

Over the past 5 years, a new and unexpected form of interest representation has developed in the European Union: subnational governments that mobilize directly in Brussels. The authors propose explanations for this phenomenon, drawing on theories of public choice, resource mobilization, and multilevel governance. The first set of hypotheses is concerned with the material and cultural resources that may induce a subnational government to organize in the European arena. The second set of hypotheses explains regional representation as an outcome of overlapping competencies, tensions, and conflicts in a system of multilevel governance. Logistic analysis of the probability of regional representation provides support for the second set of hypotheses. The authors find that subnational representation is positively associated with the degree of overlap between the competencies of subnational and supranational governments and with the political distinctiveness of a region and the relative strength of citizens' regional identity.

COMPETENCIES, CRACKS, AND CONFLICTS Regional Mobilization in the European Union

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The 1990s have seen the growth of a new and unheralded form of regional mobilization in the European Union (EU).¹ As of this writing, 54 regional and local governments representing roughly three sevenths of

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the population of the EU have established offices in Brussels. Although they have no legal or formal place in the Union, the largest and best funded of these offices combine several functions. They provide the Commission and Parliament with regional viewpoints on all issues that concern them; they survey the European scene for upcoming issues to be brought to the attention of policy makers in their home governments; they participate in dense networks with other regional offices and EU organizations of every type; and they lobby for a greater voice in EU decision making. These offices exist in the shadows of the EU, sometimes in ignorance of the existence of similar efforts on the part of other regions from their own country. But their numbers and their staff and resources have grown rapidly. The first regional offices, from Saarland and Hamburg, were set up in 1985. By 1988, there were 15 such offices. Five years later, their number had more than tripled. On average, the regional offices currently established in Brussels are barely 4 years old (Nielsen & Salk, 1995; Salk, Nielsen, & Marks, 1995).²

The growth in regional representation in Brussels is already grist in the mill of a debate between those who theorize an emergent European polity characterized by strong regional organizations, regional identities, and regional governments within a multilevel polity and those who argue that member states will succeed in projecting their domination of the process of institutional creation into the future (Anderson, 1991; Caporaso & Keeler, 1995; Constantelos, 1994; Hooghe, 1996; Hooghe & Keating, 1994; Keating & Jones, 1994; Marks, 1992, 1993; Moravcsik, 1991, 1993; Pierson, 1995). Here we are concerned with some basic empirical questions that feed into this debate. Why have subnational governments been drawn to Brussels? Which subnational governments are represented and which are not? How can we explain the emerging pattern of regional representation? These are obvious questions, yet we have had little systematic information to bring to bear on them, largely because the phenomenon is so new and dynamic. Our aim

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1. For the sake of simplicity, we use the term *European Union* to describe the former European Economic Community and European Community alongside the present structure.

2. Regional offices have attracted little scholarly attention up to the present. In addition to literature cited elsewhere in this article, they have been described in a literature focusing on German offices (see, for example, Engel, 1993; Fastenrath, 1990; Fechtner, 1992; Zumschlinge, 1989). For a recent comparison of offices in Germany and the UK, see Jeffery, 1995.

is to provide answers to these questions, using information from a census and a survey of regional offices undertaken by the authors.

WHAT DO THEORIES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION HAVE TO SAY?

The mobilization of subnational governments in Brussels is a phenomenon that, by most accounts, should not be taking place. For the past 2 decades, the state-centric approach has informed our understanding of the EU.³ State centrists view the EU as a set of institutions designed to facilitate collective action among national states and have little to say about the emergence of regional representation at the European level.⁴ According to the state-centric perspective, states remain the commanding political actors on account of their control of the European Council, an intergovernmental meeting of heads of state that sets general priorities, and the Council of Ministers, the most powerful body responsible for policy in the EU. Supranational institutions such as the European Commission, the European Court of Justice, or the European Parliament are either agents of states or have only a symbolic role. When state centrists model the activities of domestic interests, they do so in the context of a two-level game (Garrett, 1992; Moravcsik, 1993). At the European level, member-state executives bargain with each other about institutions and policy in the EU; within each member state, domestic interests try to influence what happens in the EU indirectly by lobbying their respective government. If domestic interests wish to influence EU policy, they must operate in their national arenas to pressure their member states to bargain their interests in intergovernmental negotiation at the European level.

A number of scholars have begun to formulate an alternative approach to the EU in response to the inability of the state-centric approach to recognize or explain the independent influence of supranational institutions and the

3. The chief contending theory was neo-functionalism, which views the dynamics of European integration mainly in terms of the response of politically influential policy makers to policy spillovers, connections across policy areas that would tend to drive the process of integration forward. There is no logical reason for this approach to ignore the role of subnational mobilization in the EU, but from their standpoint in the 1960s and early 1970s, regional mobilization was nowhere in sight. As Ernest Haas pointed out in 1971: "There has been very little spillover in the 'level' of action, that is, little progressive penetration from supranational institutions into the lower reaches of decision making at the national and local levels" (p. 13).

4. When we speak of regional representation in Brussels in the context of this article, we refer exclusively to subnational offices, although, of course, we are aware that subnational or regional governments have several other channels of representation in the EU (for an overview of these channels, see Hooghe & Marks, 1995).

mobilization of domestic actors directly in the European arena (Christiansen, 1994; Hooghe, 1996; Leibfried & Pierson, 1995; Marks, 1993; Marks, Hooghe, & Blank, 1995; Pierson, 1995). Instead of a bifurcated model of politics across two autonomous levels, these theorists conceptualize the EU as a single, multilevel polity.

The point of departure for this multilevel governance (MLG) approach is the existence of overlapping competencies among multiple levels of governments and the interaction of political actors across those levels. Member-state executives, although powerful, are only one set among a variety of actors in the European polity. States are not an exclusive link between domestic politics and intergovernmental bargaining in the EU. Instead of the two-level game assumptions adopted by state centrists, MLG theorists posit a set of overarching, multilevel policy networks. The structure of political control is variable, not constant, across policy areas. In some cases, as in the EU's structural policy, political influence over outcomes is dispersed among contending subnational, national, and supranational actors (Marks, 1996). MLG theorists argue that in a growing number of cases, no one of these actors has exclusive competence over a particular policy. The presumption of multilevel governance is that these actors participate in diverse policy networks and this may involve subnational actors—interest groups and subnational governments—dealing directly with supranational actors.

