Essays on the Political Economy of Decentralization

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Declaration

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified in it).

I declare that my thesis consists of 64,174 words.

Abstract

This thesis consists of three papers that make a distinctive contribution to the study of decentralization in the areas of fiscal policy, legislative behavior and government responsiveness.

The first paper revisits theories of substate tax policy that usually draw on evidence from stable federations. Investigating fiscal decentralization reforms in four European countries subject to intense center-periphery territorial competition, I find that incentives operating in such systems generate a paradox whereby prominent autonomist regions are among the least likely to make proactive changes after decentralization. I theorize this as the best response to central government attempts at blame-shifting by locking regions into making controversial policy changes. The frequent alignment of autonomist parties as 'catch-all' parties buttresses incentives to avoid tax innovation.

The second paper picks up these themes of institutional constraints and electoral incentives faced by political actors. Addressing a frequently confounding question in the field, I exploit the unusual treatment of dual candidacy in the UK's devolved legislatures to examine whether mixed-member electoral systems influence the legislative behavior of reelection-seeking politicians and uncover a split finding. Although there is some evidence that status as a list or constituency member influences members' assignments, other connections to members' presumed re-

election interests are not found. I contend that the influence of electoral rules is conditioned by contextual factors including re-selection procedures, chamber size and strong parties.

Building on insights from the first paper, the third paper empirically scrutinizes expectations from fiscal federalism theory that lower tiers of government should be more responsive to citizens. Using the responses from two waves of FOI requests emailed to 812 public bodies, I develop objective measures of timeliness and quality which identify significant variations in responsiveness across the tiers and territories of the UK. I argue that the theoretical foundations of traditional fiscal federalism theory are inadequate because they ignore institutions' cultural underpinnings, capacity constraints and principal-agent relationships shaping public officials' behavior.

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I wrote this thesis in Cardiff, Wales, at the Wales Governance Centre at Cardiff University, first as a visiting student immediately after completing my MRes at LSE, and subsequently as a lecturer on Cardiff's academic staff. The theoretical underpinnings for this thesis benefitted enormously from lengthy discussions with my research mentor at Cardiff, Professor Richard Wyn Jones. I am grateful for his valuable insights and the huge amount of time he dedicated to advising me on my work. I'm also grateful to Cardiff Politics' department heads like Dr. Branwen

Dedicated to my dad, Professor Michael John Findlay Poole

Cardiff University

(1943-2012)

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Introduction

The past four decades have witnessed a "global federalizing tendency" (Russell 2005: 13) that has rivalled transitions to democracy as one of the most important global political trends (Rodden 2006). Bolstered by theoretical expectations that decentralization should be a positive force for more satisfied citizens, better democracy and freer markets (Beramendi 2007), states have decentralized central government authority in response to bottom-up pressures for recognition and self-government from vocal autonomist movements and top-down advocacy in developing countries by donor governments and international financial organizations (for example, World Bank 1999, DfID 2002). Decentralization became a prominent policy objective not only in developed countries undertaking democratic reforms, but in post-communist states undergoing transition from centralized authoritarianism and developing countries attempting to reduce corruption or stem domestic conflict.

Western Europe is the "epicenter" of this global trend (Russell 2005: 13). In at least four major states in this region, Belgium, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom,

politics has been shaped - and on occasion entirely structured - by intense center-periphery competition over resources, power, and prestige. Given the scale and consequences of this transformation, the three papers that constitute this thesis each provide an original theoretical and empirical contribution to understanding decentralization with a particular focus on this region.

Pressures on the traditional axes of political competition in these countries have been nation-reshaping. In Belgium, successive government formation crises have been forestalled only by way of six state constitutional reforms that completely restructured the state from a unitary to a federal constitution. In Spain, where decentralization was conceived in the 1978 constitution as a buttress against any return to assimilationist Francoism (Swenden 2006), successive reforms have unleashed turbulent center-periphery dynamics, not only in Catalonia where the major regionalist party now leads an outright independentist coalition, but also in less prominent regions where political leaders have attempted to construct distinctive identities to substantiate claims for additional powers (Moreno 1997). In Italy, longstanding grievances over interregional transfers for southern Italy and preferential financial treatment for special autonomy regions such as South Tyrol prompted the two northern regions of Veneto and Lombardy to legislate for referendums on greater autonomy to be held in October 2017. And in the United Kingdom, which along with France was considered a quintessential centralist state

before 1999,[1] decentralization has been prescribed to treat two separate ailments. For Scotland and Wales, the UK government undertook "the most radical constitutional change [the] country has ever seen" (Bogdanor 2001: 1), responding to demands for political autonomy by successively devolving authority to the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales. And reflecting the widespread use of federal or decentralized structures to manage ethnic or religious conflict in countries as diverse as Bosnia & Herzegovina, Nigeria, Indonesia and the Philippines, the Northern Ireland peace process turned to executive powersharing between the province's two dominant religious communities to contain chronic political violence (Carmichael 1999).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, a "voluminous academic literature" (Shaw, MacKinnon & Docherty 2009: 546) of empirical and theoretical research has accompanied these developments, such that the field of federalism and decentralization has been characterized as a "growth industry" (Erk & Swenden 2010: 1). Contributions in this field have traced the antecedents of autonomist movements and devolved institutions formed in multi-level systems (Conversi 1997, Wyn Jones & Scully 2012), analyzed how voting behavior varies between central and regional elections (Hough & Jeffery 2006, León 2012), evaluated the interactions between

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[1] Although a substantial literature has disputed this conventional orthodoxy, particularly with regards to Scotland. These contributions have instead characterized the United Kingdom as a "union state" (Rokkan & Urwin 1983) or a "State of Unions" (Mitchell 2006)

regional and national identities and their consequences for politics (Keating 1996, Henderson 2007, Kymlicka 2001), investigated whether and how public policy or public finance outcomes vary in decentralized systems (Rodden 2006, Mazzoleni 2009, Detterbeck & Jeffery 2009), and considered how state-wide parties' adapt their electoral or organizational strategies and considered how political parties modify their strategies to a multi-tiered political game (Pallarés & Keating 2003, Chhibber & Kollman 2004, Swenden & Maddens 2008, Hopkin 2009). This expansive field has significantly advanced scholarly understanding of the causes and consequences of decentralization. While early postwar theoretical approaches were broadly optimistic in their expectations for decentralized political and fiscal systems on outcomes, more recent 'second generation' (Qian & Weingast 1997) research is differentiated by its positivist approach and its unwillingness to assume the correctness of the universalist prescriptions of the earlier contributions (Erk & Swenden 2010).

Particularly since the emergence of this second generation in the late 1990s and early 2000s, scholars have studied a vast range of research questions in hundreds of academic articles and thousands of policy reports (Faguet 2014). Drawing from – and making a significant contribution to – this research field, the papers constituting chapters 2 to 4 of this thesis focus on three topics of particular interest: fiscal policy in states characterized by intense center-periphery political competition; the influence of electoral rules on members' behavior in two devolved legislatures; and whether and how government responsiveness varies between the central, regional

and local tiers of a state. In each chapter, I use a political economy perspective incorporating a diverse set of empirical methods to test outcomes, anticipating that the consequences of decentralized governance are ambiguous and dependent on the institutional configurations and incentives faced by political actors operating in the system (Bartley et al. 2008).

