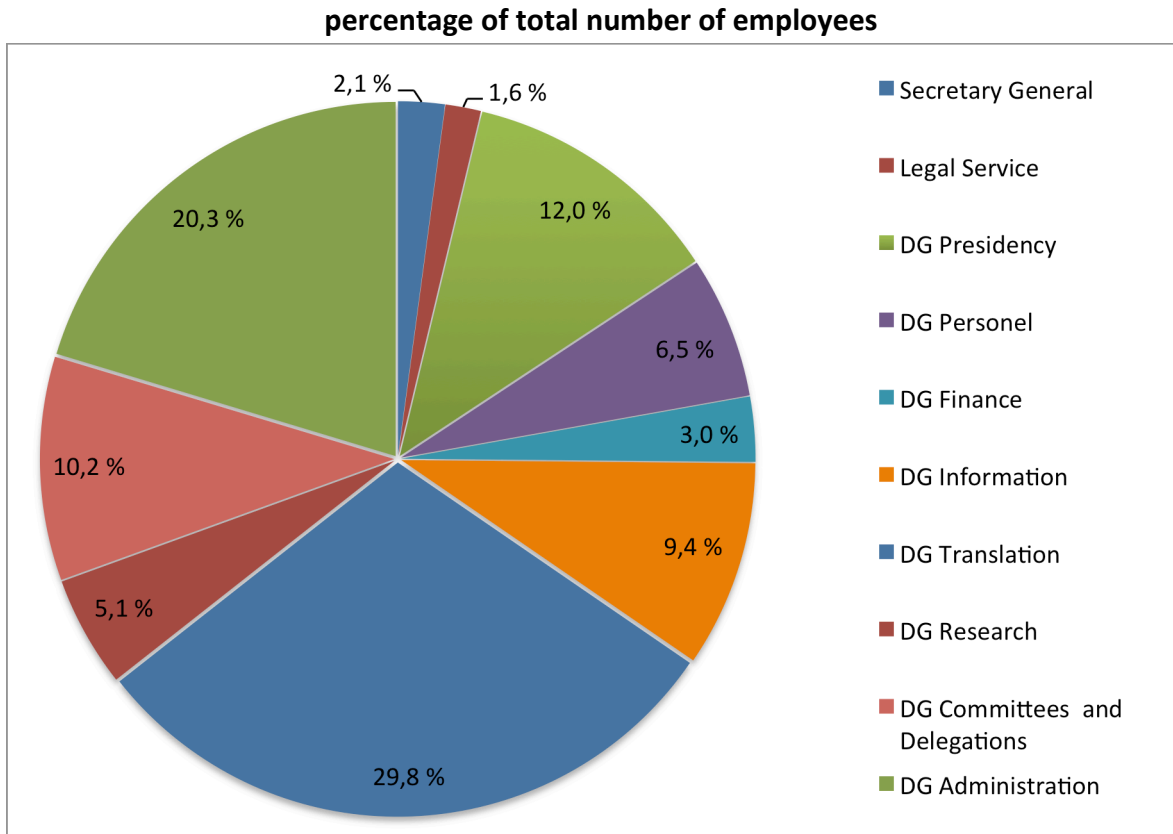
p. 2). These organisational changes are to some extent covered in the following review of the reform processes. However, as mentioned before, this review does not cover all changes that have been made to the administrative structure of the EP, but it covers the biggest and most extensive review of EP-administration that has been made by the EP so far, and focuses on the way these changes were carried out.

4.4.2 Staff structure

In the tables 3 and 4, presented hereunder, we can see a graphical view of the size, measured as per cent of the number of employees, of the DGs in relation to each other. The number of DGs has changed from the year 2000 to 2012 and a direct comparison can therefore be problematic since staff groups have been transferred between the respective DGs. However most staff has remained the same or been transferred to only one of the new DGs, since their functions fit that DG best. I have therefore grouped and coloured the DGs in order to make a comparison easier.

The Current DG for Communication is basically the same as the old DG Information, just with a new name. The current DG for Translation and DG for Interpretation and Conferences mostly consists of staff that earlier was stationed in the old DG Translation. In the same way the current two DGs for Internal and External Policies of the Union mostly consists of staff that earlier was stationed in the old DG Research and DG Committees and Delegations, whilst the DG for Innovation and Technological Support and DG for Infrastructure and Logistics mostly consists of staff that earlier was stationed in the old DG Administration.

Figure 3   Distribution of staff among DGs - 2000

percentage of total number of employees

Legend:
- Secretary General
- Legal Service
- DG Presidency
- DG Personel
- DG Finance
- DG Information
- DG Translation
- DG Research
- DG Committees and Delegations
- DG Administration

Values shown: 2,1 %, 1,6 %, 12,0 %, 6,5 %, 3,0 %, 9,4 %, 29,8 %, 5,1 %, 10,2 %, 20,3 %

Figure 4   Distribution of staff among DGs - 2012

percentage of total number of employees

Legend:
- Secretary General
- Legal Service
- DG Presidency
- DG Personnel
- DG Finance
- DG Communication
- DG Translation
- DG Interpretation and Conferences
- DG Internal Policies of the Union
- DG External Policies of the Union
- DG Infrastructure and Logistics
- DG Innovation and Technological Support

Values shown: 1,8 %, 1,8 %, 12,8 %, 6,7 %, 3,4 %, 11,3 %, 22,0 %, 9,9 %, 10,3 %, 4,1 %, 7,9 %, 8,0 %
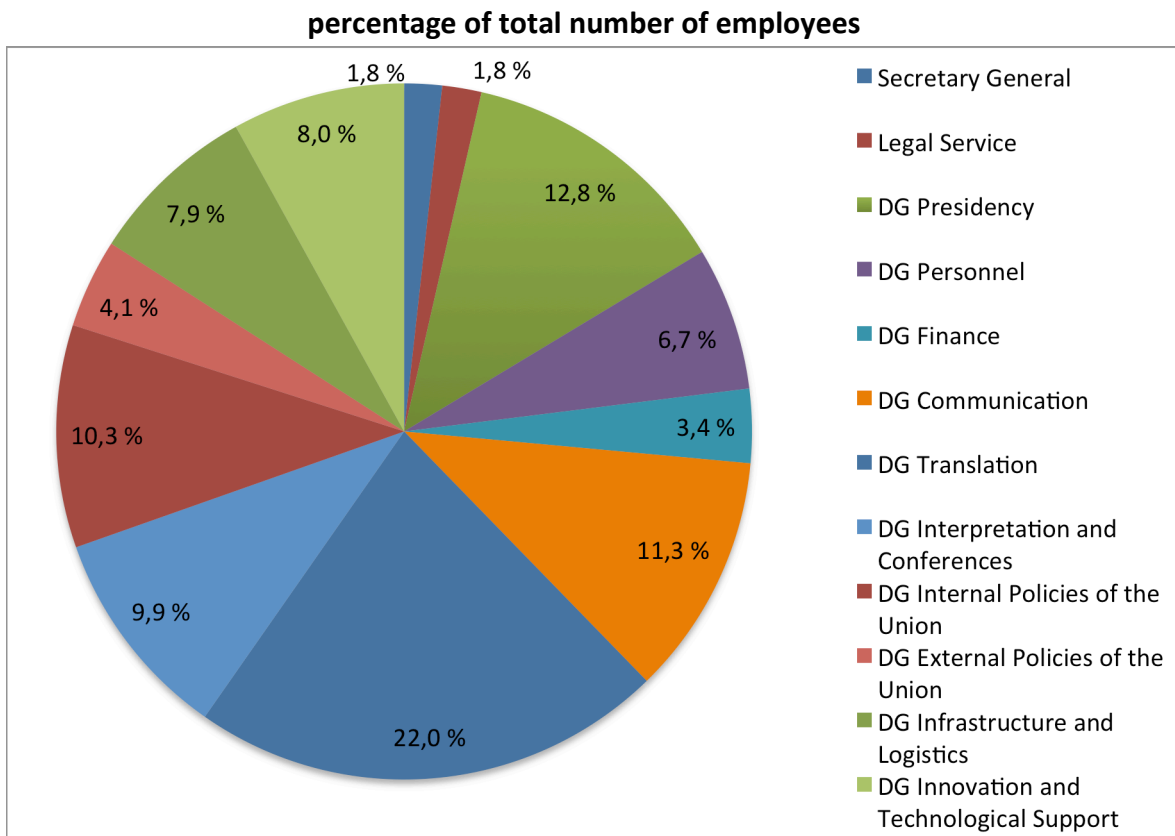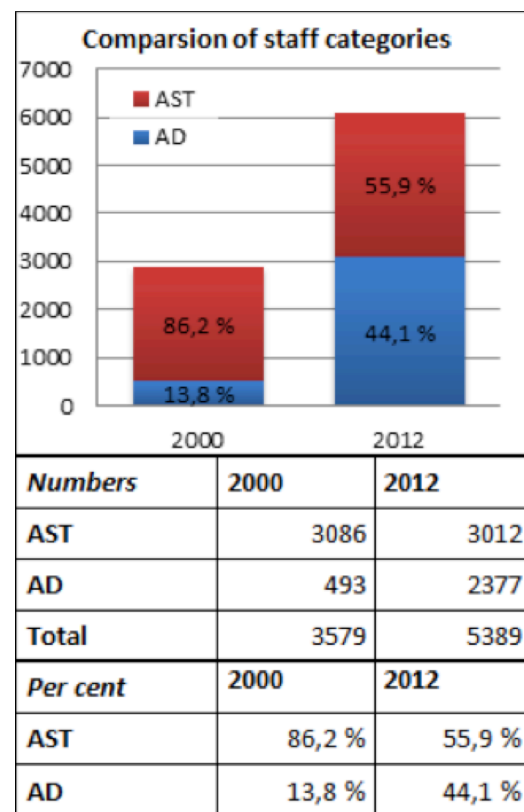
As we can see in the table 5, there has been a doubling of the number of staff in the General Secretariat over the studied period. However, this is not the only change that has happened. The ratio between administrative and assistant staff has also clearly changed. Today, 44.1 per cent of all GS staff is in the AD-category, compared to only 13.8 per cent in year 2000. These calculations are based on documents provided by the EP itself (European Parliament 2000b and 2012). The calculations are based the relevant numbers in these documents. During the studied period of time, the categorisation of staff has changed; this means that a reclassification of the staff into the current AD/AST categories has been necessary. This change was reflecting a move to recruiting staff with higher level of competence to match new requirements within the institution. The salary structure and terms of conditions of service were also substantially revised in response to calls to modernise the European civil service, particularly in the aftermath of the fall of the Santer Commission in 1999, as Corbett, Jacobs and Shackleton (2011, p. 218) writes.