However, MLG theorists have not framed clear expectations about the dynamics of this polity. If, as the theorists claim, competencies have slipped away from central states both up to the supranational level and down to the subnational level, then, *ceteris paribus*, one would expect greater interaction among actors at these levels. But the details remain murky, and apart from a generalized presumption of increasing mobilization across levels, no systematic set of expectations is available predicting which actors should mobilize and why.

FRAMING HYPOTHESES

Here we conceptualize the sources of regional representation in Brussels along two theoretical tracks. The first focuses upon the resources that may lure subnational governments to Brussels or reduce the costs of setting up an office. This line of theorizing builds on the commonsense notion that the decision to gain representation in a particular political arena is likely to reflect the relative economic costs and benefits of doing so. From this perspective, the likelihood of representation is a positive function of the amount of money that is potentially available in the targeted arena and a negative function of

the costs of representation relative to subnational government income. A slightly more sophisticated version of a resource theory of subnational representation takes into account cultural as well as economic resources as a spur to representation. Representation may result from learning as well as instantaneous calculation, and actors with more associational experience may better recognize the benefits of representation in new arenas because they have access to better information or because they are more entrepreneurial.

A second line of theorizing focuses on the political relationships forged under multilevel governance to explain patterns of subnational representation in Brussels. To the extent that competencies are spun off from central states up to supranational institutions and down to subnational governments, so both sides may have common concerns that draw them into direct communication. Multilevel governance also involves conflicts among governments as well as shared competencies, and subnational governments may mobilize in Brussels in response to differences in interest or identity that may exist between the regions they represent and the states of which they are a part. As we explain below, such conflicts may generate demands for an autonomous voice at the European level and intensify the determination of distinctive subnational governments to exploit the multiplicity of cracks for potential influence in a fragmented, multilevel polity.

In what follows, we elaborate these two lines of theorizing into five discrete hypotheses and test them against the evidence of regional representation in Brussels, based on a census carried out by the authors in November 1993. Although little systematic attention has been devoted to subnational representation in Europe, the topic is an established one in the United States, and we draw extensively on this literature in framing our hypotheses.

Our first hypothesis is a *resource pull* hypothesis derived from public choice accounts of the interaction of government and interest groups (Lowery & Gray, 1995; Mitchell & Munger, 1991; Mueller & Murrell, 1986). Government grows because distributional groups seek rents from the public. Conversely, groups are attracted to government because of its potential to redistribute wealth. According to this view, the decision to gain representation in a particular arena reflects the present value for a group of its efforts to gain some share of the wealth allocated there. A fully specified resource-pull hypothesis would conceive the likelihood of representation as a function of the probability (p_r) that an actor will be able to influence the allocation of some pool of resources (r). However, we may assume that the unmeasurable component of this function, p_r , is roughly the same for all regional governments, so that resource pull will vary with EU spending available for subnational governments. The money available for subnational governments varies across well-defined subsets. The EU's structural policy, amounting to

around 60 billion ECU in the 1989 to 1993 period, was targeted at the poorer regions of the EU. Hence, one would expect that governments representing these regions would have the greatest inducement to mobilize in Brussels.

A second hypothesis also stresses resources, but it centers on a subnational government's capacity to undertake representation. Building on the central tenet of the resource mobilization perspective that availability of resources facilitates social movement activity (McCarthy & Zald, 1977), we formulate a *resource push* hypothesis. The relevant resources in this case are the financial resources available to subnational governments, but the logic is the same: "The aggregation of resources (money and labor) is crucial. . . . Because resources are necessary for engagement in social conflict, they must be aggregated for collective purposes" (McCarthy & Zald, 1977, p. 1216). Here we hypothesize that the greater the financial resources of a subnational government, the greater the likelihood that it will be represented in Brussels.

Our third hypothesis is that regions having a stronger *associational culture* will be more likely to be represented at the European level. Scholars from de Tocqueville (1835/1954) to Putnam (1993, 1995) have argued that the character of political institutions is deeply influenced by the density of associational life in a society, and they locate the sources of this in the level of social trust, education, organized religion, and a variety of other sociocultural factors that lead individuals into closer social relations with their neighbors. Regional representation in Brussels is the result of institutional decision making rather than association of like-minded individuals, but it is not far-fetched to believe that where the art of association is strong, representation of public bodies within the polity will be enhanced. In a region with a strong associational culture, those in government may be more adept at finding and exploiting diverse opportunities for political influence. The skills and habits developed within a strong associational culture may spill over into public life, so that governments in such regions may be more willing and more able to create and sustain networks of public interaction, including an office in Brussels.

The hypotheses we have discussed above focus on the resources, both material and cultural, that can pull or push subnational governments into the European arena. However, the decision to open and maintain an office in Brussels is not simply a decision to extend representation to an additional arena, but a decision to do so independently of the central state. Regional representation in Brussels has, therefore, an expressly political logic having to do with the interaction, friction, or even conflict that may arise between regional governments and central governments in a multilevel polity.

Our fourth hypothesis links the representation of a subnational government to the scope of its competencies. Our point of departure is the observation

that unlike collective associations of individuals, public institutions do not have to overcome the free rider problem, that is, the presence of actors who receive the benefits of collective effort without paying the costs. A subnational office in Brussels is, therefore, not a collective good provided to a constituency, but a way for a subnational government to extend its reach. Here we hypothesize that subnational governments that have significant political autonomy within their respective polities are more likely to mobilize in the EU because they are more affected by decisions that are made there. The general principle here is summarized by Salisbury (1984) in a discussion of the sources of public interest representation in the United States: "The very size and complexity of an institution renders it vulnerable to a much broader array of specific policy impacts, positive and negative, present and prospective" (p. 69). Logically, it is the degree of overlap between the competencies exercised at the subnational and supranational levels that is decisive, but only the subnational part of this equation varies across our cases. We hypothesize that the larger the scope of political autonomy of a subnational government, the more it will seek information concerning policy developments in the European pipeline and the more it will wish to express its interests there. According to this logic, subnational governments are drawn to Brussels by a variable demand for *information exchange*.