All three papers find that the behaviors of actors in political environments are influenced by the operation of institutions. First, and in the decentralizing states of western Europe, central government decisions to devolve tax create a paradox whereby prominent regions that once led demands for greater autonomy are among the least likely to make use of such powers. I theorize this not only as the region's best response to blame-shifting attempts by the center, but that avoiding tax innovation is a vote maximizing strategy by office-seeking autonomist parties that compete on both the economic left-right and the center-periphery axes. Second, in considering behavior in regional legislatures to shed light on a question of longstanding interest in the broader discipline, I consider how the operation of two different electoral rules influences members in the mixed-member legislatures of Wales and Scotland. While List members take on more committee assignments than their constituency counterparts, other connections to members' presumed re-election interests suggested in the literature are not found. I surmise that any influence of electoral rules may be limited by context-specific factors such as re-selection procedures, the small size of both legislature, and strong party discipline. Third, in testing expectations that local

governments should be more responsive to their citizens, I find significant variations in responsiveness to Freedom of Information requests not only *between* the tiers of government but *across* the territories of the UK. I theorize that expectations from decentralization theory are countered by intergovernmental accountability mechanisms, variations in institutions' inclinations towards openness and transparency, and administrative capacity constraints that vary across the territories and units of government.

The remainder of this introductory chapter is structured as follows. First, I outline the theoretical claims from economics and political science with respect to decentralization, claims that have performed inconsistently in the face of recent empirical testing. Second, and in reference to the political economy and institutionalist perspectives informing this thesis, I discuss the various themes that unite the three core chapters. I then outline the methodological and data contributions made by this thesis and argue that the cases selected for study – the decentralizing states of Western Europe – offer an ideal venue for testing longstanding claims that have been ascribed to decentralization. Finally, I provide a road map for the themes and chapters constituting the rest of this thesis.

1.1 A 'DECENTRALIZATION DIVIDEND'? CLAIMS AND COUNTERCLAIMS FROM DECENTRALIZATION THEORY

1.1.1 Definitional Challenges

Decentralization is an exceptionally broad concept that incorporates various processes that can derive from different sources. It can result from 'bottom-up' demands for improved governance, local accountability, and recognition of territorially-based linguistic, religious or ethnic cleavages; 'top-down' elite interests in obliging lower-tier governments to contribute to national allocative goals or to accept a share of national deficits (Bird & Vaillancourt 1998, 3-4); or advocacy in developing countries by donor governments and international financial organizations. Scholars working in this field have used the term to describe both a static *state of being* and a dynamic *process* of repeated transfers of power (e.g. Leon-Alfonso 2007: 23; Prud'homme 1995). It can also be stratified into its *administrative*, *fiscal* and *political* forms (e.g. Falleti 2005) or into three classifications demarcating a decentralized body's degree of autonomy: *Deconcentration*, where administrative responsibly remains with the central government but is shifted to staff and offices outside the national capital; *Delegation*, in which responsibility for specific functions is assigned to organizations outside the central bureaucracy but for which ultimate responsibility remains with the delegating body; and *Devolution*, in which newly created (or strengthened) subnational units of government with clear territorial boundaries exercise exclusive

authority to perform conferred or reserved policy functions (e.g. Rondinelli et al. 1983; Klugman 1994; McGregor & Swales 2005).

Beyond these overlapping taxonomies, the concept of 'authority' is also notoriously difficult to measure; for example, a central government may transfer policy responsibilities to local governments without providing additional funding (Rodden 2006). As a result, as Bird notes, there is a tendency in the literature that "decentralization seems often to mean whatever the person using the term wants it to mean" (1993, p. 208). Indeed, decentralization is far from the straightforward and unidirectional story of repeated transfers of authority to lower-tier governments that is often assumed. Not only does the nature of fiscal, political and administrative decentralization vary dramatically both within and between countries, but the demands of modern government mean that policy, taxation and regulation are in practice frequently intertwined between the tiers (Rodden 2006).

Given this complexity both *between-* and *within* the four decentralizing states that are the subject of this thesis, and rather than focusing on the narrower (and somewhat UK-centric) term '*devolution*', I take advantage of the broader definitional scope of '*decentralization*' to analyze incentives and outcomes in these case countries in different ways. Chapter 2 in particular is rooted in the dynamic conception on the term, understanding decentralization "not as a particular distribution of authority between governments, but rather a process – structured by a set of institutions –

through which authority is distributed and redistributed" (Rodden 2006: 32). Here, I consider whether new (and evolving) institutions encourage political actors at the central and regional to respond to institutional incentives and center-periphery political competition in particular ways. In the latter two empirical chapters I use the term in a more static sense. Chapter 3 considers whether the mixed-member electoral systems chosen for the newly-established legislatures in Scotland and Wales might incentivize legislators to behave in a manner that has been theorized for more established legislatures elected by such systems, in particular the German Bundestag. Chapter 4 draws from variation in the foundational underpinnings of the devolved government bodies in the United Kingdom to consider whether citizen responsiveness might vary both *between-* and *within-* the tiers of a multi-level state.

1.1.2 Decentralization in Theory and Practice

Why would central governments divest power to regional and local governments of their state? It is a research question that embraces approaches from politics, economics, geography and philosophy and has antecedents at least as early as Montesquieu and *The Federalist Papers*. In the postwar academic literature, the 'promise of decentralization' (Rodden 2006) is a straightforward one that emerges from theoretical claims from economists and political scientists in what has subsequently been described as the 'first generation' in the field (Qian & Weingast

1997). Economists extol a reputed "economic dividend" of decentralization (Rodriguez-Pose & Gill 2005: 405) deriving from more favorable circumstances for economic growth and a more accountable government that is conducive to policy innovation and experimentation. Decentralization should result in efficiency gains (Oates 1972) because localized decision-making over local public goods and services provision would be expected to more closely match local preferences than would uniform provision by a central authority. Decentralized decision-making should also increase choice by enabling citizens to 'vote with their feet' and select tax- and public service offers in other jurisdictions that best suit their preferences (Tiebout 1956).

Political scientists also find merit in decentralization in the division of power between multiple governments as a check on excessive central government power, as a means to enhancing democracy and the local accountability, and in accommodating demands for democratic representation or mitigating social or economic marginalization of territorially-concentrated minority communities (Keating 1998), particularly where religious, ethnic, cultural & linguistic cleavages threaten inter-territorial conflict. But both approaches can perhaps be distilled into a foundational claim that decentralized government improves responsiveness and accountability: "Decentralized, multitiered systems of government are likely to give citizens more of what they want from government at lower cost than more centralized alternatives" (Rodden 2006: 5).

More recent research has, however, severely tested the unidirectional and positive claims previously ascribed to decentralization. This 'second generation' is differentiated by its positivist and methodological approach and its unwillingness to assume the correctness of the universalist claims of earlier contributions (Erk & Swenden 2010). Empirical work in the recent literature has found neither conclusive nor unambiguous support for earlier universal notions; indeed, studies have found that decentralization and federalism can be associated with higher levels of perceived corruption (Treisman 2000), and under certain conditions, macroeconomic instability (Rodden 2006).