The results of my calculations shows that in 2000 there was 6.3 assistants employed per every administrator. In 2012 the number is 1.3. Hence, there has been a significant increase in the percentage of AD-

Figure 5   Staff categories

Numbers	2000	2012
AST	3086	3012
AD	493	2377
Total	3579	5389
Per cent	2000	2012
AST	86,2 %	55,9 %
AD	13,8 %	44,1 %

(European Parliament 2000b 2012c)

Table 4   Classification of staff

The old system was dividing staff into five categories (A for administrative staff, LA for translators and interpreters, B for executive assistants, C for clerical staff and secretaries and D for manual service staff), whilst the new system has got two function groups: AD for administrators, including linguistics, and AST for assistants (i.e. all other support staff). In fact AD is the equivalent of the old A/LA (Administrators/Linguistic Administrators) and AST (Assistant) is the equivalent of the old B, C and D. AST embodies now the whole range of assistants that before was divided in B (Higher level), C (middle level) D (lower level)

(European Parliament Registre 2013)

category staff. If these numbers are broken down into Directorate-General (DG)-level we can , in figure 6 and 7, see that the most significant increase in administrators has been in the DG Translation and DG for Interpretation and Conferences.

The recruitment system changed dramatically (Baneth 2012, p. 13), when the EU institutions introduced The European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) and the Concour as we know it today. The EPSO is responsible for selecting staff to work for the Institutions and Agencies of the European Union, the Institutions and Agencies can then recruit its staff from the pool of candidates that has passed the EPSO selection procedure, known as the Concour (EPSO 2013).
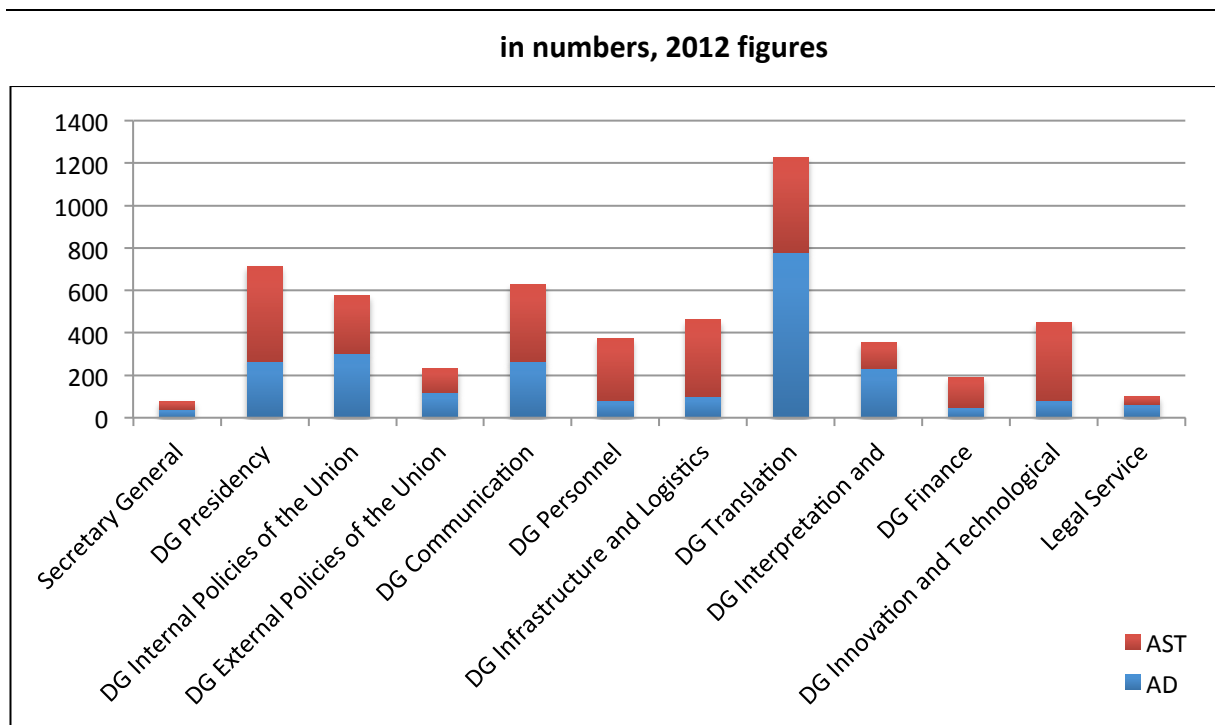
Figure 6   Distribution of staff among DGs and category

in numbers, 2000 figures
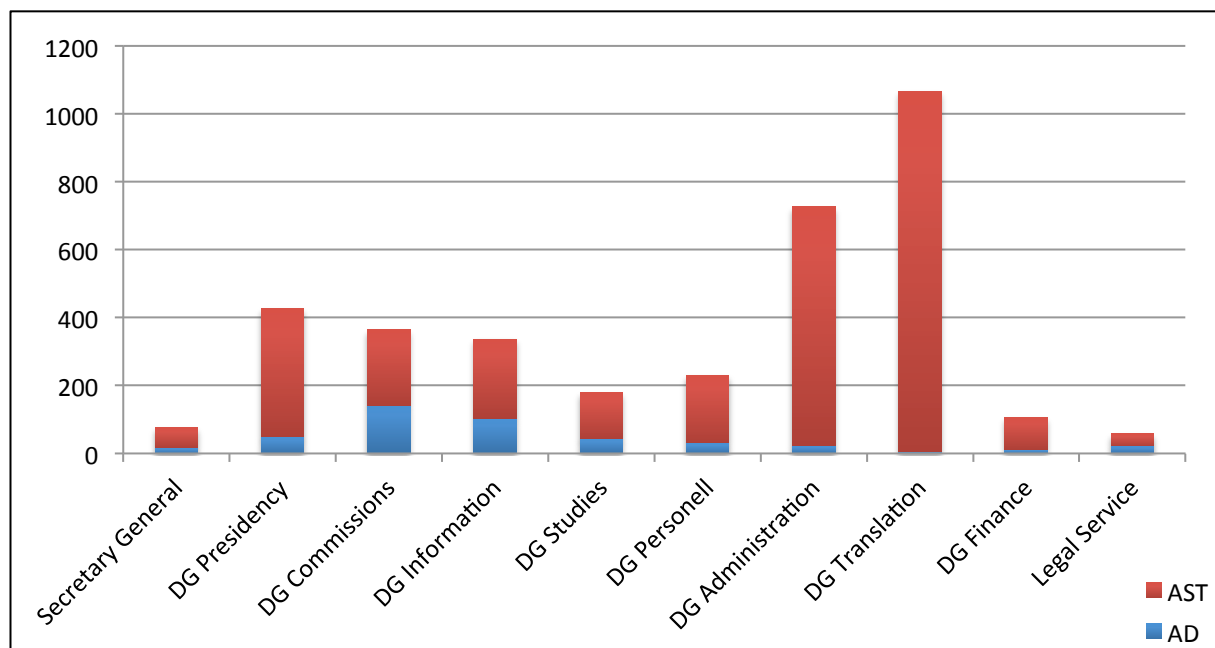
(European Parliament 2000b)

Figure 7   Distribution of staff among DGs and category

in numbers, 2012 figures

(European Parliament 2012c)

4.4.3 Locus

As we have seen, the activities of the EP is spread to three European cities; Strasbourg, Brussels and Luxembourg. This is a result of a political compromise that most people see as "unfortunate", and not least the MEPs has tried to push for gathering the whole EP to Brussels, where the European Commission and the Council are located. Most member states support the idea of a single place for the EP, but since the question requires consensus to change, France and Luxembourg are able to block this issue (Tallberg 2013, pp. 91-92). There have however been some changes made to the location of some staff, in accordance with the proposals made by the Secretary-General of the EP. These proposals was made as part of the "Raising the Game"-reform, covered in the coming parts of this study, and included an ambition to "end the geographic and administrative separation of committee secretariats and research staff in DGIV, by bringing the relevant staff to Brussels [...]" (Secretary-General 2003, p. 6).

4.4.4 Summary

To sum up the main changes in the overall structure of the EP, we can note some general characteristics. This summary is made based on the research question and demarcations of it, namely that this study focuses on the organisation of the administration in the EP, and especially on the administrations role of assisting the Parliaments Members.

The first change we can note is that the DGs that organises the committee secretariats has been reformed. Earlier all committee secretariats were organised into the DG for Committee and Delegations (DG 2), but now this DG has been split up to two new DGs; one for internal policies and one for external policies. These new directorates has also been complemented with the staff that earlier worked in the DG for Research. The staff from DG for Research has been transferred to the relevant policy units in the new DGs. Their tasks has also changed from that they earlier produced deep analyses on a long-term basis, to producing quicker and more easily accessible texts on topics that are of immediate interest to the MEPs and relevant to the legislative acts of the day. This change has also involved transferring staff posts from Luxemburg, where the DG for Research was located to Brussels where the new DGs are located.