Our final hypothesis theorizes the implications of *regional distinctiveness* as a source of friction between regional and national governments and, hence, of subnational mobilization. Subnational and national governments are not simply differentiated layers of decision making but institutions of interest aggregation based on different constituencies with potentially conflicting interests and identities. One potential source of friction lies in the existence of multiple territorial identities, cultures, and languages within a state, a condition that is the norm rather than the exception in the EU member states. Another source of friction lies in durable differences in party-political collocation across territory, which is also a common enough phenomenon across Europe.

The force of both sources of conflict between subnational and national governments is exacerbated by the power of central state executives in the Council of Ministers and in the treaty-making process. The legitimacy of state executive influence in the EU is based on the claim that state executives are the democratic expression of distinct territorial interests rooted in national identities (Taylor, 1991). To the extent that regions are differentiated from the countries of which they are a part by strongly rooted identities or durable partisan preferences, we hypothesize that subnational governments will be

spurred to create channels of communication and influence that are independent of the central state.

To the extent that a subnational government is in conflict with its respective central executive, so one might expect it to try to exploit other points of political access. The European system of multilevel governance, like the American system, provides ample opportunities for what Grodzins (1967) called the multiple crack, the strategic exploitation of multiple points of access. Grodzins used the term *multiple crack* in two senses, both of which are appropriate to the EU. First, it refers to the existence of numerous points of access at different levels of government, which result from the extraordinarily fragmented character of decision making. State executives play a major role in the EU, and much lobbying is channeled through them, but the Commission and the European Parliament (and on occasion the European Court of Justice) are also worthy targets for subnational governments. Second, the term "means a wallop, a smack at government in an attempt to influence policy" (Grodzins, 1967, p. 134), and in such a fragmented polity, interest groups could be expected to disperse their efforts according to rough criteria of efficiency and hit several points of access simultaneously.

DATA

UNITS OF ANALYSIS

Table 1 lists the subnational governments that had offices in Brussels by country and level of representation as of November 1993.⁵ The data were compiled on the basis of lists of regional offices maintained by the Association of European Regions and the Council of the Brussels Region and a census conducted by the authors.

With few exceptions, representation in Brussels is dominated by the upper level of subnational governance in a country, and we use this principle to determine units of analysis in countries that have no subnational representation. In Germany, it is the *Länder* that monopolize representation in Brussels; in Spain, the *Comunidad Autónomas*, and in Belgium, the *Régions*. In France, almost all offices represent *Régions*, individually or in territorially contiguous groups. Group offices are funded by constituent regions. The United Kingdom has the widest mix of representation. Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland are represented, alongside less encompassing groups of

5. This data has been collected by the authors as part of a survey of regional offices in Brussels.

Table 1

Regional Offices in Brussels, November 1993

	Level of Representation			
	NUTS 1	NUTS 2	NUTS 3	Other
BELGIUM				
	Vlaams Gewest ^a			
	Région Wallonne			
GERMANY				
	Baden-Württemberg			
	Bayern			
	Berlin			
	Brandenburg			
	Bremen			
	Hessen			
	Mecklenburg-			
	Vorpommern			
	Niedersachsen			
	Nordrhein-Westfalen			
	Rheinland-Pfalz			
	Saarland			
	Sachsen			
	Sachsen-Anhalt			
	Thüringen			
				Hanse ^b
SPAIN				
		Andalucia		
		Cataluña		
		Galicia		
		Madrid ^c		
		Extremadura		
		Pais Vasco		
		Comunidad Valenciana		
		Murcia		
		Canarias ^d		
FRANCE				
		Nord-Pas de Calais ^e		
		Alsace		
		Bretagne ^f		
		Côte d'Azur		
		Martinique		
		Pays de la Loire ^f		
		Picardie ^g		
		Rhône-Alpes		
			Bouches du Rhône	
			Manche Expansion ^h	
				Centre Atlantique ⁱ
				Grand Est ^j
				Grand Sud ^k

(continued)

Table 1—continued

Level of Representation			
NUTS 1	NUTS 2	NUTS 3	Other
ITALY			
Lazio ^l			Mezzogiorno ^m
UNITED KINGDOM			
North of England			
Northern Ireland			
Scotland			
Wales			
Yorkshire			
and Humberside	Cornwall and Devon		
	East Midlands		
	Essex ^g		
	Highlands and Islands		
	Kent		
	Lancashire		
		Strathclyde	
		Surrey	
			East of Scotland

Note: To gain comparability across subnational regions, the European Commission has developed three general categories of territorial unit, which, in descending size, are designated NUTS (Nomenclature des Unités Territoriales Statistiques) 1, 2, and 3. These units do not necessarily correspond to levels of government. Each country is divided into three levels, irrespective of actual governance structure.

- a. At the time of writing, Flanders has not selected a representative for this office.
- b. The Hanse office represents Hamburg and Schleswig-Holstein.
- c. Madrid is also a NUTS 1 and NUTS 3 region.
- d. The Canary Islands is also a NUTS 1 region.
- e. Nord-Pas de Calais is also a NUTS 1 region.
- f. Bretagne and Pays de la Loire share an office.
- g. Picardie and Essex share an office.
- h. The Centre Atlantique office represents Poitou-Charente, Centre, and Castille-Leon.
- i. The Grand Est office represents Champagne-Ardenne, Bourgogne, Lorraine, Alsace, and Franche-Comte.
- j. The Manche Expansion office represents Manche.
- k. The Grand Sud office represents Aquitaine, Mid-Pyrenees, Languedoc-Roussillon, Provence-Alpes-Côtes d'Azur, and Corse.
- l. The Lazio office is funded by private firms rather than the regional government of Lazio.
- m. The Mezzogiorno office is funded by the Italian state, not regional governments.

counties in England. We follow the pattern of country representation outside England and use what are termed Standard Regions within England in determining our units of analysis.⁶ We extend the principle of highest administrative unit to units of analysis in countries where there is no subnational

representation. For Greece, this is the development region; for Ireland, the Planning Region; for Italy, the Regioni; for the Netherlands, the Landsdelen, and for Portugal, the Commissaoes de Coordenacao Regional and Regioes Autonomas (the Azores and Madeira).