The insights of the latest empirical work imply that anticipating the consequences of decentralized governance on policy, political and fiscal outcomes is a particular challenge: "When it comes to the political and economic consequences of federalism [and decentralization], the devil is in the details" (Beramendi 2007: 759-760). This paradigm shift in the literature recast the scope of new contributions in this field. Recent progress has been necessarily incremental and alert to case-specific institutional configurations that may condition the impact of decentralization on outcomes. Equally however, scholarship has been eager to expand to new cases and exploit new methodologies to shed light on persistent empirical questions.

Firmly rooted in the second, more skeptical generation in this research field, the papers constituting this thesis are motivated to test the optimistic expectations for decentralizations from the 'first generation' literature and some of the equally

unidirectional claims from more recent work (e.g. Worthy 2013, Hong 2017 in chapter 4). Reflecting insights from a large political economy research program, this thesis contends that institutional context matters: The consequences of decentralized governance are ambiguous and dependent on the institutional incentives faced by political actors operating in the various tiers of government. But this context specificity should not be an impediment to advancing knowledge in this field, and this thesis uses new empirical methodologies to confidently engage with complexities arising from case specificities.

The following section addresses how political economy perspectives have been associated with significant progress in understanding decentralization and how this thesis learns from – and contributes additional insights to – scholarly understanding by focusing on political actors' interactions within the institutions of multi-tiered states.

1.2 POLITICAL ECONOMY AND NEW INSTITUTIONALIST PERSPECTIVES IN THE STUDY OF DECENTRALIZATION

"Political economy" is a term with an exceptionally broad reach. In the first paragraph of the thousand-page *Oxford Handbook of Political Economy*, Weingast & Wittman (2006) list the diverse and frequently contradictory usages for the term, from Adam Smith's science of managing a nation's resources to generate wealth, to the Marxist application of the term to refer to the influence of historical processes over the

exploitation of labor by capital, and from the twentieth-century study of linkages between economic policy and politics to scientific methodologies influenced by both economics and sociology. Reflecting the utility of recent contributions that analyze the role played by individual agency within the constraints and opportunities provided by institutions in understanding state transformation, this thesis adopts the methodological definition of the term; namely that "political economy is the methodology of economics applied to the analysis of political behavior and institutions" (Weingast & Wittman 2006: 3).

This "grand synthesis" (Weingast & Wittman 2006: 3) of modern political economy approaches is tied together by the use of methodologies from economics to explain social and political phenomena. The unit of analysis underpinning these approaches are individuals who are assumed to act rationally in accordance with their exogenously-determined goals. In other words, actors behave in accordance with their preferences for final outcomes and their beliefs about the likely effectiveness of the actions, or instruments, available to achieve these outcomes (Shepsle 2010). I use these standard assumptions to empirically test political outcomes. In chapter 3 for example, I assume that members of the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales are motivated by their goal of winning re-election. Positing that certain committee assignments might be a useful instrument in achieving this goal, I investigate whether legislators act in accordance with expectations from this

presumed individual calculus by statistically testing patterns of committee assignment.

But in any political system, and particularly in the complex multi-tiered states that feature in this thesis, theoretical approaches that only consider individual actors are insufficient because they ignore the institutions that incentivize particular actions and constrain others. Indeed, far from becoming the manifestation of a kind of economic imperialism in the realm of political science, political economists adapted to the failures of early positive models to yield the simple equilibrium result found in economic models of perfectly competitive markets (Ordeshook 1990) by emphasizing the interactions of "both 'economic' behavior in the political process and 'political' behavior in the marketplace" (Alt & Alesina 1998: 645) Continuing to exploit techniques and rational maximization assumptions from microeconomics, contributions from modern political economy explicitly incorporate institutions that bind actors' strategic options and divert outcomes from the equilibrium result that would have been achieved in their absence. For example, with the Downsian model of electoral competition routinely failing to produce its famous convergence result in real world political environments (Grofman 2004), the spatial model of elections began to integrate various humanly-devised constraints that may prevent convergence on the median voter, including strategic manipulation (Gibbard 1973, Satterthwaite 1975), agenda-setters (Tsebelis 2002), or actor-determined procedural rules in committees that divert outcomes away from the median voter (Shepsle &

Weingast 1995, Ordeshook 1990). As a consequence, and in addition to explaining collective outcomes such as resource allocation and public policy in reference to the "political and economic institutions constrain, direct and reflect individual behavior", scholarship in this area investigates how and why institutions "evolve in response to individual incentives, strategies and choices" (Alt & Alesina 1996: 645).

This process of adaptation and learning in political economy paralleled the rediscovery of institutions elsewhere in the discipline that galvanized the emerging opposition to behavioralism in the study of politics after the 1960s. This rediscovery contributed to the rise of an approach that became loosely grouped together as the 'new institutionalism' (Ordeshook 1990, Hall & Taylor 1996). But despite this well-documented re-emergence of institutions in political science, in the field of decentralization and comparative federalism at least, it is not clear that institutions ever truly went away. Studies of federalism and decentralization continued to draw from the 'old institutionalism' long after its displacement by behavioralism in the wider discipline (Erk & Koning 2009). The enduring applicability of institutions for research in this field originates from the prominence of government bodies and constitutions in any study of the sharing or dispersal of political authority between two or more tiers of government (Erk & Koning 2009). For example, well before new institutionalism entered the mainstream in the discipline, Canada's foremost scholar of federalism and the constitution, Richard Simeon argued:

> Institutions are not simply the outgrowth or products of the environment and they are not just dependent variables in the political system. They can be seen as independent forces, which have some effects of their own: once established they themselves come to shape and influence the environment. (1977: 297)

Simeon's characterization of the importance of institutional configurations in delimiting political outcomes would fit comfortably within mainstream new institutionalism approaches in contemporary political science many decades later.

In a contribution that still shapes the characterization of this approach in political studies two decades later, Hall & Taylor (1996) disaggregate the 'new institutionalism' into three distinct perspectives: Rational choice institutionalism that considers how individuals are incentivized and constrained by institutions in pursuing their own goals; Historical institutionalism that views institutions as relatively persistent features of the historical landscape where path dependencies from previous decisions influence future actions and power relations; and Sociological institutionalism that understands not only the behavior of individuals but their self-images, identities and basic preferences to be bounded by shared values and world-views constructed from common experiences, routines or familiar behavioral norms. These conceptualizations have been adapted and built upon, such as Guy Peters' six analytically separate versions of the new institutionalism (2000). But despite this apparent disaggregation, the framework has instead been subject to growing rapprochement between the branches, and particularly between historical and rational choice institutionalism (Katznelson & Weingast 2005), such that the

perspectives "complement rather than correct each other" (Keating, Loughlin & Deshouwer 2003). Embracing this rapprochement, the following section specifies how the papers in this thesis use political economy techniques and draw from both rational choice and historical institutionalism to theorize and explain outcomes under decentralization.

1.3 UNIFYING THEMES ARISING IN THIS THESIS

This thesis brings together three papers that typify the skeptical detachment and alertness to context specificity characteristic of recent literature in this field (Erk & Swenden 2010). Although each chapter deliberately exploits different methodologies and three separate datasets (see section 1.4), they are structured around several unifying themes, namely the 'calculus approach' in understanding outcomes; exploiting context differences between the regions of a state; and attentiveness to democratic representation, responsiveness, and accountability.