The second change is that the number of staff in the General Secretariat has almost doubled during the studied period. The distribution of the staff between the DGs has been basically unchanged.

Thirdly, we can note that this is not the only change that has happened to the staff structure. The ratio between administrative and assistant staff has also clearly changed. Today, 44.1 per cent of all GS staff is in the AD-category, compared to only 13.8 per cent in year 2000. When broken down on respective DG, we can see that this change is especially notable for the language services.

Fourth, we can note that there have been transfers of staff posts towards Brussels. These changes has however clearly been restrained by the political compromises between the Member States of the EU, as we will see more of.

4.5　The reform processes

So now we have seen *what* that has changed to the formal organisational structure of the EP. Now I will move on to describing how the reform processes has been carried out, in order to answer the second part of my research question: How can these changes be explained?

To answer this question I will look in to the two big reform attempts and processes that the Parliament has gone through during the period examined. Each reform process and its rationale will be presented hereunder. The reform processes have been carried out over 2-3 years, and I have decided to name the processes after the person, Vice-President James Provan in the first process and later the Secretary General Julian Priestley in the second, that was central in driving the process and writing the proposals to the Bureau. Since there is only about six months between the Provan process ended until the Priestley process starts, one can discuss whether this should be seen as two separate processes or as one single reform process. Even so, since they can be separated by a clear and final proposal to the Bureau I will present them as two processes. It is however necessary to underline that the processes are closely linked together.

As written earlier, this study focuses on the organisation of the administration in the EP, and especially on the administrations role of assisting the Parliaments Members. This is a kind of autonomous and scientific research support that not all national parliaments provide to their MEPs. In 2000 the Directorate-General for research performed an in-depth comparison of all the national parliaments in the EU, as well as the US Congress to see how these were structured in both their political and administrative work. This study showed that only some parliaments have this kind of scientific support (European Parliament 2000a). Among these is the German Bundestag, which has a research department with about 60 experts working (European Parliament 2000a, p. 87). The French National Assembly does not have any kind of unit or department working on these issues, hence all research made is based on the political staff (European Parliament 2000a, p. 64). The Greek and Swedish parliaments have both got a research department of about 25 experts, while the Irish parliament has got two staff working on research (European Parliament 2000a, pp. 103, 116 and 192). In the case of the Swedish Parliamentary Research Service, the EP study underlines that the

Swedish parliament has clear rules stating that studies provided by the autonomous service "must be objective, well founded and presented in a form that is concise and easily accessible" (European Parliament 2000a, p. 192).

4.5.1 The first part of the reform process (main actor James Provan)

In 1999, for the first time in a very long time, or ever, there was an attempt to take a holistic approach to the parliament's way of working, not just in the administrative support but also on how the MEPs were working, the voting procedures etc. As we will see, when it comes to the administrative side of the EP, this reform proposal did not get the necessary support from the Bureau. I will here look closer in to the actual reform suggestions, but also on the process leading up to the proposal to see what explanations that can be found.

The Internal Organisation Unit of the Directorate-General for Personnel had performed a study on which the Secretary General lays down a document where he proposed measures intended to "clarify and strengthen the role played by DG 4 (Directorate-General for Research) in Parliament's secretariat by ensuring that the products and services provided by DG4 fully meet the needs of those who use them" (Secretary General 1999). These proposals will be the starting point for the presentation of the first reform initiative.

The reform proposal is motivated for five reasons; 1) Legal obligations to ensure transparency and public access to documents 2) relocation of resources between DG4 and the Parliamentary Documentation Centre in Brussels 3) adaptation to the new IT-structure in the EP 4) clarify the roles of DG4 and the DG for Committees and Interparliamentary Delegations 5) Continue the work of The Science and Technology Options Assessment unit (STOA) to streamline methods and procedure. Out of this analysis of the situation, the Secretary General proposed some changes, where the most important ones were the establishment of a steering committee for DG4, consisting of the members of the central political bodies of the EP (the College of Quaestors together with the presidents of the Conference of Committee Chairmen and Conference of Chairmen of Interparliamentary Delegations and Join Parliamentary Committees) to ensure that "the services and products provided meet the needs of those for whom they are intended" (Secretary General 1999, pp. 1-2). These changes lead to a stronger

political control over the administration, and were also adopted by the bureau, however the basic organisational framework was left intact.

Following these decisions a general awareness of the need for administrative reform was rising (Kungla 2007, p. 75). Vice-President James Provan (UK, EPP) was assigned with the task of being rapporteur for these issues in the EP. As Vice-President of the EP, Provan was a member of the Bureau, which is the competent body for these kinds of decisions. During the following months he presented a set of working documents on internal reform, in total there are six of them, that were circulated and discussed among the central actors in the EP (Provan 1999, pp. 1-3 and Kungla 2007, p. 76). The documents had a broad approach, covering issues such as the work of the plenary, rules of procedure, status and members' allowances, status of personal assistants etc. (Provan 1999 - 2001b).

Provans first working documents

In his first Working document "Areas of reform", published 1 December 1999, Provan acknowledges that the mandate of his task, to develop a strategy for internal reform, is long. Therefore, he writes, he will use this first document to define the starting points for his work. Provan clearly states that the subject of internal reform is "horizontal", and that "discussion of subject areas for which responsibility has been attributed to other members of the bureau" is inevitable. He further underlines the need of an open discussion and consensus-based decision-making in order for the task to bear fruit. In some areas it will be possible to come forward with concrete proposals in the relatively near future, whilst in others change will inevitably be a long-term affair, Provan (1999, p. 2) writes. The rapporteur further lists all areas that are susceptible to reform and their rationale, among these this study will cover:

Table 5 Areas susceptible to reform and their rationale

- Attribution of activities to Brussels and Strasbourg
  - Possible geographical concentration of certain activities
  - Enhance visibility of activities
- Structure of secretariat
  - Review overall staffing levels, increase or decrease as appropriate, rationalise the allocation of staff to different functions, with priority to the political needs of Parliament
  - Rationalise the geographical deployment of staff
- Assistance to members
  - Reassess the requirements of members in terms of staff assistance;
  - Review the structure and role of committee secretariats
  - Review the role of the directorate-general for research vis-a-vis members and committee secretariats
  - Review relations between secretariat staff, political group staff and members' assistants;
  - Review personal assistance to office-holders(notably vice-presidents)
  - Consider move towards staffing by member (personal staff) rather than by parliamentary function.
- Employment status of staff
  - Review and possibly modify in accordance with conclusions drawn above
- Support resources for members
  - Enhance documentary/information technology facilities available to members
  - Reassess physical environment for political activities
- Administration/budget
  - Look into possibility of managing certain categories of administrative activity and expenditure on an inter-institutional basis (buildings, linguistic services, etc.)
  - Focus use of Parliament budget on on-going Parliamentary activities

(Provan 1999)

Following these proposals set out by Mr Provan, the Bureau had a meeting on the 14th of February 2000 where the Working Document no 1 was discussed. Some interesting points taken up;

"[Provan] suggested that Parliament, first of all, should become less bureaucratic so as to be able to handle its new powers, particularly in the context of the conciliation procedure, and be in a position to exercise greater influence. In this connection, Mr Provan cited the example of the US Congress,

which he thought was an interesting case, and the number of officials of which was considerably smaller than that working for the EP (1350, as opposed to 3260 posts at the EP, excluding the Language Service). He said that at this stage he was not aiming at reducing the number of staff, but that he recommended shifting the focus of their work." (Bureau 2000a, p. 14).

In the following debate, a general agreement develops about how to relate to the need to restructure the EP and in which order things are to be made. Mrs Lienemann, Vice-President, can illustrate this general agreement with her statement:

The European Parliament should first of all clarify the priorities for change. By way of example, she referred to the need to draw up a hierarchy of the European Parliament's different functions [...]. Only then, in the light of its priorities for change, should the European Parliament equip itself with appropriate staffing resources (high level of skills in new technology, mastery of technical data) (Bureau 2000a, p. 16).

Following the discussions, the second Working Document (Provan 2000a) was published on 19 April 2000 and was aimed at developing and articulating the ideas that were developing among the Members of Bureau. VP Provan here identifies the principal objectives of reform, broken down into subcomponents, broadly defined measures that could be used to achieve those goals and a timetable where the measures are ordered. Provan underlines though, that this paper is presented as part of the development-process leading to the actual measures being presented later on, the measures should therefore not be regarded as final. Provan had identified two fields that were directly linked to the improvement of assistance to the MEPs; research support and legal advice.

As *regards research/scientific support* there is a need from the MEPs for "quick, concise and reliable information on the subjects on which they are required to form an opinion or express a view". Today they usually rely on committee secretariat staff, also where it could not be "reasonable to expect the secretariat staff to be in ready possession of all the technical knowledge required [...]". This can push members to rely on information from sources whose neutrality (political or institutional) is not guaranteed, such as lobby groups, consultants, economic operators or the Commission" (Provan 2000a, p. 11).

A reformed DG for Research (DG 4) could meet the new need, Provan argued. At this time, DG4 was performing two main tasks: 1) running the Parliamentary Documentation Centre (PDC), which Provan called a "well-equipped and modern

parliamentary library" however it was also "an under-used resource, which suffers from a surprisingly low level of awareness within the institution". 2) Involvement in "relatively long-term research activities" both internally from it's around 70 high-qualified staff and from external consultants. The DG for research "produces a quality product" but it does not adequately respond to the MEPs needs. Therefore Provan proposed that the DG 4s activities should be "recast as a rapid delivery service of short briefings and information packs".