RESOURCE PULL

Ideally, to indicate the economic lure of the EU for subnational governments, we would have data on the overall distribution of potential EU spending for each region. Such data is unavailable, for the Commission does not disaggregate all EU spending to the regional level. However, we do have detailed data on the regional distribution of structural funding, and this accounts for a significant share of EU spending in the regions, and indeed for around one quarter of total spending (14 billion ECU per annum) in the early 1990s. Structural spending is by far the most salient allocation of resources for subnational governments. The data limitations that face the researcher also face subnational decision makers, and their own perception of the resource pool available at the European level is likely to be strongly oriented to structural funding.⁷

There are important differences in the political process of allocating the money across countries and across regions, which we should take into account.⁸ Countries that qualify in their entirety for structural funding, that is, the very poorest countries eligible for objective 1 funding, are covered by nationwide Community Support Frameworks (CSFs) that include both regional and sectoral programs, whereas countries that qualify for objective 2 funding have regional CSFs. When it comes to the sectoral CSFs, it is difficult for subnational governments in the poorer regions to present the case for regional priorities against central government assertion of national priorities. Hence, only a portion of the budget for structural policy can be considered a realistic incentive for regional lobbying. Commission documents divide spending between a regional category, which is broken down by region, and

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7. Our confidence in this indicator is strengthened by the fact that more than half of total EU funding in 1990 was devoted to agricultural policy, which is not amenable to regional government influence at the European level.

8. Objective 1 areas encompass 21.7% of the population of the EC; objective 2 areas encompass 16.4%; and objective 5b areas encompass 5.0% (Commission of the European Communities, 1990).

a sectoral category, which is not; we use this regional category in our data analysis.

RESOURCE PUSH

Our measure of resource push is total subnational spending prorated by regional population and converted to common European Currency Units (International Monetary Fund, 1993). In the absence of comparative data for government spending at the level of individual subnational governments, we have adopted a second-best solution derived from data on government spending at the subnational level, and we prorate this across regions, based on their population.

ASSOCIATIONAL CULTURE

There are no comparative data that directly measure the strength of associational culture across our cases. The nearest available indicator is share of the workforce in the industrial sector, a variable that is closely related to associational culture ($r = 0.84$) as measured by Putnam (1993, p. 153) in his study of the topic in Italy. Our confidence in this parameter is reinforced because its significance and size is robust in the face of controls for subnational revenues and regional GDP per capita.

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

No single indicator appears to provide a valid measure of subnational political autonomy, so we have designed a composite index, represented in Table 2, which sums scores for general constitutional provisions, special provisions for particular regions, and competencies exercised by regions that go beyond the formal constitution. The first element is based on the constitutional character of the state, indicated here on a scale ranging from a unitary state (0) to a fully federal political system (4), which we set out in column 1. However, the political functions of some regions, including some in Portugal, the United Kingdom, and France, are not represented in formal constitutional provisions for the state as a whole but are established as extraordinary provisions for particular regions, and we account for these in column 2. Regional governments play an active role in framing central government policies, as in Belgium and Germany. This dimension of regional power is indexed in the third column of Table 2.

Table 2
Regional Autonomy Index

	Federalism ^a (0-4)	Special Territorial Autonomy ^b (0-2)	Role of Regions in Central Government ^c (0-2)	Summary Score (0-8)
Belgium	3	1	2	6
Denmark	0	0	0	0
Germany	4	0	2	6
France	1	0	0	1
Overseas territories	1	1	0	2
Greece	0	0	0	0
Ireland	0	0	0	0
Italy	1	0	0	1
Luxembourg	0	0	0	0
Netherlands	0	0	0	0
Portugal	0	0	0	0
Madeira, Azores	0	2	0	2
Spain				
Régimen extraordinaire	3	2	0	5
Régimen ordinario	3	1	0	4
United Kingdom				
England	0	0	0	0
Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland	0	1	0	1

Note: This table is an updated, revised, and expanded version of the institutional autonomy index designed by Jan-Erik Lane and Svante Ersson (1991, chapter 6). The major differences between our index and the Lane/Ersson index are as follows: Lane and Ersson score federalism 0 to 2, with only Germany (2) and Belgium (1) having positive scores. We adopt a wider range; in addition to Germany and Belgium, we have a high positive score for Spain and low scores for France and Italy to distinguish them from truly unitary states such as Portugal and Greece. Likewise, we have a wider spread of scores for special territorial autonomy (with three intervals instead of two) to enable us to distinguish between the broad-gauged special autonomy of Catalonia, the Basque Country, and other Spanish regions under the exceptional constitutional provisions, on the one hand, and the smaller degree of autonomy accorded to the French overseas territories, Northern Ireland, and Spanish regions under the ordinary constitutional provisions. Spanish regions and French overseas territories are not scored positively by Lane and Ersson. Following Richard Nathan (1991), we adopt an index of the involvement of regional governments in the machinery of central government. This component variable allows us to do justice to Belgian regions, which have not found it necessary to claim a greater share of spending and taxation because they are so entrenched within their state executive. Finally, we dispense with what Lane and Ersson describe as functional autonomy, an index of the autonomy of interest groups and other domestic associations, including the church, vis-à-vis the state. The resulting index encompasses the dimensions of federalism conceptualized by Richard Nathan with the exception of his cultural dimension, which we deal with as a separate variable.