1.3.1 THE 'CALCULUS APPROACH' IN UNDERSTANDING OUTCOMES UNDER DECENTRALIZATION

Political economy approaches in the new institutionalism, termed the 'calculus approach' by Hall & Taylor (1996), expect political actors to pursue their goals within the constraints of institutions. Here, institutions provide actors with information pertaining to the likely present and future strategies of others and shape actors'

strategic calculations by bounding the range of possible alternatives (Hall & Taylor 1996). This characterization provides a useful foundational basis for this thesis, and all three papers draw insights from across the boundaries of Rational Choice and Historical Institutionalism (e.g. Katznelson & Weingast 2005). For example, Chapter 2 draws from both the Rational Choice and Historical approaches to investigate territorial competition in Western Europe, positing that recent widespread tax devolution is an instrument – or a means to an end – for central and regional political elites rather than an end in itself. From Rational Choice institutionalism, I posit that institutional design has emerged from the preferences of political actors over policy outcomes (Hix 2007). Both the interests of central tier politicians in blame avoidance and prominent autonomist regions' longer-term objective of incremental accretion of 'national' institutions are served by fiscal decentralization. And from Historical Institutionalism, this chapter incorporates two useful elements: the dynamics of power (Lecours 2005) and the likelihood that historical path dependencies bound the future possibilities for individual agency. I draw from insights from the literature that the creation of regional institutions may have acted as a lightning-rod for territorial identities to be molded by entrepreneurial regional elites, first in the most prominent autonomist regions of a state and subsequently in more 'centralist' regions where political elites construct distinctive identities to substantiate claims for comparable powers, a process Luis Moreno terms "ethnoterritorial mimesis" (Moreno 1997, also Lecours 2004). This chapter finds that central government decisions over which taxes

to devolve to lower tier governments appear to create future path dependencies over which neither central nor regional actors can control.

Chapter 3 picks up these themes by analyzing the institutional constraints and electoral incentives faced by political actors. Here, I consider the operation of the mixed-member electoral systems used to elect members to the Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales, and investigate whether different electoral rules impact the behavior of re-election seeking legislators. Addressing a frequently confounding question in the field, I exploit the unusual prohibition of dual candidacy (candidates standing on jointly on constituency and list ballots) in Welsh elections between 2007 and 2016 and compare this with the absence of any such prohibition in Scotland. I posit that re-election incentives operating on members, such as constituency members' interests in personal vote cultivation, might be observed through assignments to legislative committees. Although there is some evidence that a legislator's status as a list or constituency member influences committee assignments, other connections to members' presumed re-election interests are not found. Reflecting the finding throughout this thesis that case specificity matters, I surmise that the influence of electoral rules is conditioned by further contextual factors including re-selection procedures, chamber size and strong parties.

Building on these insights into the role that institutional constraints and incentives play in shaping actors' behavior, Chapter 4 empirically scrutinizes expectations from fiscal federalism theory that lower tiers of government should be

more responsive to citizens than the central tier. Using responses from two waves of FOI requests emailed to 812 public bodies, I develop objective measures of timeliness and quality which identify significant variations in responsiveness across the tiers and territories of the UK. I posit that top-down intergovernmental principal-agent dynamics – the institutional constraints that incentivize actors to behave in a certain manner – overwhelm the traditional electoral and exit-and-voice mechanisms in government accountability to citizens assumed in earlier theory. The theoretical foundations of fiscal federalism theory also ignore institutions' cultural underpinnings and administrative capacity constraints. Here again, this chapter draws from insights from both Rational Choice institutionalism and Historical institutionalism: the latter addressed through a hypothesis that institutions established in the modern government era will be more receptive to transparency demands than bodies with long histories of operating in closed systems.

1.3.2 Exploiting Context Differences between the Regions of a State

Further developing the observation that context specificity matters, the papers in this thesis join a rich seam of academic research in the 'new regionalism' (Keating 1998) that rejects 'methodological nationalism' (Jeffrey & Wincott 2010): the state as the sole unit of interest in political science. But if institutional configurations influence both actors' strategies and outcomes in politics, not only is the regional tier an

important focus of scholarly inquiry, but research must be cognizant of the potential for significant variation *between* the various regions of a nation state. Simply put, not all regions are created equal. Even where decentralization has been largely symmetric, citizens in certain parts of the state might be more oriented towards a regional identity than those in more 'statist' regions. The strategies pursued by regional and central political elites will therefore depend on their respective abilities to orient citizens' towards the pursuit of collective goals at the regional or central level (Jeffrey 2012).

This basic observation is often missed in the usual point of departure in studies of decentralization that distinguish regions according to their relative levels of authority in the two domains of *Self Rule* and *Shared Rule*. In this approach, regional authority is considered an additive function of the political, administrative and fiscal powers a subnational government exercises in its own territory (self-rule) and co-exercises in the country as a whole (shared rule) (Elazar 1987, Marks, Hooghe & Schakel 2008, Hooghe, Marks and Schakel 2010, 2016). But this resulting indicator, the *Regional Autonomy Index* (RAI) (Hooghe, Marks and Schakel 2016), is not designed to distinguish those regions which may be more 'autonomist' from those that may have a more 'centralist' orientation. For example, the RAI score for all Spanish regions other than the Basque Country and Navarre is a comparatively high 23.5, including Catalonia and Galicia, where regional claims are constructed around centuries of linguistic, ethnic, cultural and geographic difference, along with Castile and León, a 1983 administrative creation from the Old Castilian core of the central

Spanish state. Yet more recent research emphasizes that a region's relative prominence derives from contextual factors such as the strength of regional identities, the region's 'self-rule' institutional authority, and the strength of its economy (Henderson, Jeffrey, Wincott & Wyn Jones 2013). In Western Europe at least, 'regionalist' attributes are most recognizable in the 'strongest' of regions – high autonomy 'self-rule' regions buttressed by strong economies and historical foundations (2013: 305).

The papers in this thesis regard the likelihood that 'autonomist' and 'centralist' attributes are distributed irregularly within a nation-state as a useful source of variation for empirical analysis. Chapter 2 uses this within-state variation between 'autonomist' and more 'centralist' regions as a basis for positing that regional and central political actors will behave differently depending on the salience of the center-periphery axis of competition in the region in question. Such a dynamic would significantly limit the applicability of theories of substate tax policy that usually draw on evidence from stable federations such as the United States. Investigating fiscal decentralization reforms in Spain, Italy, Belgium and the United Kingdom – four countries that are subject to intense center-periphery territorial competition – I find that incentives operating in such systems generate a paradox whereby prominent autonomist regions are among the least likely to make proactive changes after decentralization. I theorize this as the best response to central government attempts at blame-shifting by locking regions into making controversial policy changes.

Chapter 3 exploits a further source of regional variation between the two substate legislatures analyzed; namely the divergent treatment of dual candidacy between Scotland and Wales. I anticipate that incentives to either cultivate a personal vote for constituency members or appeal to a party membership 'selectorate' for List members would be stronger in Wales where it was not possible for candidates to 'hedge their bets' and stand for election on both the constituency and regional components of the election.