The paper identified that this change would "undoubtedly cause a series of organisational difficulties, not least because of the language aspect (the notion of rapid delivery essentially rules out translation) or indeed the fact that most of the staff concerned are Luxembourg based". Provan argues that the best way to organise the "new" DG for Research would be to combine its Parliamentary Documentation Centre (PDC) with the research services and make the PDC the 'interface' between the MEPs and the research staff. MEPs "would then turn to the PDC with their specific needs and requests". The PDC staff would then decide either to, provide an immediate response if possible, or refer the request to a researcher who would prepare the briefing. This would also lead to "substantial redeployment towards Brussels", something that is known to be fraught with difficulty (Provan 2000a, pp. 12-13).

Regarding *legal advice on legislative acts* Provan (2000a, p. 13) writes that in the post-Amsterdam period, there is a convincing case for the need to boost Parliament's legal "quality control", not least to ensure that legislation passed in the Parliament should be able to stand a challenge in the courts after adoption. This type of service did not exist at all at this time. The only legal expertise was the Legal Service, whose role was and is to advice the Parliament as an institution and, if needed, to represent the EP in the Courts. The envisaged need in the Working Document is something else, namely to – "in a technical sense"- be involved in the political process (Provan 2000a, p. 13). Provan draws up the idea of a central service, functioning as a "quality-control", "close to the committees and conciliations departments within DG2 (Committees and Delegations)". Provan argues that the Parliament "is relatively well-endowed with officials in possession of a legal background, but these are dispersed in a wide range of nonspecific activities. Some of this staff, including complementary new recruitments, could form this new service. (Provan 2000a, pp. 13-14).

The paper moves on into other areas of how the administration functions, and under this point Provan especially focuses on *Management Culture within the Secretariat*. Provan begins with stating; "Needless structural changes can often be introduced for cosmetic or presentational reasons without there being any genuine change in the lines of responsibility and command (or the underlying management culture)" (Provan 2000a, p. 16).

Provan writes that a recent Committee of Independent expert within the Commission had identified that the Commission was lacking a "genuine management culture". "The same could be said about the Parliament, though with the rider that the Parliament is not *intended* to be a management organisation, but the administration of a political institution" Provan (2000a, pp. 16-17). Even so, management skills are needed and Provan argues that they are "not sufficiently recognised, valued or rewarded within today's secretariat". On this background Provan (2000a, pp. 16-17) suggest that the EP should establish "clear job descriptions for each position", but also to weight these "in order to establish a clear equivalence of value and responsibility between posts of different nature". The personnel policy of the institution also needs to be more proactive to better match individuals' careers with their personal capacities. He calls for the introduction of "Modern personnel management techniques, such as psychological profiling and aptitude assessment (combined with appropriate training)". These have proven successful in many other large public and private organisations and are "the unfinished business of the institution's new personnel policy" (Provan 2000a, pp. 16-17).

Moving on to the *ethics* in the Parliament, Provan (2000a, pp. 17-18). criticises the political authorities for seeing appointments in the "higher reaches of the administration as a political balancing act and a way of installing "their" people in key positions. This is one of the main reasons why it today "exists a certain confusion within the institutions". Some officials has also "neglected to distance themselves from the political business of the House" (Provan 2000a, pp. 17- 18). "The issue has become one of urgency and one where the political authorities, who are responsible for top appointments, must assume their responsibilities" (Provan 2000a, p. 18). The rapporteur holds dear "the ideal of a neutral and non-partisan administration enjoying the trust of all political players". This does not mean that the civil servants are forbidden

to have their own political allegiances, but it "does mean that they should not allow these views to colour the exercise of their official functions" Provan (2000a, p. 18).

For exactly the same reasons, Provan (2000a, p. 18) argues that the relationship between political group staff and the staff of the Parliament must be reviewed. The two types of staff has got "completely different functions. At present there is an unhealthy degree of crossover between the two groups", Provan argues. Provan further writes that the "ramifications of this proposal are of course vast […]". "However, […] the present moment provides a unique opportunity at least to raise matters which normally be considered taboo. It is this open-minded spirit that he would ask his colleagues to reflect on this area" (Provan 2000a, pp. 18-19).

The plenary sessions are, as known, divided between Brussels and Strasbourg. Provan lifts this as a factor that many people and MEPs, sees as an example of the ineffectiveness of the EU bureaucracy. Even so, Provan (2000a, p. 4), writes that he "has no proposals to make at present concerning the number, duration and location of Parliament's plenary sessions. Whatever inconveniences and discomforts (not to mention expense) inflicted by the current arrangements, they must be considered, for the time being at least, a fact of life which is not in Parliaments power to change."

Following these proposals set out by Mr Provan, the Bureau had a meeting on the 2 May 2000 where the proposals of Working Document no 2 were discussed. The discussions mainly concerned issues not covered in this study, however some interesting points were taken up; Provan did say in his introductory speech that he wished to avoid "at all costs discussion being side-tracked by debate on Parliament's seat". Further on in the discussion, the Secretary-General said that almost none of the proposals put forward would present major problems for the Administration in terms of implementation. In the minutes, most of the discussions regard the political side of the institution. According to the minutes there was also a discussion regarding "a study to be carried out on job evaluation and personnel management" (Bureau 2000a). Following the discussion, the Bureau decided to invite Provan to get back to the Bureau with a new Working Document were he would "set out proposals for reform for rationalising parliamentary business and improving assistance to Members" (Bureau 2000a).

More actors get involved

These new proposals were set out in Provans "Working Document no 3" which he presented to the Bureau members on the 9 May 2000. The document was then discussed on a Bureau meeting on the 15 and 16 May. On this meeting, the Bureau decided to approve Provans proposals of how to use the €300,000, that had already been included in the EP budget, to perform an external study. Provan (2000a Annex II) had proposed that this money should be used to perform a study regarding the papers section 3.2 Management Culture in the Secretariat, and in particular two areas under this section, I quote:

– *"Job evaluation: The assessment and weighting of different tasks within the secretariat, in order to establish their actual degree of difficulty, responsibility, intellectual content, management content etc. The objective would be to establish equivalence and make recommendations if necessary, (i) to regrade specific functions better to match the degree of seniority needed and (ii) to restructure specific services on the basis of effective management criteria, by either adding or removing hierarchical levels".*

– *"Introduction of modern personnel management techniques: An outside consultant could advice the Parliament on the introduction of modern personnel methods such as aptitude testing and psychological profiling within the context of the introduction (in the 2001 budget) of a new careers advisory service".*

Following this meeting, a revised version of the Working Document no 3 were sent to the political group chairmen. Within the relevant areas for this study, the Working Document no 3 basically passes on the proposals from Working Document no 2. That is, to reform the parliaments research support, as well as the legal advice to the MEPs. The document does not go further in depth with the proposals, but Provan invites the political groups to meet him in person to further exchange views on the proposals. (Provan 2000b, pp. 10-12). The latter fact means that the full reactions from the Political Groups are not available to the public, and therefore not able for me to study. Some reactions were however discussed at the meeting of the Conference of Presidents of 8 June 2000, were Mr Provan also was present. On this meeting, Mr Provan gave three

main reasons for his broad reform proposals; first the "low turnout at the last European elections", secondly the fact that "much of the Parliament's working methods dated from the time prior to the directly elected Parliament", and thirdly he "stressed that Parliament's workload would increase dramatically in the near future" (CoP 2000). The meeting moved on to Provans proposals, were Mr Provan repeated his suggestions for reforming research/scientific support and legal advice services.

The reactions to Mr Provans proposals were mixed, but mostly positive where many of the Political Group Presidents said they shared Provans view of what was necessary to do, but not always shared the same view on what solutions to chose. On the matter of the organisation of the EP staff ad administrative support, most of the Group Presidents agreed on the need to modernise and improve the research and legal support. Mr Karas (AT, EPP) also did so, however he said he was completely opposed to modifying the statute for group staff, a proposal that was put forward in Provans WD 2. The decision made was that further discussions were to be held inside the political groups, in a dialogue with Mr Provan, and that Mr Provan were to present new documents after the summer period where his ideas were further developed. The upcoming documents were to be presented in three parts: a document presented in July setting out ways to apply more effectively the current rules, a second document in September on plenary and committee reform and later a third document to deal with the other issues raised in his Working Documents (CoP 2000, pp. 10-15). On 23 June 2000, Mr Provan presented his fourth Working Document. This document was only covering the "political side" of the EP and is therefore not part of this study.

Provan puts forward proposals – but only regarding the political side of the EP

Following the summer period, the Bureau further discussed Provans proposals and decided to call on Mr Provan to put forward "very detailed proposals for decisions" (Bureau 2000b). In November 2000 Provan therefore presented his Working Document 5, based on the feedback and the discussions in the Bureau, "but also in the Conference of Presidents, the Conference of Committee Chairmen, the Conference of Delegation Chairmen, the political groups, besides in numerous bilateral meetings". The paper responds to the Bureaus decision that "the time was ripe for firm proposals to be formulated" (Provan 2000c, p. 3). The proposals cover matters falling both under the competence of the Bureau and other bodies. It, as Provan writes, "relates to areas where

in-depth discussions have taken place and where a consensus has emerged – notably in the field of Parliament's procedures and working methods" (Provan 2000c, p. 3). It is important to note that the Parliament's procedures and working methods are the biggest part of Provans reform proposals. However, these procedures and working methods regards the political side of the parliament, and are therefore not part of this study. Indirectly, Provan here says that no consensus had emerged regarding the administrative reform of the EP.

Further on, Provan writes that "in several other areas, where discussions have not yet been exhaustive (e.g. administrative reforms, the relationship between permanent and political group staff, certain aspects of assistance to Members), the rapporteur reserves his position, hopes to engage in further discussions and will return to these subjects in due course" (Provan 2000c, p. 3). Provan also noted that several matters raised in the earlier Working Documents are being addressed in other contexts. Among these we can note:

- A new inter-institutional recruitment system was prepared. (This is the process that resulted in the creation of the EPSO)
- The Bureaus decision on re-orientation of DG4. (The process that this chapter 4.5.1 started with)
- An extensive review of the Staff Policy, including the development of management skills and criteria for top appointments.