(continued)

Table 2—continued

a. Federalism refers to the constitutional scope for regional governance in the state. Given that most regional offices were created in the last 3 years, we have scored federalism for each country circa 1989. 0 = highly unitary state, which does not have a regional level of governance or only a weakly institutionalized regional level of governance. 1 = unitary state in which regions have restricted and specialized competencies. 2 = regionalist state in which regions have extensive and diversified competencies, but less autonomy than category 3. 3 = federal state in which regions are defined by a high level of political, administrative, and financial autonomy. 4 = federally dominated state in which regions significantly influence the policies of the central government.

b. Special Territorial Autonomy modifies the federalism index by scoring regions within states to the extent that they have special arrangements for home rule. Regions having narrowly defined special arrangements are scored 1; regions having wide-ranging special arrangements are scored 2.

c. Role of Regions in Central Government: Regions having a very strong role in central government decision making are scored 2; regions having a strong role are scored 1; others are scored 0.

REGIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS

A. Regional Identification

We use data provided by Euro-Barometer 36 (October-November, 1991) to measure the strength of regional identity vis-à-vis national identity across regions. Of the available data on regional identification, this is the closest to the time period for this analysis. We calculate relative regional identification by subtracting attachment to the nation from attachment to the region. The resulting score is aggregated to our regional units of analysis.⁹

B. Political Divergence

The indicator of political divergence is constructed to capture both the magnitude of political divergence between a region and the country as a whole and its duration. We first establish the party composition of the national government in April 1986, 1987, 1988, and 1989. Data from the corresponding Eurobarometer surveys (Nos. 25, 27, 29, and 31) are used to determine the proportion of voters in each region who support opposition parties for each of the 4 years. The yearly values are then averaged to provide a measure

9. Respondents were asked to identify the geographical unity they considered to be their region. They were then asked to rate their degree of attachment to their town or village, their region, their nation, the EU, and Europe as a whole. Our measure of regionalism captures attachment to the region relative to that of the nation by subtracting national attachment from regional attachment.

Table 3
Correlation Matrix

Regional representation	1.000					
Structural funding	-.0816 (.3328)	1.000				
Regional expenditure	.1748 (.0458)	.0753 (.3945)	1.000			
Industrial labor force	.2867 (.0006)	-.1005 (.2390)	.2553 (.0038)	1.000		
Political autonomy	.4880 (.0001)	.1895 (.0234)	.3457 (.0001)	.2351 (.0050)	1.000	
Political divergence	.3887 (.0001)	-.0963 (.2719)	.0025 (.9779)	.0024 (.9784)	-.0445 (.6110)	1.000
Regional attachment	.2827 (.0010)	.0683 (.4382)	.0711 (.4386)	.2015 (.0200)	.4327 (.0001)	.0639 (.4667)
	Regional representation	Structural funding	Regional expenditure	Industrial labor force	Political autonomy	Political divergence

Note: Data are Pearson correlations, with *p* value in parentheses.

of cumulative political divergence before 1989, the mean date for the establishment of regional offices in Brussels.

EXAMINING THE EVIDENCE

RESOURCE PULL

The resource-pull hypothesis predicts that subnational governments having potential access to more resources at the European level are more likely to open an office in Brussels. This hypothesis finds little or no confirmation on the basis of EU spending for structural policy. The coefficient for structural funding in the simple regression is small and insignificant (Model 1; see Table 4). When we control for regional expenditure, industrial share of the labor force, political divergence, and regional attachment, the structural funding variable is significant at the 0.1 level (Models 7, 8, and 9; see Table 5), but it is weak and insignificant in our fully specified model (Model 10; see Tables 3, 4, and 5).

It is possible that these results suffer from measurement error. But we have created an index of resource pull that is narrowly focused on spending available for regional governments. Instead of measuring overall structural spending, we count only spending available directly for regional governments. The effect of this is to increase the relative share of funding for

Table 4
Univariate Logistic Regression Results

Model	1	2	3	4	5	6
Structural funding	.0914 (.3436)					
Regional expenditure		.2374 (.0770)				
Industrial labor force			.3572 (.0010)			
Political autonomy				.6337 (.0001)		
Political divergence					.5574 (.0001)	
Regional attachment						.3596 (.0023)
Percentage predicted	52.1	58.6	66.7	64.5	72.3	68.4
Number of observations	143	131	141	150	133	133

Note: Data are standardized coefficients, with *p* values in parentheses.

Table 5
Multivariate Logistic Regression Results

Model	7	8	9	10
Structural funding	.2151 (.0613)	.2373 (.0612)	.2662 (.0371)	.1129 (.4097)
Regional expenditure		.2964 (.0936)	.2516 (.1841)	.0076 (.9747)
Industrial labor force	.4092 (.0025)		.2657 (.0533)	.2698 (.0921)
Political autonomy				.7887 (.0002)
Political divergence	.6789 (.0001)	.7250 (.0001)	.7460 (.0001)	.9608 (.0001)
Regional attachment	.3174 (.0154)	.3302 (.0111)	.2984 (.0272)	.0749 (.6235)
Percentage predicted	81.5	80.8	81.9	87.6
Number of observations	131	120	120	120

Note: Data are standardized coefficients, with *p* values in parentheses.

declining industrial regions in the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, and Germany, which have high rates of regional representation, and to decrease the relative share of funding for poorer countries, including Ireland, Greece,

and Portugal, which emphasize sectoral policies and which lack regional representation. In other words, we have bent over backward, to devise a measure that could pick up resource pull if it existed.

When we return to structural funding in the aggregate, it is striking that the overwhelming proportion of the regions that receive the bulk of funding are not represented. Not a single subnational government from Portugal, Greece, Ireland, or southern Italy has an office in Brussels. Hence, the association between aggregate structural spending and representation is always negative, irrespective of our controls.

