

The underlying goal of this research project is to explain the differences in the patterns of national parliamentary mobilization in European affairs across EU Member States. Building on a new conceptualization of the role of national parliaments (NPs) as “multi-arena players” in the European Union (Auel and Neuhold 2017) this project sets itself three concrete research objectives. **First**, it aims at explaining what factors influence parliamentary mobilization in the six EU-oriented arenas available for NPs’ participation and linked to the EU legislative process: (1) the Early Warning System for subsidiarity control; (2) the Political Dialogue with the European Commission; (3) the green card initiative for proposing or reviewing EU legislation; (4) inter-parliamentary conferences (IPCs) on the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy; on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the EU; and a Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group for Europol; (5) scrutiny of national governments in EU affairs and (6) domestic monitoring of the implementation of EU law. Each of these arenas present an institutional opportunity structure through which NPs can control and influence the EU policy-making process. **Second**, the project will cast light on the interplay among the analyzed arenas. Here the research question becomes whether and how the EU-oriented activities of NPs influence each other. For example, does a strong ex-ante scrutiny of national governments reduce external activity or rather enhances it? Has the emergence of the green card procedure reduced or enhanced the use of EWS or political dialogue? **Third**, it will address the long-neglected question whether NPs consider themselves primarily domestic actors or European players and to what extent their parliamentary self-perception vary from what is generally expected from them by experts and the general public.

The envisaged research will be divided into three stages. In the first, based mainly on desk-research and literature review, an analytical framework will be developed in order to determine a set of independent variables. These will be derived from theoretical perspectives of the new institutionalism, multi-level governance and Europeanization. On such basis, a questionnaire tailored at NPs will be constructed and sent out. The second stage will entail measuring and mapping the activity of 27 NPs in the abovementioned arenas in order to produce a unique set of multidimensional data on the parliamentary EU-oriented activity. In the third stage, empirical verification of the hypotheses and addressing research questions will take place based on the feedback received from questionnaires and other sources (interviews, documents analysis).

There are two main reasons for which this project has been undertaken: First, the question of national parliamentary engagement in EU affairs has recently become very salient in the field of EU politics. Strengthening of NPs in the EU was not only one of the British bargaining chips in the process of negotiation of a new settlement for the UK in the EU but is also postulated at EU level by other Member States (i.e. V4 countries, the Netherlands, Denmark). EU institutions also admit that NPs can and should play a more meaningful role in the EU policy-making. It might be therefore all the more confusing to acknowledge that many NPs still appear unable or reluctant to make use of the existing windows of opportunity. This project will try to address this puzzle. By combining the transnational and cross-arena perspective it will empirically verify the notion of NPs as ‘multi-arena players’ and cast light on the existing discrepancies. Second, the empirical literature on NPs in the EU lacks a comprehensive cross-country and cross-arena overview of NPs’ mobilization which would account for the existing differences. This project will compensate this lacuna by conducting a systematic analysis of the causal factors behind parliamentary EU-oriented activity across 27 Member States. By doing this, it will help answer the question of whether the latest inter-institutional dynamics have had any impact on the existing conceptualizations of parliamentary roles, thus further developing the theoretical strand of the literature.