The Bureau discussed the fifth Working Document on its meeting on 11 and 13 December 2000, the reactions to Provans proposals were positive. Therefore the Bureau decided to adopt the draft Decision and address the recommendations to the competent bodies (Bureau 2000c). In other words, Provan did get support for his reform proposals when it comes to the 'political side' of the EP. The discussions on the administrative side of Parliament continued, as we will see.

In December 2000, the Directorate-General for Research published a thorough study that compared the organisational and budgetary arrangements in 15 of the national parliaments of the EU Member States. The DG also made a similar review of such arrangements in the US Congress. The study was prepared at the request of Mr Provan and is extensive; it is on over 200 pages, and focuses on "some aspects of the ways in which parliaments have organised themselves, in particular their budgets and

staffing, but also to some extent their procedures". The DG stresses "a comparison is sometimes very difficult, even of apparently simple matters such as the budgets of parliaments" (European Parliament 2000a). As far as I can see, this document was not formally discussed in the Bureau or any of the other bodies that I have documentation from.

The ROME-PE study

Almost a year goes on were, at least the formal treatment of, the reform initiative stands still. During this period, the € 300,000 external study, which the Bureau decided in May 2000, was executed. The study was called ROME-PE (A French acronym for "Répertoire Opérationnelle des Métiers et Emplois – Parlement Européen") and was performed by a consult firm following an open invitation to tender. The results of this study was presented in two reports; one interim report that was presented in June 2001 (Secretary-General 2001b), and the final report that was presented in November 2001 (Secretary-General 2001a, p. 4). The purpose of this study was to make an inventory of the staff skills and write job descriptions (profile of every post in the establishment plan), so that they could be matched better in the future. The study was thorough, and criticised the current situation in the EP-administration in forcible words. The Introduction of the final report stated, "the issues at stake became clear gradually, if they ever became clear at all". . The parliament administration as of today is said to be fragmentised. This can be exemplified with that the study writes that "in the Secretariat, differing working methods and job descriptions ultimately disguise fairly similar activities." (Secretary-General 2001a, p. 4)

Furthermore, the report states that the EP "has a number of characteristics which work to the detriment of optimum human-resource management. (Secretary-General 2001a, pp. 7-8). The report lists "constraints" for the "room of manoeuvre if change is to be introduced". Some of these are fundamental factors that the report considers hard to change (with special address to the split working places, the layout of premises and the multilingualism). The report does however underline that these are a consequence of policy options that are "effectively set in stone, but they restrict the room for manoeuvre in the sphere of HR management" (Secretary-General 2001a, pp. 7-8). So far the general notes and introduction from the study, now moving to the results.

The study performed an extensive analysis of the existing situation in the EP administration, this included the jobs, tasks and skills inventory. The study also included a forecast of the future of jobs in the EP, where the consultant (Secretary-General 2001b, pp. 4-6) pointed out a number of current and upcoming challenges were the ROME-PE study could be used to help parliament handle. Finally the study pointed out proposals for action to handle the issues. These proposals are set out with the "constraints of the organisation" in mind, and "starting from the hypothesis of a strategy of evolution rather than one of radical reform" (Secretary-General 2001a). The argument is that a full inventory of posts, tasks and competences is necessary to be able to handle these issues (Secretary-General 2001a, pp. 2-4).

In short, it can be said that the ROME-PE study came with some major criticism of how the parliament had worked so far. The presentation of the results hereunder will as a base follow the organisational key variables and will have the final proposals of the study as a starting point, these will be presented in bullet points. The proposals of the study mostly covers the *formal organisational structure*, hereunder the study proposes:

- Better control and management of staff
  - Clarify expected tasks and duties for staff
  - Give the managers a greater responsibility
  - Strike a better balance between general skills and specialists (give greater prominence to multiskills on recruitment)
  - Improve the professional training
  - Professionalise the staff
- Improve the working methods and processes
  - The organisation is to fragmented today
  - Develop joint working methods and 'best practise'
  - The organisation needs a more integrated and horizontal approach instead of todays idea that 'what we have, we hold'
- Empower and give the DG 5 (DG for personnel) new competences
  - Draft HR master plans (including recruitment, training, mobility and organisation)
  - Give it a strategic, proactive position in recruitment and training
  - Make use of the staff databases built up by the ROME-PE study
  - Professionalise the training structure – think innovation and pre-eminence of skills

These proposals are motivated by the organisations "complexity and the difficulty of creating synergies". Historically the parliament had "developed in the basis of expediency or 'local' circumstances". This had led to a situation were effort was duplicated, the direction of energies were not optimal, and a fragmented structure. This is explained by a "lack of clarity concerning their respective roles and a lack of administrative and management culture". The report goes as far as saying that "it is difficult to see how the Union can be enlarged without developing professionalism and a genuine administrative culture" (Secretary-General 2001a, p. 8 and 11).

As regards *locus*, the study does not have any concrete proposals to make, however it is mentioned as a factor to take into account when looking at the organisation of the EP staff. Parliament has several working places and this implies a lot as regards "travel, the lack of continuity in the implementation of measures and the dispersal of teams" (Secretary-General 2001a, p. 7). Furthermore, the study notes that there seems to be a shifting focus of the human resources towards Brussels, while "jobs in Luxembourg seem to be losing their substance" (Secretary-General 2001a, p. 10). For this change, support is virtually unanimous, the report notes (Secretary-General 2001a, p. 15)

Provans last document (last attempt?)

During the same time that the ROME-PE study presented its final report, November 2001, Provan also presented his last paper on internal reform: Working document no 6. As Provan writes, the purpose of this paper was to "float options on how the relationship between members and the legislative support provided to them from a variety of sources might evolve". The options focuses on the "assistance available to members in the committee context, where most legislative work is carried out" (Provan 2001, p. 4). The proposals (Provan 2001, pp. 5-7) can be recognized from Provans earlier documents:

– Multidisciplinary and project based support teams to the committees' members. A better definition of officials' roles, duties and obligations in relation to the support provided.

– Reform the internal research capacities to deliver more "speedy hands on briefings". This would include the integration of DG4 staff into the committee structure.

– Reorganise the verification service of DG2 into a direct "legislative support service that would function as a compulsory "quality control filter" to check that texts intended to be tabled in committees "meet basic formal, legal and procedural requirements".

As regards economy and financial matters, Provan describes the resources available as "relatively abundant". However he makes proposals regarding their use and allocation. One proposal is that each committee should have its own annual budget to decide upon and use for visits, short-term expert contracts etc. In essence, anything that the committee might find necessary to improve its official activities. The same idea characterises the proposals on the allocation of money to the MEPs. Provan wants to collect all the sums that at this time were given equally to all MEPs (allowances for general expenditure, secretarial, travel, language training, and informatics training) into one amount that the MEP would be free to distribute among these purposes. Provan also wants the Parliament to encourage the members to 'upgrade' their personal assistants and start using them more as political advisors. But he underlines the autonomy of the MEPs and says that this is up to them to decide on. The only restriction would therefore be a minimum percentage that would be assigned to employ at least one designated political advisor. All these allocations would of course be made under auditory control (Provan 2001, pp. 7-9).

Provan also repeats his strong commitment to a clearer "distinction the political sphere […] and an explicitly neutral civil service. This means that "all officials, especially those in senior positions, to obtain from all forms of political partisanship which might have a bearing on their professional activities". He also calls for recognition "that a career in the political groups and a career in Parliament's permanent administration are two separate things". This should not make movement between the two impossible, but movement between the two must involve a "change in career (a "one way ticket")" (Provan 2001, p. 10).

The Bureau decided, on its meeting of 10 December 2001, to postpone the treatment of this document to a forthcoming meeting (Bureau 2001, p. 6). I have not been able to see any further treatment of Mr Provans proposals.

4.5.2 The second part of the reform process (main actor Julian Priestley)

On 15 June 2002 the Secretary-General, Julian Priestley, presents the note "Assisting the European Parliament and its Members: Raising the game", which builds on the Bureaus discussions on the ROME-PE study. The note was prepared after a Bureau decision in January were it had instructed the SG to prepare options concerning "support for Members in the area of legislative drafting" and "the verification of legislative texts" (Bureau 2002b, p. 22).

The formal responsibility had, in other words, moved from one of the Vice-Presidents to the Secretary-General, hence one level up in the formal structure of the administration. As we can see in the documentation just about six months has passed since the last part of Provans reform proposals were presented to the Bureau. This means that Provans process is still fresh in memory. The Provan process did get a lot of positive feedback and the bulk of Provans proposals regarding the 'political side' of the EP were adopted. Therefore they are not in the interest of this study. As regards the 'administrative side', Provans proposals were formally never treated in the Bureau. Instead, the Bureau discussed and focused on the proposals of the ROME-PE study and on its meeting of 8 April 2002 it instructed the Secretary-General to come back to the Bureau with an options paper, that is the paper that was presented on 15 June 2002.

This new part of the reform process can, as discussed, be seen as an extension of the first part. The process however differs from the former in some ways, among other things because the Priestley process only aims at changing the parliament's administrative support. Another difference is that it is the Secretary-General himself who has developed the reform proposal this time, and not the Vice President Provan.