Does this indicate that subnational governments are not motivated to increase EU spending in their regions? To make such a claim, we would need to know the extent to which having an office enables a subnational government to influence the allocation of spending at the European level, which is the *p*, term described above. The most plausible explanation for the feebleness of the resource-pull hypothesis is that regional offices are simply not effective channels for subnational governments to influence EU spending, a line of argument that accords with analyses of structural funding (Marks, 1996; Pollack, 1995). Member-state executives, and to a lesser extent, the European Commission, determine the budget for structural funding and its spatial allocation, not regional governments. EU regional spending is, no doubt, of intense concern to subnational governments, but they realize that opening an office in Brussels will not do much to help them get more.

There are two main problems with applying a resource-pull hypothesis to interest mobilization in the EU. First, the resources at stake tend to be meager. The EU spends little more than 1% of European GDP, and this covers administration as well as programs. However, the force of this argument is less for subnational governments than for most other domestic interests, because a sizable share of total EU resources is channeled into structural policy. So the weight of explanation for the inability of resource pull to explain regional mobilization falls onto a second feature of the Euro-polity—the inability of subnational governments to influence spending at the European level. The allocation of moneys in the EU is determined largely through hard bargaining among member-state executives. When it comes to finances, the EU is a state-centric polity, and a regional government that is oriented to money will operate through national rather than European channels. If the EU were mainly concerned with taxing and spending, then subnational governments would have little to gain by operating directly in Brussels. The fact that the EU concentrates a significant bulk of its spending in cohesion policy directed at regions is a false clue in our effort to understand regional representation.

RESOURCE PUSH

We find little support for the hypothesis that subnational governments having greater access to financial resources will be more likely to be represented in Brussels. Our measure of subnational revenue is significantly associated with representation in univariate analysis (Model 2), but the association does not survive the multivariate controls we exert. Although the parameter estimates for subnational revenue always have the correct sign, the closest they come to significance is 0.0936 in Model 8, which excludes political autonomy and industrial share of the labor force.

The capacity of subnational governments to extract resources is weakly related, if at all, to the likelihood that they will be independently represented in Brussels. This stands to reason, given the range in the size of regional offices in Brussels. At one extreme are the Catalan and some of the German *Länder* offices, which employ as many as 22 full-time officials and operate as unofficial embassies from impressive buildings. At the other extreme are single-room offices employing just one or two part-time staff. The costs of maintaining an office in Brussels vary widely with the financial commitment of a subnational government, and they can be relatively small even for a poor government. The contrast between well-funded and poorly funded regions lies in the *size* rather than the *existence* of a regional office. Relatively wealthy subnational governments in Denmark, the Netherlands, and France (most notably the Paris region) are absent; relatively poor ones, such as Cornwall and Devon or Lancashire in England and Murcia or Extremadura in Spain, are present.

To summarize our findings so far, subnational governments are mobilized in Europe neither in response to spending at the European level nor on account of their relative capacity to fund representation. We find little or no evidence supporting economic push/pull hypotheses. Money does not drive the establishment of subnational offices. We must, therefore, turn to cultural and political factors to provide a plausible explanation for the pattern of regional representation.

ASSOCIATIONAL CULTURE

Our results concerning industrial share of the labor force provide indirect evidence supporting the hypothesis that subnational governments in associationally rich regions are more likely to seek representation in Brussels. Industrial share of the labor force is strongly and significantly associated with regional representation in univariate regression (Model 3), and retains

significance at the 0.1 level or better when we add controls (Models 7, 9, and 10).

However, we are not measuring associational culture directly, and we cannot discount the possibility that the association we find has other sources. One possible interpretation, which we are able to test and reject, is that industrial share of the labor force taps the effect of per capita income in a region. When we add a variable measuring regional per capita income to our models, the effect of industrial share of the labor force remains strong and significant; in none of our models does the variable of regional per capita income attain significance. Regional per capita income is significantly correlated with industrial share of the labor force, but it is even more strongly correlated with subnational government expenditure. Adding a per capita income variable to our models does not change our results.

To the extent that material resources matter for regional representation, one would expect them to matter at the level of governments rather than mass publics. But no matter how we test this, we find that financial resources are not as important as cultural resources. The evidence we uncover is, at the very least, congruent with the hypothesis that stronger associational cultures increase the willingness of governments to extend their own organization into transnational political arenas. But this effect is not particularly strong. The weight of our explanation lies in political factors that have to do with the dynamics of multilevel governance.

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

The information exchange hypothesis views subnational governments as suppliers and consumers of information concerning policy. Subnational governments with the most extensive political role in their respective domestic political systems are both the most hungry for and the best supplied with information and the most likely to open an office in Brussels. The variable we have designed to measure this, regional political autonomy, is very strongly and significantly associated with regional representation in simple regression (Model 4), and the effect is no less significant under the controls we exert in our fully specified Model (Model 10).

This finding accords with more impressionistic evidence concerning the functions of regional offices, based on open-ended interviews conducted by the authors. The staff of most regional offices are keenly aware that they do not exert palpable political power in the European arena. Most view their role as that of interlocutor between administrators and representatives in their home region and European political actors, particularly in the Commission. For administrators in regional governments that have broad-ranging compe-

tencies, this function is critical, because they are affected by European regulations on so many fronts, including structural policy, environmental policy, educational policy, transport, and communications, as well as several other policy areas (Mazey & Mitchell, 1993). Maintaining a regional office is part of an effort to gain early warning of policy initiatives that are entering the pipeline. Given the labyrinthine character of the policy process in the EU (Mazey & Richardson, 1993), one can well imagine why those running subnational governments would find it useful to have a physical presence near key decision-making institutions. An office in Brussels is a form of insurance against the hazards of a notoriously unpredictable policy environment.

Regional office administrators tend to be formidable information gatherers. Closed-ended questions in our survey give us a detailed picture of who they communicate with, how they communicate, and how often. The average regional office is in weekly contact with seven Directorate Generals. But they do not only tap the Commission for information. Of regional offices surveyed, 44% were in contact with a member of the European Parliament in the previous week.