Finally, chapter 4 finds the divergent historical and institutional underpinnings of the devolved institutions in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland of significant value in testing whether responsiveness should vary between the tiers of government. In contrast to Scotland and Wales, where "devolution is an exercise in decentralizing power in response to a demand from people there for more control over their own affairs" (Carmichael 1999: 141), responsiveness and public administration concerns in Northern Ireland were subsumed within a macro architecture in which conflict resolution through political accommodation was the primary imperative (Carmichael 1999, Greer 2012). Moreover, while Scotland and Wales' institutions were established as an integral part of an open government constitutional reform program characterized by contemporary commentators as the "New Politics" (e.g. Cairney 2012, Mitchell 2000, Osmond 1998), Northern Ireland's devolved institutions were a legacy of the 1921-1972 Stormont Parliament and the Direct Rule Northern Ireland Office, a body which was itself "the lineal descendant

of the old Stormont Cabinet Office" (Bell 1987: 212). I use this intra-state variation in contexts to test whether and how the foundational underpinnings of institutions affect outcomes, finding Scotland's devolved institutions more responsive to FOI requests than their Northern Ireland counterparts.

1.3.3. DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION, RESPONSIVENESS, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The third unifying theme focuses on theoretical perspectives on decentralization that emphasize the oft-claimed virtues of accountability and proximity in reconnecting citizens with their governments. Here, the papers constituting this thesis consider the extent to which expectations that local and regional governments should be more responsive to their citizens than central governments are evident in practice.

Traditional fiscal federalism theory supposes that decentralizing income tax powers would allow regions to better tailor tax policies to the distinct preferences of citizens in localities and regions. Although rarely addressed directly in the literature, there are theoretical grounds to anticipate that where differences in citizen preferences across territories are large (especially for regions most likely to articulate regional distinctiveness), we might expect greater differentiation in tax rates and public goods provision. But Chapter 2 argues that far from becoming prominent tax innovators, regions that most emphasize their distinctiveness are among the least likely to vary rates from the national fiscal policy trajectory after powers are

transferred. I argue that in overlooking the strategic interests of regional actors pursing a "champion of the region against the center strategy", and central actors' interests in countering this by shifting the blame for controversial tax policy decisions, the efficiency gains anticipated by fiscal federalism are over-estimated.

This chapter further contends that expectations from fiscal federalism theory ignore insights from the Downsian model of electoral competition. In prominent autonomist regions, parties compete not only on the traditional left-right economic spectrum but also on a national identity/center-periphery dimension. If autonomist parties adopt a policy-seeking, polarised position on the center-periphery dimension (their very *raison d'être,* after all), Downsian electoral dynamics would encourage office-seeking autonomist parties to converge on the position of the regional median voter on the economic spectrum for office-seeking purposes, maximizing the likelihood of attracting a sufficient number of voters to gain office. Autonomist parties would therefore be expected to adopt a 'catch-all' strategy on the traditional economic axis of competition by downplaying polarizing income tax policies that would otherwise split their pro-autonomy core vote.

Finally, as outlined elsewhere in this introduction, Chapter 3 considers how electoral systems affect legislator behavior, namely constituency members' assumed incentives to cultivate a constituency-based personal vote (and List members' incentives to cultivate a party-reelection vote) in the devolved legislatures of the United Kingdom, and Chapter 4 empirically tests expectations that lower-tier

governments would be more responsive to their citizens by coding and analyzing the quality and timeliness of UK public bodies' responses to Freedom of Information Act requests.

1.4 METHODOLOGICAL AND DATA CONTRIBUTIONS

The three papers constituting this thesis adopt a variety of methodologies as well as generating new data in order to explore the theoretical arguments introduced in this chapter. Rather than adhering to a single methodological approach, each paper employs different methods to engage with both the theoretical underpinnings for decentralization introduced in this chapter and practical empirical problems in multi-tiered states.

Given the previous absence of existing large datasets to inform the research questions addressed in this thesis, I employ multiple methods to expand the potential of comparative research (Poteete et al. 2010). The objective for each paper is to select techniques that can circumvent previous challenges of measurement, using innovative methods to test theories and hypotheses that have previously been difficult to empirically investigate. Chapters 3 and 4 employ quantitative statistical analyses for subjects that had not been studied in this manner before, trialing recent techniques developed in the literature such as Hanmer & Kalkan's (2013) Observed Values method for calculating marginal effects from a probit regression. But because the

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newness of tax decentralization in the four western European countries limits the potential for large-N statistical analysis, Chapter 2 uses cross-case comparisons to work around the limited number of years and observations. I exploit the annexes of detailed annual reports from the EUROMOD project – a European tax-benefit microsimulation model managed at the University of Essex – to catalogue tax changes in every Spanish and Italian region over the past decade.

Taking advantage of a far larger number of observations, Chapter 3 uses two separate innovative methods. First, I use a self-constructed database cataloguing the biographies, educational histories, and committee assignments of every member of the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales between 1999 and 2016 constituting 1,942 and 900 member-year observations respectively. Second, I undertake a detailed search of LexisNexis citations of committee activity in the Welsh and Scottish print media since 2000 to assess expectations that certain committee assignments might offer more scope for personal vote cultivation by members of the two legislatures.

Chapter 4 also employs quantitative methodologies made possible by a large self-constructed database. Attempting to overcome the lack of empirical evidence for assertions that decentralization is associated with improved responsiveness, I use public agency responses to Freedom of Information Act requests to facilitate the type of data collection that had previously been beyond reach for single researchers working outside of large-scale projects (Savage & Hyde 2014). From these responses I

construct two composite variables of response quality and timeliness for 811 public organizations across the United Kingdom, and analyze this data using statistical modelling.

1.5 WESTERN EUROPE AS A VENUE FOR EMPIRICAL TESTS OF THEORIES OF DECENTRALIZATION

As the "epicenter" of the worldwide decentralizing tendency, the four case countries featured in this thesis harbor significant variation in the historic and cultural bases for their regional institutions, from "historic nationalities" such as Catalonia and Veneto to regions without strong regionalist sentiment or self-rule traditions such as Brussels-Capital, Castile and León, and Lazio.

Chapter 2 considers all of these country cases. In Spain, although historic charter rights have afforded the Basque Country and Navarre longstanding and significant fiscal powers, successive fiscal decentralization programs have replaced the previous grants-based financing system for the rest of the State with a semi-autonomous system in which regional governments share revenues from most major taxes. In Italy, several regions have been forced to use their limited (but increasing) tax-raising powers to fund deficits incurred by their primary spending obligation, the regionally-administered National Health Service (SSN). Grievances over perceived unfairness of Italy's territorial financing system prompted two Lega Nord regional presidents to call constitutional reform referendums for late 2017, first on outright independence and subsequently on greater autonomy after an intervention by the

Italian constitutional court. Belgium's transition from unitary state to federation has been accompanied by successive reforms to the territorial financing system from a largely-grants funded equalization system to one in which Belgium's three regional governments are responsible for raising a large proportion of the their own budgets from at least a dozen different taxes. And fiscal decentralization has accompanied the UK's incremental legislative decentralization, albeit dormant in Scotland between 1999 and 2016 but now constituting a major part of the Scottish Government budget.