The document sums up the reform process so far and states that much of the reforms needed are already on the way of being implemented. This regards:
- The need to reform Parliaments political side, where Provans proposals had been received well and got support.
- In the end of 2001, a new department focusing on HR-planning had been established
- The mission of the DG for personnel was also being revised in order to transform the DG into a more active HR management service

- A new staff policy were being drafted that were to be more "dynamic" and include a new survey of the existing skills and competences in-house
- An IT environment to support staff management was planned and to be built up

However, as the Secretary General (SG) writes, the "Bureau's attention was drawn to a certain number of problems which was highlighted during this work [the ROME-PE study] – not least resulting from the interviews with Members – and which concern not the process of human resources management, but the service it [the General Secretariat] provides" (Secretary-General 2002b, p. 2). The question that arises is: "Is Parliament's secretariat providing the quality of services now needed by the institution to carry out its responsibilities?" The short answer to this question seems to be no, and the explanations to this is the same ones as were drawn up before by Mr Provan, and others (Secretary-General 2002b, p. 2):
- The parliament had gone through changes "almost beyond recognition", it is now "immeasurably reinforced" and a "co-legislator on the bulk of EU legislation".
- "The model for assisting parliamentarians was developed before the first elections in 1979. Twenty years on, and the model has changed little on paper, but all the parameters have changed".

Even if the model works, in the sense that "business is got through Parliament" and the EP "continues on its upward trajectory", there is a growing dissatisfaction both among MEPs, but also amongst staff and outside the institution, as regards what the SG calls a "growing quality gap" – the quality of decisions and legislation is generally not satisfactory. This is explained by the fact that the EP did not always have "the people with the appropriate qualifications". The MEPs felt that they could no longer "count on the relevance and reliability" of advice from the secretariat in the committees on more complicated issues. Even if this problem would be fixed, the SG writes, one more is still to deal with, namely the technical/legal quality of texts decided upon. A text voted on in the committees, and then in plenary, can, through the co-decision procedure, become European law. Therefore the text needs to be "clear, precise and, as far as possible,

legally watertight", and equally important, it must "correspond as between the different working languages" of Parliament (Secretary-General 2002b, p. 2).

Hence, the quality problem drawn up has two sides:

1. "The quality and availability of expert assistance to Members on the policy issues they now face in the parliamentary work."
2. "The technical quality of the legislative 'product', because of drafting difficulties, clearly compounded in the multilingual framework."

The main proposals that the Secretary-General puts forward were (Secretary-General 2002b):

- Integrating the research and scientific services of DG4 together with the committee and delegations secretariats of DG2, into new policy departments, following the policy divisions of Parliaments political work.
- On the request of the member (especially Rapporteurs) setting up 'Project Teams' of the officials designated to assist the Member on an issue (from the political group staff, the policy research department, the specialist advisers, Legal Service, language service etc.).
- Giving the committees the option to buy in competence from the outside to these teams.
- Constitution of a tabling service, where all amendments were to be tabled at "all stages of the parliamentary procedure". This service would provide "formal, procedural and linguistic verification" as well as "a fully multilingual legislative drafting consultancy".

The STEP-study

During the first half of 2002, the EP had let a new consulting firm, STEP, perform another study; this one was based on in depth interviews with senior officials and MEPs. The focus was on how they experienced the services that provides assistance to members, both from the inside and outside. It tries to identify and present successes and shortcomings, and in the end recommendations to improve the services. It is clear that this report points in the same direction as the other ones. The shortcomings are the same problems as pointed out before, roughly: The research services are hard to use,

and its working procedures lead to a slow production of rigorous reports. This does not meet the needs of the MEPs that instead want short, reliable and quick briefings and PMs (STEP 2002, p. 11).

The outlined principles for a new organisation is therefore (STEP 2002, p. 12):

- Skill centres structured around the areas covered by the remits of the various parliamentary committees
- Closer cooperation or merger with DG II
- Strengthening the Helpline and rapid reaction services
- Organising openness to the outside world (EU – world)
- Putting in place of a quality control service
- Working in project mode and improving expertise
- Setting up of a central unit to be responsible for resources control and planning of activities

Following the presentation of this study, a debate had been raised in which the locations of the DGs, and the Parliament itself, were discussed. This was a reaction to the at this time far-reaching plans to move the posts of the DG 5 to Brussels. Mr Poos, a Luxembourgian MEP and Quaestor had sent a letter where he warns the Parliament of doing this as it would, in his view, breach an agreement which "has the force of a Treaty" that "stipulates that the Parliaments Secretariat and its departments should continue to be situated in Luxembourg", more specifically this had been specified to mean that at least half of the Secretariat staff needed to be placed in Luxembourg (Poos 2002, p. 1).

This debate led to that the Secretary-General decided to write a report "on the costs of maintaining three places of work", and to ask for Bureaus permission to forward the report to the Convention on the Future of Europe, which was a body established to produce a draft constitution for the European Union. This report estimated the costs of "the geographical dispersion" to be € 169 million (Secretary-General 2002d). The Bureau decided in accordance with the SGs proposal (Bureau 2002a, p. 12).

During the fall 2002 the DG for research (DG 4) had produced its own answer to the STEP report. The DG for research reacted on that the report took account of a number of critical comments. This criticism "could have been avoided or better presented if STEP had had an opportunity for a more in-depth discussion of them with

DG for research's management". The DG for research generally says the report is too generalising. However they do not comment on the proposals put forward in the STEP report (DG for Research 2002). The Secretary-General comments on this in a note to the Bureau were he calls the DG for research's answer "objective", and says it puts the DG in a "proper perspective". Further on he calls DG for research's approach "constructive". This "enables us to conclude that, as things currently stand, almost all the staff most directly concerned support the recommendations" regarding restructuring the research support. The SG also says that the "objective difficulties linked to the different places of work are clearly apparent" (Secretary-General 2002a, pp. 2-3). Following this document, the SG presented another one on 31 October 2002 where he informed the Bureau of the conclusions of the three working groups that had been studying the Raining the Game-proposals in-depth. This report is around 160 pages long and thoroughly goes through the questions. Its conclusions are positive and the SG therefore proposes to move forward and that he should get back to the Bureau with "definitive proposals" on the issues. The SG also notes that a plenary reaction on the proposals had been made as part of the 2003 budgetary procedure, and also this reaction is positive (Secretary-General 2002c, pp. 1-3).

The Secretary-General moves forward

On 23 January 2003, 2 years and 9 months since VP Provan had outlined almost the same proposals, the Secretary-General presents his final proposals for the 'Raising the Game'-reform. The note is short and summarises the proses that lead to these proposals, starting from around a half year before, when the SG first presented the 'Raising the Game' initiative. The Secretary Generals (2003) proposals "directly concerning legislative assistance" were:

- The creation of a Tabling Office in DG1, ultimately as a directorate
- The division of the current DG2 into two directorates-general, one handling internal policies, and thus with an essentially legislative vocation, and the other handling external policies
- The incorporation into the two new directorates-general described above of the staff from the studies directorate of today's DG4, with the relevant posts being transferred to Brussels

- The consequent reorganisation of the two new directorates-general into policy-based directorates grouping together committee secretariats and policy support departments

The proposals was later on discussed and supported by the Conference of Presidents (CoP 2003). Some issues were debated on during this meeting, but the SG, who was attending the meeting said none of the fears that came up were to worry about, and the two big party groups EPP and S&D were both eager to get the proposals accepted and implemented. The EPP representative had said "the Secretary-General's proposals sought to improve the assistance provided to Members. Accordingly, any delay in their adoption (pending the completion of the Convention's work) would do Members a disservice" and he also "expressed the hope that a decision would be taken as quickly as possible in the Bureau, the body competent to deal with this matter, so that Parliament could meet the challenge posed by the enlargement" (CoP 2003, p. 16).

About a week later, the Bureau decided to adopt the full proposals put forward, both the ones referred here over and the others (Bureau 2003, pp. 21-22). The Bureau had approved the Raising the game reform.

4.5.3 Summary

To sum up the main findings from these two reform processes, we can note some general characteristics. In 1999 Vice-President Provan was assigned with the task to prepare some documents regarding the internal organisation of the EP. Already in his first working document, Provan had identified the scientific and legal support as an area to reform. Provan further developed these proposals in his second working document, the proposals put forward here are very similar to the ones that later on are adopted. This includes recasting the DG for research into a rapid delivery service, and a legal-technical quality control closely connected to the political processes. A slightly revised version of this document is presented in the third Working document. This document is also sent to other actors in the Parliament and is discussed on.

Following these discussions Provan presents a fourth document, which only regards the political processes in the EP. Some months later, the Bureau calls for Provan to move forward and present concrete proposals. Provan does so in November 2000, the

proposals are however only covering the parts were a consensus has been reached. This was not the case for the reforms on the administrative side of the EP. The proposals that are put forward are adopted.

During almost a year after this, no formal treatment of the reform proposals is made, but one external study, the ROME-PE is made. When this study presents its final report in November 2011, it criticises the EP on many points, especially for being fragmented and therefor not working optimal. The study mainly regards the management of staff in the EP. Around the same time, Provan puts forward his sixth and final Working document. In this document he lifts his proposals for administrative reform again. The Bureau discusses this document, but decides to postpone a decision on it.

Instead, around six months later, the Secretary-General, Mr Priestley, proposes his 'Raising the Game'-document. Priestley here draws on the conclusions of the ROME-PE study and says there is a clear quality problem regarding the services that are provided by the administration. The problem is two-sided and regards the quality of the expert assistance and the legislative product. During the same period a second external study is performed, the STEP study. This one focuses on interviewing senior officials and MEPs regarding the services provided by the EP. The results are clear: the quality of the services does not meet the needs of the MEPs and they are hard to use. On 23 January 2003, 2 years and 9 months since Provan had outlined almost the same proposals, the Secretary-General presents his final proposals for the 'Raising the Game'-reform. The note is short, but clear: A new legislative support structure should be set up. DG for Research in Luxemburg were closed down and the posts transferred to the new DGs for the committee secretariats, one for internal and one for external policies, these were to be located in Brussels. The proposals were adopted and implemented.

This was a short summary to give an overview of what happened in the formal reform processes. The interesting part is to put these happenings in relation to the theories and put them in a context. That is what I will do now.