Information is not a one-way street. Regional offices have information that key actors at the European level lack, and in gathering information, they are intent on conveying the particular concerns of their regional governments. Regional office administrators rarely make explicit demands on supranational actors but, in a spirit of informational exchange, endeavor to explain the costs and benefits of alternative policies from the standpoint of the region. Translated into the terms of interest-group politics, regional offices "lobby" those in power, although administrators of regional offices usually describe their activities in more bureaucratically acceptable language. Although they do not carry heavy sticks to force their will into policy, the information conveyed by regional offices usually falls upon eager ears, for the Commission is a small organization with immense responsibilities, and it continually strives to diversify the sources of its information beyond member-state executives.

One of the insights of the policy network approach is that information and power are intimately connected, and this is nowhere more true than in the EU (Rhodes, Bache, & George, 1996). The emphasis on consensus rather than majority decision making and on detailed, technocratic regulation in a setting of extreme territorial diversity places a premium on information concerning the preferences of multiple state and nonstate actors (Majone, 1994). Politics in the EU is usually about regulation in a complex and fragmented environment, and a Brussels office serves a vital function as a subnational government's ears and voice.

At the same time, regional offices funnel information from the European level to their respective regional governments, which may then exert pressure on their central state executive. Regional offices serve as a two-way channel between their respective national arenas and the European arena. Although they have no formal role in the decision-making process, they challenge the monopoly of central state executives as the sole nexus between domestic politics and international relations.

The association between regional political autonomy and representation in Brussels is clear for several countries. Regions having the most political autonomy and broadest functions within their respective states, that is, those in Germany and Belgium, are all present in Brussels. In contrast, the unitary states of Portugal, Ireland, and Greece, where regional governments are weak, have no offices. In these cases, the pattern of regional representation is essentially a country pattern, and subnational political autonomy, which varies little within countries and greatly across them, is precisely pitched to the dependent variable.¹⁰ But not all of the variation on the dependent variable is country-based, and here subnational autonomy is a less powerful predictor. The outlying cases are eight highly autonomous Spanish regions that lack offices and seven English offices representing weak regions. To explain these, one must turn to variables that are more sensitive to within-country variation.

Before we do so, we wish to take up the issue of timing. The information exchange hypothesis provides what we think is a compelling explanation for the timing of regional mobilization in the European Union. Why was there a rapid increase in the number of regional offices beginning in the late 1980s rather than the early 1980s or the 1970s, or the mid-1990s? The answer, we believe, is that the years following the Single European Act saw an unparalleled expansion of the EU's competencies in areas of concern to subnational governments. As the EU began to flex its decisional powers in a broad swath of policy areas concerned with market competition, the environment, social policy, and industrial and regional policy, so regional actors were drawn toward the new centers of power for information and influence. Territorial variations in subnational competencies help explain the incidence of representation among regional governments; variation—through time—of competencies at the European level provides a key in explaining when and why the tide of mobilization began.

10. National patterns of similarity are probably reinforced by interaction between regional governments. It may well be the case that diffusion and competition are generally stronger among regional governments within countries than across countries on account of commonalities of language, culture, political context, and so on. Block models suggest as much (Salk et al., 1995). Our assumption in this article is that diffusion and competition have a disproportionate impact on regional governments that are otherwise the most likely to organize.

REGIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS

The regional distinctiveness hypothesis explains subnational representation in terms of the tension between a region and the country of which it is a part and predicts that regions that are politically and culturally different from their respective national societies are more likely to mobilize in the EU.

We find that regional identity is correlated with regional representation in the expected way ($r = .28$) and that its coefficient is highly significant in a single variable logistic regression, predicting 68.4% of the cases correctly (Model 6). This effect withstands controls for any set of variables except regional political autonomy, as in Models 7, 8, and 9. But whenever we control for regional political autonomy, the parameter for regional identity loses its significance (Model 10), chiefly because this variable is strongly associated with regional political autonomy ($r = .43$).

Inspecting the pattern of regional representation in Table 1, we can see that almost all regions that have a strong regional identity, that is, ethnically, culturally, and/or linguistically distinct regions, are represented in Brussels. This variable is particularly strong for the three countries that have the greatest internal variation in regional representation, the United Kingdom, Spain, and France. Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, and Cornwall, the most culturally distinctive areas of the United Kingdom are all present, whereas just two regions in the south of England are represented. In Spain, the Basque country and Catalonia are present, as are Galicia, Valencia, and the Canary Islands. With the exception of Navarre, the small distinctive region east of the Basque Country, the unrepresented regions in Spain are generally less distinct. In France, the most distinctive regions—Corsica, Martinique, Bretagne, Alsace, Lorraine, and Midi-Pyrénées—are represented. Apart from Normandie, the nonrepresented regions are not ethnically or culturally different from the Paris region (which is absent from Brussels).

Our results for regional identity are not difficult to fathom. The effect of regional identity is swallowed by regional political autonomy because the two are closely associated. The causal nexus between these variables probably runs in both directions. Strong regional identity intensifies demands for regional governance; strongly entrenched regional governments intensify regional identity.

Our measure of political divergence is strongly and significantly associated with subnational representation. In the simple regression represented in Model 5, this variable correctly predicts 72.3% of cases. Under any set of controls, this variable is highly significant and has the strongest impact (Models 7 through 10).

Our results provide strong confirmation of the regional distinctiveness hypothesis. Regional governments are induced to organize in Brussels because they represent territories that are distinct from the country as a whole. Rather than rely on their respective central state executives for information, regional governments have sought an independent channel. Our analysis suggests that the demand for an independent channel is greatest where those representing a region believe that it has special circumstances that differentiate the region from the country as a whole. The logic of the argument applies whether the sense of distinctiveness is party-political or cultural; in either case, regional governments are driven to Brussels to secure independent representation.