Chapters 3 and 4 focus on the United Kingdom. The British political system had been long regarded as a pre-eminent example of concentrated executive power in a national government that had resisted the global decentralizing trend (Paun & Hazell 2008; Shaw, MacKinnon & Docherty 2009). But the UK's rapidly-transitioning institutional arrangements provide several major sources of variation for empirical analysis that is of broader interest both in the subfield and the wider discipline. That the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales were newly established in 1999 means that the operation of mixed-member electoral systems are less likely to be effected by institutional hangover effects (Crisp 2007) that may operate from the memory of prior electoral rules continuing to influence the behavior of elected members. And that legislation prohibited Welsh candidates from standing on both the constituency and list components of the two-ballot election between 2007 and 2015 provides a unique source of cross-case variation between the two systems.

Chapter 4 finds that two features of the UK are of particular use in empirical testing theories of government responsiveness. First, the UK is a venue for comprehensive FOI legislation covering a sufficiently large number of organizations at central, regional and local tiers to facilitate data collection and quantitative statistical analysis. And second, significant differentiation in the foundational underpinnings of the new regional tier allows researchers to test whether institutions inclined towards openness and transparency will be more responsive than consociational institutions designed to resolve conflict. While devolution to Scotland and Wales aimed to give institutional expression to national identities and to craft more transparent and accessible government structures, conflict resolution through political accommodation was the foundational imperative for Northern Ireland's new powersharing institutions. The UK case is therefore instructive in understanding not only the dynamics of decentralization but also how context-specific incentives operating on actors affect outcomes.

1.6 OVERVIEW

The remainder of this thesis is structured as follows: Chapters 2, 3 and 4 present each of the three papers introduced above in turn. In Chapter 5, I summarize the substantive and methodological contributions of these papers, discuss how this work advances knowledge in the field, and consider possibilities for future research using

the methods and insights advanced in this thesis. I also explore the implications of my thesis for contemporary policy debates, arguing that closer attention should be paid to incentive structures operating on actors in multi-tiered systems as the regional dimension of politics continues to shape competition and outcomes across the globe.

2

The Paradox of Fiscal Decentralization: Why autonomist regions don't make more use of devolved tax powers

Abstract:

Existing theories of substate tax usually draw on evidence from stable federations and therefore overlook the incentives generated by center-periphery competition in rapidly decentralizing states. This chapter explains the apparent paradox that prominent autonomist regions are among the least likely to vary tax rates after income tax decentralization. Challenged by a 'champions of the region against the center' strategy, central elites seek to lock regions into blame-sharing for controversial policy changes. Autonomy-maximizing regional elites accept fiscal decentralization but are alert to electoral and budgetary risks. Avoiding proactive rate changes means voters are unlikely to perceive any change from tax decentralization, weakening the effectiveness of the center's strategy and allowing the region to maintain a 'regional champion' strategy. These incentives are buttressed by the frequent arrangement of autonomist parties as 'catch-all' parties, and by their longer-term objective of incremental accretion of proto-state institutions that overrides any short-term advantages from tax innovation.

It often becomes impossible, amidst mutual accusations, to determine on whom the blame or the punishment of a pernicious measure, or series of pernicious measures, ought really to fall. It is shifted from one to another with so much dexterity, and under such plausible appearances, that the public opinion is left in suspense about the real author.

Alexander Hamilton, *The Federalist Papers,* n. 70.

Don't ever put up income tax, mate. Take it off them anyhow you please, but do that and they'll rip your fucking guts out.

Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating to UK Opposition Leader Tony Blair, 1995.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains an apparent paradox at the heart of the rapidly-developing process of fiscal decentralization in multinational states of Western Europe. Traditional fiscal federalism theory supposes that decentralizing income tax powers would allow regions to better tailor tax policies to the distinct preferences of autonomist regions. But far from becoming prominent tax innovators, regions that most emphasize their distinctiveness are among the least likely to vary rates from the national fiscal policy trajectory after powers are transferred. Scotland has never used rate-varying powers, Flanders has not varied surcharges in the first three years of operations, northern Italian regions are among the most infrequent users of tax powers, and Catalonia has made use of rate-varying powers only once, during a coalition led by (non-autonomist) Catalan Socialists.

Prevailing expectations have overlooked the incentives operating on central and autonomist regional elites competing intensely over power, recognition, status and resources. While existing literature frequently assumes a simple story of decentralization being demanded and won by regionalist parties applying pressure on statewide parties (e.g. Obydenkova and Swenden 2013), passing the buck for politically-costly income tax decisions can be a 'blame avoidance' strategy by central elites (Weaver 1984), locking the region into blame-sharing and fiscal retrenchment. Autonomist elites accept fiscal decentralization because it allows them to retain a greater share of own-sourced revenues and is accompanied by tax agencies and

treasuries, contributing to a longer-term objective of incremental accretion of national institutions. However, they also recognize that assertive use of rate-varying powers carries short-term economic and political risks that may jeopardize this long-term objective. Aligning the region's 'fiscal trajectory' with that of the central government means voters perceive little or no change from tax devolution, weakening the effectiveness of the center's 'pass the buck' strategy and allowing regional actors to continue an electorally-successful strategy that champions the region's interest and projects blame for detrimental outcomes onto the center. The frequent arrangement of non-statewide parties as 'catch-all' parties spanning the left-right ideological spectrum buttresses incentives to avoid tax innovation in autonomist regions. The best response to central blame shifting is therefore to accept tax powers but avoid their proactive use. In rational choice institutionalism terms, this equilibrium is an efficient institution because it is mutually beneficial to central and regional elites.

In the deeply-competitive environment characterizing territorial politics in the multinational states of Europe, such an equilibrium does not preclude change. If a coterie of political elites determines constitutional arrangements, individuals within that set will attempt to gain a greater share of the system's resources (or prestige, or authority, or recognition) (Bednar 2016). The resulting 'federal bargain' can be understood as an incomplete contract that affords both sides with considerable opportunities for political opportunism (Rodden 2006), albeit bounded by institutional structures.

The remainder of this chapter is structured as follows. First, I assess the foundations for differentiated use of decentralized fiscal powers drawn from stable federations, arguing that such underpinnings only have partial applicability to the deeply-competitive environment of territorial politics in the decentralizing states of Western Europe (Spain, Italy, Belgium, and the UK). In the final sections I evaluate regional income tax policy changes in these countries, finding that party competition and incentives operating on political elites have created an institution-in-equilibrium with respect to income tax decentralization.

2.2 STABLE FEDERATIONS AS AN UNSTABLE FOUNDATION IN UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENTIATED USE OF TAX POWERS

As regions have assumed an increasing number of policy responsibilities in recent decades (Hooghe, Marks & Schakel 2010), attention has shifted to the large gaps between expenditure responsibilities and the usually-far more limited revenue-raising competences of regional governments. Traditional fiscal federalism theory has recommended a limited scope for tax decentralization (Bird 1999), and the literature has generally assumed that senior central government politicians and civil servants would be reluctant to divest themselves of their monopoly revenue-raising power (Brennan & Buchanan 1980).