5   Analysis

5.1   Introduction

In the previous chapter I presented the empirical findings from my study based on the reading of the selected documents. The question now is what these findings can tell about the research question asked in the beginning of this study:

How has the formal organisational structure of the European Parliament-administration changed over time and how can these changes be explained?

In order to answer this I will analyse the findings on the basis of the theoretical framework. The first part of this analysis will be a shorter review of the changes and how they can be seen out from the theory. The second part of the analysis will focus on looking on the reform processes themselves. I will here look at the nature of these processes, how they were organised and what this tells us about the parliament.

5.2   The changes in the formal structure

I will here draw up the central lines of the formal organisational changes, with focus on the direct support functions to the MEPs. I will also relate the changes to some of the problems that where identified in the reform processes.

An instrumental analysis of the reforms indicates large-scale changes in the organisational structures of the parliament. The proposals regarding the scientific support were extensive. Broadly outlined, the reforms led to that DGs were closed down and staff was transferred to new DGs where the nature of their tasks also was changed. Staff was also transferred from Luxemburg to Brussels.

The results show that changes has been made in order to make the organisation more adapted to the needs of the MEPs. This has been made through a reorganisation of the legal and the research units, to connect these closer to the political processes. The legal support, the Tabling Office, has been built up as a completely new part of the service and it is organised from a process-based approach, where all legislative acts are to be validated by the Tabling Office. The research units, on the other hand, has been restructured and merged into new policy support units that are following the same

structure as the committees of the parliament. These policy units have therefore been more adapted to its different clients.

Given the frustration that many MEPs had expressed regarding the quality of the support services these changes were logical, seen from the perspective of the organisational key variables. As Egeberg noted, one can expect issues to be coordinated better if they are organisationally placed in the same units. This is what the EP wanted to achieve when it comes to the scientific support. The EP had the analysis that there already was competence inside the EP-administration, which was possible to organise better and connect closer to the MEPs and their needs. Therefore, the EP decided to create new policy departments based on the divisions of the committees in the Parliament. This would, seen from an instrumental perspective, be a good way to, directly on an organisational level, integrate the research competence that the parliament already possessed, and bring it closer to the work of the MEPs. This change affects which primary affiliation that the concerned staff has. From being organised as a separate research team, they will now be organised into a new structure that are based on the same sectoral divisions as the MEPs already are organised in, namely the committees of the parliament.

Similar, the setting up of Project Teams is a reform that would organise the different support functions closer to the client, the MEPs. The Project Teams are collecting the relevant staff from different parts of the parliamentary organisation, and sometimes also from external sources. These teams were to be put up on the MEPs request. Since they consisted of staff from different parts of the organisation, they are working as a temporary and secondary affiliation for the staff that forms the team. According to Egebergs theories on organisational affiliations, the staff could be therefore expected to act as representatives from their original organisational affiliation. One could therefore expect these teams to, to some degree, become arenas to negotiate, or broke deals, between the different organisational interests. The main task of the teams are however to provide advice to the MEP on a given legislative act. If used in the right way these teams could strengthen the rapporteur by giving him or her a proposal that already are supported by different actors in and around the parliament when coming back to the political treatment of the act.

The formal organisational structure in the EP administration has also changed in the way that the number of staff has been growing substantially. The expansion of the

Parliaments tasks, as well as the enlargement of the EU to new member states has been used as explanations to the growth. This is a process that are connected to the fact that the EU as a whole has growing from 15 to 27 member states during the studied period. This has led to that the number of parliamentarians in the EP has been growing and the translation service has had to increase its capacity in order to fulfil the new requirements. This change can therefore be described as a natural or incremental growth and does not necessary need to be part of a design or intentional reform.

The structure of the staff did also change during the studied period. We have seen a clear increase in the share of AD-category staff can both be seen as part of the same natural process, but it could also be part of the ambition to professionalise the staff and make them more able to meet the MEPs requirements.

During the reform process there was an expressed criticism that political loyalties with the party groups in the parliament were affecting the administrations work. The reform processes and documents studied shows that the issue was discussed extensively through out the reform processes. Proposals to change this were also put forward and adopted, also much of the work of the ROME-PE study was regarding staff management. We also know that new staff regulations were introduced during the studied period. These changes are not my main focus, but they are however interesting to see in relation to some other changes. When looking at the structural changes to the research support these changes are however not as logical seen from this problem. The changes were on an organisational level tying the staff closer to the political side of the parliament. According to the theoretical framework and the organisational key variables, this might lead to a situation were the staff is developing closer relations to the politicians. In that sense, the change could be seen as a risk. This is however not a risk that is discussed in the studied documents.

Throughout the reform processes, we can note an expressed frustration over the geographical separation of the EP. The frustration was founded in the logistical, economical and time-consuming that the geographical division creates. It can also be understood from a theoretical perspective. One of the organisational key variables regards exactly this, locus. According to Egeberg, physical distance has a negative impact on contact and coordination. However, there seems to be a consensus in the EP-administration on the fact that this is impossible to change. The geographical division has long traditions, are regulated in detail and specifies how many staff that is to be

located in the different cites. During the reform processes we saw an indication of the tension on this issue in the reaction of one of the Luxembourgian MEPs and the reaction that the issue got in the rest of the Bureau. The ROME-PE study clearly criticised the geographical division and connected it to the restraints of reforming the parliament institutions.

5.3 The reform processes

The reform proposals by Mr Provan were a deliberate attempt to change the organisation. This was the first time were this type of holistic approach to the organisational structure was taken. From what my searches have found, this was also the only time that this has happened.

The hierarchical variant of the instrumental perspective assumes the organisation to be homogenous with a clear leadership that evaluates the organisation from a functionalistic and problem-solving perspective. Therefore changes in the organisation are expected to come as a result initiatives from the leadership. Furthermore, the hierarchical perspective expects organisations to have the capacity to carry out rational actions. This is defined in four elements, specified in the theory-chapter; A clear image of the goal or problem, an analysis of which alternatives that are possible and which consequences to expect from each alternative. In addition to this one expects the organisation to have rules for how to make decisions and choose between the specified alternatives.

From the document study one can see that the starting point for the reforms are an analysis of a need to adopt the organisation to new conditions in the environment (increased power, upcoming enlargement etc.) and also to help out with the growing dissatisfaction that MEPs had felt. The general analysis is that the Parliament did not meet up to the requirements that the changed role and changed expectations had led to. Provan, and later Priestley, as well as the external consultants argued for a line where they lifted the need to reform the administration in order for it to become more adapted to the needs of the MEPs. Provan points out that it is from this situation that his proposals should be seen. In his review of the organisation and his motivations he describes a mismatch between the needs that the MEPs have and how the organisation actually works today. This can be exemplified with the wish to provide a neutral source

of information, which is "quick, concise and reliable". To change this situation, and also to prepare the parliament for the eastern enlargement, the Bureau initiated the reform processes. In that sense, the motive of the reforms can be explained from a hierarchical perspective. The reform proposals are also formally motivated from the perspective of what is good for the MEPs. This can be seen as an indication that the MEPs are, in a formal sense, the owners of the organisation. The reforms are motivated out from the logic that the EP-administration is to be a tool for the MEPs.

The reform processes of the EP administration was however generally not characterised by the hierarchical logic. There is no sign of a rational evaluation of different alternatives in the sense that the hierarchical perspective would assume. When the proposals are discussed in different bodies, or in the Bureau, they are not given any clear options or alternatives. Instead, the proposals are presented more as Provans own, based on his own understanding of the situation in the parliament.

Already in his first document, Provan writes that his papers are to be circulated and discussed among central actors in the EP. He underlines a need for a consensus-based decision-making if the reforms are to give the intended results. This could be a sign that the leadership in the EP does not have the full control over the organisation in the sense that the hierarchical variant of the instrumental perspective assumes. Provan indicates that it is not enough that the leadership, the Bureau in this case, makes a decision on the reform and then it will be implemented. This can instead be seen as if Provan presumes that the process will need to be negotiated between different actors. The factors of how the process were organised indicates that the negotiation-based variant of the instrumental perspective is more likely to explain how the process are carried out. Relevant actors would be the leadership, the MEPs, the political groups as well as the staff in the administration itself. This means that the authority relationships in the parliament are complicated. A complicating factor is, as we have seen, the political compromises that lie in the bottom of the institution, this especially affects the physical location of different parts of the institution and the distribution of staff between them.

From an instrumental perspective, one can note that the EP, or the Bureau, did not at any time in the process put up any unit, committee or project team to coordinate or carry out the internal reforms. The Bureau, that is the competent body of handling most of the issues that are dealt with in these reform processes, handles a lot of other issues of a more day-to-day character. For instance, they make decisions on parliaments

buildings, which seem to be a frequent theme. To mix issues of such different character could have a negative impact on the processes, since the members have to change focus. The instrumental perspective builds on the notion that organisation matters for how it is reorganised too. If a unit had been put up, and it would have included other actors than the leadership, then that would have supported a negotiation-based process. In the case of the EP administration, no unit were set up, and a lot of different actors were included when the documents were to float as discussion papers. This means that the different actors inside the EP does not necessary need to have the same view of the organisation or which "collective problems" that it faces. These factors are likely to have played an important role for how the reform processes were carried out, why the negotiations were necessary and why the took so long.

These negotiations can be seen in the light of the special features that characterises a legislature. As noted, the members of a legislature are formally equal to each other and they do not stand in the relationship of authority or subordination of each other, as members of hierarchical organisations does. This means that the management and leadership of the EP are elected by the MEPs, which they are set to lead. To negotiate and form a consensus on important changes is therefore even more important than in a hierarchical organisation. This is also one of the factors that make rational design of this kind of organisation hard.