It is worth stressing we are not arguing that governments from distinctive regions are drawn to Brussels to displace central states and so create a Europe of the Regions. The notion of a Europe of the Regions is sometimes used as a straw man to dismiss regional empowerment by linking it to the chimera of a nonstate order run by independent regions. One may explain regional representation in Brussels without referring at all to the notion of a Europe of the Regions. A more suggestive term is that suggested by Hooghe (1996): "a Europe *with* the Regions," which refers to the demand on the part of regional governments for influence alongside, rather than in place of, state executives, and this does play a role in the decision to create regional offices. Administrators in offices representing the most distinctive and strongly entrenched regions in Europe, such as Catalonia, the Basque Country, and Bavaria, stress that their goal is to empower regional governments and restructure decision making in the EU and that maintaining a regional office is a step in that direction.

CONCLUSION

The sources of variation in the representation of subnational governments in the EU are to be found in a political logic of multilevel governance rather than in the resource logic focusing on the money available to subnational governments.

The greater the overlap between the competencies of subnational and supranational government, the more likely that a subnational government will be represented in Brussels. Hence, it is the most entrenched subnational governments with the broadest range of competencies that have regional offices, including every Land in Germany and every region in Belgium. Given their scope, such governments have an intense need for information concerning upcoming legislation and regulation. At the same time, they are

a valuable source of information for the European Commission, which is a resource-poor organization that often finds itself uncomfortably dependent on information provided by member-state executives. This is a story of information exchange, although it is worth stressing that information and power are intimately connected in the decision-making networks of the EU. There is no clear line, for example, between explaining the objective problems of a region and making the political case that some policies are feasible and others infeasible.

The logic of regional representation also has a harder political edge, which results from conflicting regional and national interests in a multilevel polity with multiple cracks or points of access. Regional governments may mobilize in Europe because they have political demands that conflict with those of their national governments, either because those in the region have a strong sense of separate identity, reinforced perhaps by a distinct language and/or culture, or because they have a durable party-political orientation that is not represented in the national government. One finds such distinctiveness in the north of England, with its cultural and political friction with Conservative-dominated governments drawing their support from the south. Regional/national conflict of interest underlies the representation of many regions in Europe, including Galicia, the Canarias, Bretagne, Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland, Catalonia, and the Basque country. The directors of the Catalan and Basque offices say that they do not represent regions in Europe but distinct countries, a claim symbolized by the Basques with an extra yellow star on their EU flag (Interviews with the authors).

Subnational governments representing distinctive regions are reluctant to channel their interests exclusively within central states if they wish to influence decisions at the European level. In its national political arena, a subnational government is likely to find itself pitched against a national majority, whereas in the European arena it represents one among a far larger number of national groups, none of which is dominant. Such considerations amplify the political ambitions of distinctive regional governments to gain institutional access at the European level, ambitions that contributed to the decision under the Maastricht Treaty to create a Committee of the Regions, but which remain largely unfulfilled from the standpoint of real political power. From this perspective, maintaining a well-staffed permanent office in Brussels is a step in the direction of authentic autonomy within Europe.

If the decisions that mattered to subnational governments were made exclusively by state executives in the Council of Ministers or in other state-dominated forums, then there would be little incentive to open an office in Brussels. Subnational governments would in that case do what state centrists theorize they should do, that is, focus their activity exclusively on

lobbying their respective state executives, who would then represent their views in intergovernmental negotiation. But the European polity has some of the characteristics of what Grodzins (1967) called the multiple crack, diverse points of access that allow subnational governments and a wide variety of interest groups multiple opportunities to influence outcomes. We find that the broader the competencies of a subnational government and the more intense its conflicts of interest or identity with the national state, the more likely it will mobilize in Brussels.

This argument has little to do with financial resources, whether controlled by subnational governments or offered to them by the EU. Subnational governments are not lured into creating offices in Brussels by the possibility of getting more money from the EU. EU spending is relatively small, insignificant in relation to its regulatory impact. Like other poor government agencies, the EU's influence lies in telling others what they can and cannot do, rather than in paying them to do it. And the money that *is* spent is determined largely in intergovernmental fashion by bargaining among member-state executives.

We also find that differences in the spending power of subnational governments do not have any significant effect, once one controls for the political factors discussed here. The annual budgets of regional offices in Brussels vary from several million ECU to the less than 200,000 ECU for a small office with one or two part-time staff. Small regional governments with meager resources have the option of setting up equivalently small regional offices.

The only resource we find evidence for is that of associational culture, which presumably is linked to the entrepreneurialism of subnational decision makers in pursuing opportunities for political communication and influence beyond their own region. Our evidence here is based on the share of the regional workforce employed in industry, which we offer as an indirect measure of the strength of a region's associational culture. Our confidence in this reading of the evidence is strengthened because we are able to test and reject the alternative interpretation: the industrial share of the workforce is significant because it picks up the effect of per capita income.

We explain regional mobilization in Brussels as an outcome of overlapping competencies, tensions, and conflicts in a system of multilevel governance, but one should note that this does not lead us to discount the importance of intergovernmental bargaining in the EU. Intergovernmental bargaining is an important feature of decision making in the EU, but it is not a constant or immutable feature that floats above politics. Over the past 2 decades, state executives have shifted a range of competencies to supranational institutions, and in the process, they have created intense demands

for direct exchange of information among actors in different political arenas. With the Single European Act of 1986 and the process of supranational regulation that followed it, state executives decisively altered the structure of political opportunities in Europe. This has given rise to an unprecedented (and from the standpoint of most state executives, unintended) mobilization of subnational actors at the European level.

But there are stark variations in the engagement of subnational actors at the European level. Regional mobilization does not empower regional governments in general but only a select subset of them. The picture of regional mobilization we present here is one of wide divergence among regional governments, rather than convergence. There is little evidence of a Europe of the Regions here. Rather, we have seen the emergence of a Europe with the Regions, or more accurately, a Europe with *some* regions. Because multilevel governance in the EU encompasses territories with sharply contrasting democratic polities, we find that territory itself is a potent source of political variation in the activities of groups at the European level.¹¹ The EU brings together actors from different countries and regions, and thus exacerbates rather than diminishes the role of territorial factors in politics. This article is an initial attempt to shed some light on how it does so.

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11. See Alberta Sbragia (1993) for a discussion of the role of territory in structuring EU political institutions.

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