This literature provides important underpinnings in understanding tax assignment and the regional governments' use of devolved taxes. But much of this

evidence is drawn from long-established and stable federations, notably the US states where the economic left-right spectrum primarily structures political competition. Consequently, this work risks overlooking a 'national identity' dimension that structures electoral competition in the autonomist regions of decentralizing nation-states (Rico 2012).

Simply put, not all regions are created equal. Recognizing the potential that "regionalist" or "centralist" attributes would be irregularly distributed within a nation-state, Henderson et al. (2013) find broad diversity, from "historic regions" such as Wales and Catalonia to "administrative conveniences" such as Lower Saxony; from high-autonomy "self-rule" regions such as Scotland to the administratively-weak French regions; and from strong regional economies such as Bavaria to economically weaker areas such as Galicia. Strongest evidence of 'centralist' attributes is found in the most "feeble" regions – those that are institutionally or economically weak and lack historic foundations (2013: 305).

Should territories that most articulate their distinctiveness make more assertive use of income tax powers than more 'centralist' regions? Although rarely directly addressed in the literature, it is a question with broad underpinnings. Responding to differentiated preferences is fundamental to the derivation of the normative decentralization prescriptions of 'first generation' fiscal federalism theory that assumed that governments would seek to maximize social welfare (Rodden 2006). Wallace Oates' decentralization theorem (1972) hypothesized that localized

governance optimizes allocative efficiency by accounting for variations in preferences: Where differences in citizen preferences across territories are large (especially for regions most likely to articulate regional distinctiveness), we might expect differentiated provision of taxes and public goods. Similarly, and assuming a large number of small jurisdictions competing for mobile consumer-voters who locate according to their ideal balance of taxation and public services, 'Tiebout sorting' (from Tiebout 1956) suggests that tax-and-service packages differing between localities will more closely match individual preferences than standardized national provision. Finally, if elections can be understood as policy selection or preference revelation mechanisms (Shepsle 1991), party control should matter for tax policy because left-wing governments' predisposition towards state intervention and a larger public sector requires additional revenue. Since income tax is easily understood it is well suited for ideological positioning such as proposals for tax cuts or redistribution (Blom-Hansen et al. 2006).

In contrast to the early fiscal federalism literature that viewed the center as a benevolent, welfare-maximizing social planner, a 'second generation' is more skeptical of universalist accounts and focuses instead on the incentives created in the operation of political institutions and the behaviors they induce from actors (Oates 2005). For example, evidence from the US states (Berry & Berry 1992, 1994) suggests the validity of a 'regional diffusion hypothesis' (Walker 1969) that derives from incentives operating on risk-averse state politicians. States are more likely to increase

rates or introduce new taxes if neighboring states have already done so, because of greater certainty about policy consequences, reduced fears that businesses may relocate to neighboring jurisdictions, and the opportunity for politicians to draw attention to the neighboring state's tax policies in rebuffing criticism that the tax is unfair (Berry & Berry 1992: 722). An incentives-based account also informs the large electoral cycles literature that considers electoral proximity a key determinant of tax changes (e.g. Nordhaus 1975). Introducing politically-costly policies early gives the "public the maximum amount of time to forget the government's unpopular action before the next election" (Berry & Berry 1992:719).

But preference- and incentives-based accounts of tax changes can be derailed by the immediacy of economic crises. Fiscal decentralization in Western Europe coincided with deep fiscal retrenchment following the 2007-08 financial crisis, a global recession and the Eurozone banking crisis. Regional budgets faced severe contraction as receipts from own-sources and intergovernmental transfers reduced significantly. Budget shocks might overwhelm divergence and trigger a tax-raising response. As Hansen argues in relation to the US states, this response might result not only from fiscal necessity but because "the existence of an economic crisis . . . may reduce the political risks of tax innovation, particularly if a state is legally required to show a balanced budget" (1983: 150).

These approaches in explaining substate tax policy have made progress in understanding incentives operating on regional political actors. However, because the

subject for such work is often stable federations – in particular the United States – this research frequently neglects the center-periphery axis that is essential in explaining electoral competition in the strongest historical regions. In particular, existing political economy approaches overlook incentives operating on autonomist parties that derive from the Downsian model of electoral competition. Where competition is structured both along the economic left-right and the center-periphery dimensions, these two axes organize political orientations and voting behavior differently and give rise to distinctive plains of competition between statewide and autonomist parties (Pallarés & Keating 2003). The best response for office-seeking, vote-maximizing parties in such systems is to develop a broad appeal on both axes. In a two-dimensional ideological space, pro-autonomy parties may be inclined to converge on the regional median voter by creating a 'broad-church' or 'catch all' platform that attracts autonomy-inclined voters from both wings of the economic left-right spectrum (Massetti 2009: 524-525). Reflecting such incentives, autonomist parties tend to be located in the mainstream of political competition on the centrist/liberal right or conservative right in 'bourgeois' regions such as Flanders, Veneto and South Tyrol; and on the center-left in 'working class' regions such as Wales and Wallonia (Massetti 2009). As a result, historic regions governed by 'catch-all' autonomist parties (or adaptive statewide parties) might be especially averse to using devolved tax powers.

The central proposition of this chapter is that decentralized income taxes should be subject to very little change, especially in the prominent autonomous

regions or historical nations of a state. But a number of factors might explain the (albeit limited) use of such powers. Particularly among parties that do not compete on the national identity/center-periphery dimension, party ideology should have some explanatory power, with center-left parties more likely to raise taxes and center-right parties more likely to reduce them. By extension, non-autonomist parties operating in prominent autonomist regions should be more likely to use tax powers than pro-autonomy parties that may be attempting a 'catch-all' strategy on the economic left-right dimension. Contemporary political parties such as the *Ciutadans* (Citizens) or the Socialists' Party in Catalonia might therefore be more active in modifying tax rates than Convergence and Union, *Junts pel Sí* or the Republican Left; the sp.a (Socialist Party Differently) or Christian Democratic & Flemish in Flanders more willing to alter income tax than the nationalist New Flemish Alliance, and Scottish Labour and the Scottish Conservatives more active in rate changes than the Scottish National Party.

Budget shortfalls may also force the hand of some administrations, particularly where regions are required to raise revenues to close budget deficits (as in Italy). 'First-mover' regions may also reduce the political costs of increasing rates in later-moving, neighboring regions (i.e. 'regional diffusion'). Finally, the nature of the region's financial settlement should also play a major role in tax policy. Regions such as South Tyrol and the Basque Country should be relatively more flexible in using devolved tax powers because of a much more generous financial settlement than regions participating in 'ordinary' funding regimes.

But any explanations for the use (or non-use) of tax powers focusing solely on the regional tier will have limited purchase because this approach entirely ignores the interests of a second player in inter-territorial competition. In contrast to early approaches that assumed the Center to be a benevolent welfare maximizer, 'second generation' theory considers senior central government politicians and civil servants to be equally self-interested as regional actors. Not only are political elites in autonomist regions engaged in 'nation-building', for which "the possession of formal authority is instrumental to the fulfilment of the goals of individual and collective actors" (Christensen 2000: 390), but central actors have an interest in defending against this strategy by appealing to the integrity of the nation-state (Lecours 2004) or engaging in the 'politics of blame avoidance' (Weaver 1984) by passing the buck for politically-costly decisions. This dynamic between central and regional actors, and in particular each party's best response to each other's strategy, is of fundamental importance in explaining tax policy outcomes in the decentralizing states of Western Europe.