The Provan documents should to a large degree be seen as a contribution to a much larger debate that Provan wished to start and also steer in a certain direction. This larger debate, is seen in some of the documentation studied, but only as small fragments, they can therefore only be seen as such and should be seen as indications of what that had been going on in the informal discussions in corridors etc. Different issues and proposals from the documents were also handled in different contexts, as it is noted in one of the documents. The working documents produced by Mr Provan are to a large degree produced by him as an individual member of the Bureau, and they were only to float as discussion papers. Provan was never given a clear mandate or timetable to drive a reform, or a goal to work for.

This image, that no consolidated process or any clear goal for the reforms existed, was something that the external studies criticised. For instance, it can be exemplified with what the ROME-PE study formulated in its report; "the issues at stake became clear gradually, if they ever became clear at all". This is an interesting notion as it indicates

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that the parliament did not have a clear goal picture or target when they decided on this study, it could be seen as a symptom of the lack of a central group to coordinate the reform process.

Provans working documents were focusing on procedures and structures in the EP as a whole, both on the political side and the administrative side. The concrete proposals that his work ended in were adopted when it comes to the political side of the union. On the reforms of the formal organisational structure of the administration however, this was not the case. The reason for this is not explicitly given in the documents, but Provan writes that he wishes to engage in further discussions on the matters. It lies near at hand to see this as a result of that the desired consensus did not exist. The Parliament had, however, discussed the matters for a long time. The EP had also invested money in an extensive external study, the ROME-PE, which had criticised the EP administration from many perspectives and also stressed the importance of reforming the EP administration before the EU were to be enlarged again. As we know, the big eastern enlargement of the EU was coming closer.

Following Provans reform attempts the Secretary-General, Mr Priestley, took over as the central actor and driving force for reforming the EP Administration. When looking at the substantial content of the proposals, it is clear that Priestley builds on the same ideas as the ones put forward by Provan. From an organisational perspective this means that the reform process from now on was coordinated from the highest unit of the EP, the Secretary-General. During this time a second external study was presented, this one strongly underlined the argument that the MEPs were not satisfied with the way the parliament worked and which support they were provided with. It also proposed the same type of measures as were presented earlier.

The use of the external studies is interesting from an analytical perspective since they can be said to represent an outsiders view in the sense that they are not biased towards any of the different actors within the institution. They are an external expertise and as such they have a different legitimacy when they present their results and recommendations.

It took the EP years of talks to reach a consensus on how to reform the institution, and in the end, the final reform is almost a copy of the initial proposals. The reasons for why the process took so long are hard to read out from the documents directly. Through

the theoretical framework I have however been able to point out some of the central organisational factors that matters in these kinds of processes.

From an institutional perspective one underlines the need of acceptance throughout the organisation to be able to make a reform happen. The need for this acceptance was also underlined by Provan in his first document. The Rome-PE study showed that the Parliament has a strong organisational culture that is described as complex where there are difficulties of creating synergies, and this could also be an indication of why the process was taking so long. The Parliament did however reform itself and the reasons for this should be seen in connection with that the process and discussions had been going on for a couple of years and the arguments for the reforms had been built up and gotten support also from the external studies as well. One of the arguments for reforming the organisation, that the workload had been increasing and were to increase even more, was also getting more immediate as the eastern enlargement of the union were coming closer. This might have helped to push for the changes.

Throughout the processes, the reactions from other stakeholders are badly documented in the formal documentation. However, what one can see is that some individuals in the management played a central role in the processes. By pushing for their ideas during almost three years, they built up an acceptance for the need to reform the organisation. This is also helped by the fact that the argument of making the parliament ready for the increased workload that were expected in connection with Eastern Enlargement grew stronger. When this acceptance was reached, there was only one proposal that had been formally evaluated, and this proposal was also adopted.

The external studies has also pointed on some constrains of reforming the EP administrations. This mainly regards the strong organisational culture in the Parliament, but also the geographical location has been mentioned. The administration has had a historically strong and independent position compared to administrations in other, national, parliaments. It has also developed it characteristics throughout the years, as the ROME-PE study points out. From a theoretical perspective it is relevant to see this fragmented institutionalisation in relation with one of the other constrains of reforming the EP, namely the geographical location of the institutions. The question of the location has been present at several points in the reform process. It is clear that the leadership and majority in the parliament see this as an Achilles' heel of the EP. However they seem

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to acknowledge that it was out of the Parliaments control to change this and therefore they did not move forward with any proposals to change this radically. The proposal to move some of the staff from Luxemburg to Brussels was however enough to provoke the only formal protest during the whole reform processes.

The process tracing, together with the two perspectives of how change happens, has indicated that individuals, rather than the organisation as a whole, mainly have driven the formal processes leading to the internal reforms. The individuals that were assigned with the task, first Mr Provan ant later on Mr Priestley, were formally never given any clear mandate or directive. They were asked to prepare a proposal on internal reform, but what this would lead to or from which perspective they should work was formally never decided upon. This was also the case for at least the ROME-PE study, were the consultants deliberately said this in their report. From the formal documentation, this is one of my main conclusions about the process, and how to explain it.

As noted in this analysis, the debate around the reform proposals has been going on in many different forums in the parliament throughout the whole process. This has also been explicitly written at some points in the documents studied. I have however not been able to find out what that has been said in these discussions or in the actual negotiations between different actors. Is has therefore also been hard for me to come back to the conflict lines that were outlined in the theory chapter. These dimensions might have been easier to find out more on if the formal documents were complemented with interviews. The research design was chosen out from a wish to put emphasis on the formal process and factors. This fact was also discussed in chapter three of this study.

6   Conclusions

As stated in the opening chapter of this study, the research question is about the organisation of change; how the structure of an organisation changes, why it does so, and the factors that shape organisational change processes. I have studied this in the context of the EP, the only directly elected, transnational representative institution in the world. The central conclusion from this study is that the formal organisational structure has changed in several ways, both as a result of intentional reforms and as a result factors that was not entirely up to the parliament itself. This study has especially paid attention to the reform processes and changes regarding the scientific and legal support functions. I will here summarize the results and relate them to the previous research. Finally I will give some ideas for further research on the EP administration.

The fact that the EP is a transnational *parliament* presents these kinds of change processes with some special features. As noted in the introductory chapter, a legislature has the power to organise itself. This is to a large extent valid also for the EP, with the clear exception of its geographical location, which I have pointed at also earlier in this study.

The administration has grown substantially during the studied period. This has been made by decisions to expand the administration, but the factors that triggered the expansions come as a result of the enlargements of the EU as a whole. Therefore they come as a result of decisions that are not up to the EP themselves to decide upon. The EP administration have had to serve a growing number of MEPs and the translation services have had to deal with many new languages as a result of the enlargement of the EU. The requirements on the quality of the services have grown. This has also led to a growing dissatisfaction amongst the MEPs. Throughout the reform processes, these factors have been used to motivate the proposed changes.

First, this study shows that the proposals, which were formulated at a very early stage in these processes, were discussed in many different forums, and they also gained support from the external studies. However, no other options were evaluated. Secondly, the reform was initiated and driven by central figures in the parliaments management. Even so, it took the parliament long time to reach a consensus; this might be an indication of the documented problems to create synergies, which the ROME-PE study pointed at. Thirdly, the external studies were referred to at many stages and created

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legitimacy for the proposals. This indicates that the main focus was not on rational design of the organisation, but more on establishing a consensus around the proposals that was put forward by one individual, or a group of people. Hence, this was not a ground-breaking new initiative, but rather a slow process that eventually led to a consensus. The instrumental factors was the ground for proposing the changes, whereas internal discussions and negotiations stands out as the important factors to explain the process that led to the decisions.

These findings lead to the question whether institutional design is possible in an institution like the EP. As stated in the theory chapter, "many changes are not the result of reforms and many reforms never result in changes". This study has shown this. Some of the changes listed has come as results of reform processes, like the ones studied here, but some of the changes has been part of a more natural process in the sense described above. The reforms and changes has also been limited by some factors that are completely out of reach for the Parliament itself to change, whilst other limitations lies within the parliament structures.

Altogether the results indicate that the reforms in the organisation were initiated from an instrumental and problem solving perspective. The process that started can however best be described and explained from a negotiation-based perspective. An essential notion is that the individuals, Provan and Priestley, have played a central role as advocators for reform. Even though I have been unable to directly identify the negotiations in the documents we can see that Provan builds the process around the fact that the documents are to be discussed and that a common agreement, a consensus, between the relevant actors is necessary. The long period of time used to reach a fruitful consensus indicates that the relevant actors did not have the same analysis of what problems, or solutions, that were relevant.

Previous research on the EP and its internal structures has drawn attention to how the *institutional resources* affect the parliaments influence over policy and how the MEPs handle the informational deficit they might face when making policy-choices and in their voting behaviour. In connection with this, some studies have pointed in the direction of the administrations' role in supporting the parliament's power in relation to the executive. The reform processes could be seen as part of this strategy since they clearly has the ambition to empower the MEPs more by giving them easier access to new and stronger legislative support units from within the parliament. The name of the last

reform process "Raising the Game" could also be indicating this ambition. The reforms could in the same way bee seen as part of the strategy that Kreppel identified in her studies, namely that the Parliament from the mid-1990s had focused internally and 'streamlined' its procedures and organisational structures to maximize efficiency. Kreppel goes further and linked the revisions of the Rules of Procedure to the treaty-reforms and argued that the parliament consciously had been using these revisions to strengthen its own role. Just as Kreppel noted from her study, this link is not directly and explicitly marked in the reform processes I have studied. It is however not unthinkable that the Treaty of Nice, which was about to enter into force during this period, was in the minds of the actors in these reform processes. The indirect links are clearer; the main purpose of the Treaty of Nice was to prepare the EU for the Eastern enlargement, and this enlargement is explicitly mentioned at many stages throughout the reform processes. It is clear that the management pushed for the reforms to be made before the EU where enlarged. It is not unlikely that it would have been harder to reach a consensus on the reforms after such a big enlargement.

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