2.3 ADDING THE CENTER BACK: COMPETITION AND DECENTRALIZED INCOME TAX

The previous section began by asking whether pro-autonomy territories of a state should be expected to make more assertive use of income tax powers than more 'centralist' regions. Although preferences-based theoretical underpinnings of the

early literature might assume this to be the case, existing explanations have frequently overlooked the center's interests in resisting decentralization, and the region's best response to the center's strategy. In extending a concept that fiscal decentralization can be understood an 'incomplete contract', this chapter argues that incentive structures operating on central and regional elites create an "institutional equilibrium" (Shepsle 1986, Calvert 1995) at a point where income taxes are devolved but autonomist regions are not inclined to use them. This position might be alternatively conceived as a Mexican standoff in which an uneasy stalemate persists because neither party can advance or retreat without being exposed to jeopardy.

The equilibrium rests on four 'pillars' deriving from electoral competition, blame-shifting and the authority-maximizing objectives of central and regional elites:

1. Regional elites in autonomist regions adopt a 'champion of the region against the center' strategy, harnessing differentiated identities and instrumental economic grievances to mobilize support and project blame for detrimental outcomes onto the center.

2. Strategic central government actors resist this strategy by engaging in the politics of blame avoidance, using fiscal decentralization legitimized through negotiated settlements to lock regions into sharing or assuming blame for controversial or costly policy changes, particularly during periods of spending restraint.

3. Although they are alert to the potential loss of an electorally successful 'regional champion' strategy, autonomist regional politicians are engaged in a nation-building project and therefore accept fiscal decentralization as it grants status and prestige on the region and is supplemented with institutions such as Treasuries and tax agencies that mirror or substitute those of the center.

4. While regional actors are willing to assume risks associated with fiscal autonomy, the likely success of the center's blame-shifting strategy is minimized

(and the continued success of a continued 'champion of the region' strategy maximized) where the regions tether regional tax rates and thresholds broadly to the national tax policy trajectory.

Although opportunities exist for continued competition and bargaining, these incentives give rise to a condition where income taxes are partially decentralized but tax divergence between regions is significantly smaller than anticipated in the fiscal federalism literature.

PILLAR 1: 'CHAMPIONS OF THE REGION AGAINST THE CENTER' AND INSTRUMENTAL ECONOMIC GRIEVANCE

Particularly in the strongest historic regions, political elites may be able to reorient the regional populace to pursue collective goals at the regional level not simply via affective identity claims but also by instrumental economic interests crystallized by grievances over territorial financing and resource distribution (Jeffrey 2012). Instrumental grievances are frequently the most prominent contentions in federal and multi-national states. In Canada, Western Alienation has been fomented by Alberta and British Columbia's net contribution to equalization and the perception that federal spending is directed at central Canadian interests (Lecours 2004). Net contributor states to Australia's extensive fiscal equalization are frequent and vocal critics of the method used to determine distributions from the Goods and Services Tax (GST), the major source of state and territory revenue.

In Spain, the imbalance between Catalonia's contributions to tax revenue and public funds received from the state "has been a permanent cause of struggle" (Castells 2014: 284) that "has become one of the main arguments used by Catalan political elites to advocate for greater autonomy or straight secession" (Rico 2012: 222). Mobilization of economic grievances has contributed to the growth of regionalist parties not only in 'bourgeois' regions such as Bavaria, Flanders and Northern Italy, but also in 'working class' regions such as Sardinia and Wales, where mobilization draws from perceptions that existing redistribution does not adequately address economic inequalities (Jeffrey 2012).

Articulation of grievance by prominent regions can also encourage elites elsewhere to construct distinctive identities to substantiate claims for comparable powers or financial settlements to those ceded to the historical regions, a process Moreno terms ethnoterritorial mimesis (Moreno 1997). In Canada, the salience of regional grievances first mobilized in Québec and Western Canada give provincial leaders elsewhere an electoral incentive "to be aggressive when they deal with the federal government on issues they can frame as affecting their interests and/or identities" (Lecours & Béland 2010: 582). In the case countries, regions without a strong tradition of independent identities such as Wallonia, Brussels, Valencia and the Canary Islands have attempted to "stimulate feelings of distinctiveness in their own federate entity" (Lecours 2004: 81).

PILLAR 2: RESISTANCE FROM THE CENTER: SOLIDARITY, NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENTS AND BLAME-SHIFTING

Notwithstanding the benevolent assumptions of early literature, adopting a competitive strategy in inter-territorial relations is not the sole prerogative of regional actors. As in Canada after the 1995 Québec referendum and the UK after the 2014 Scottish referendum, central actors can be expected to resist the 'slippery slope' of decentralization by appealing to notions of interterritorial solidarity and the integrity of the nation-state (Lecours 2004).

In addition to inertia and appeals to solidarity, one response to an autonomist 'champion of the region against the center' strategy is to engage in "the politics of blame avoidance" (Weaver 1986) by locking regional governments into sharing or assuming blame for controversial policy changes (Béland & Myles 2012). Far from being a simple story of devolution being demanded and won by regionalist parties applying pressure on statewide parties (e.g. Obydenkova & Swenden 2013), decentralization can be a vital instrument for central actors to 'pass the buck' (Weaver 1986). Because of voters' negativity bias – "their tendency to be more sensitive to real or potential losses than they are to gains" – Weaver observes that office-seeking politicians are more motivated to avoid blame than they are to seek credit (1986: 370). They therefore have a strong incentive to force other actors in the system to make politically costly choices. In particular, where a policy change is likely to bring benefits to one part of the electorate but negatively affect another broad group (such

as welfare reform or tax rises), transferring responsibilities to other tiers of government can circumvent institutional paralysis that may delay or stymie such reforms (Costa-i-Font 2010).

Particularly in parliamentary systems where executives are drawn from the legislature, it is more difficult for central government actors to deflect blame to other branches of the center. Decentralization to other tiers is therefore a means to avoid blame in the event of a reform backfiring (Costa-i-Font 2010: 483). Indeed, because blame shifting usually represents a useful long-term strategy to both incumbent and future governments, central tier parties may "collude" to approve such transfers (Costa-i-Font 2010: 483). Such decentralization reforms can be legitimized and locked in by 'negotiated settlements' between central and regional governments. Myles and Pierson (2001) note that all major pension reform events in Canada in the 1990s were the products of such center-periphery settlements, which might include all-party agreements, tripartite agreements with 'social partners', or approval by national referendums.

A short-lived Australian fiscal decentralization proposal in 2016 is illustrative of a central blame-shifting strategy using income tax. Facing an $80bn cut in projected commonwealth spending on hospitals and schools, and "the inevitable blame from state premiers for not stumping up the cash" (Guardian Australia, 3 April 2016), the Turnbull Government proposed 'tax room' for state income taxes by reducing the federal tax: the same mechanism used in Spain, Belgium and Scotland. After state

premiers rejected the plan the Prime Minister warned: "Don't come to the commonwealth asking for more money when you weren't prepared to even think about putting taxes up yourselves… Now the ball is back in your court" (News.com.au, 4 April 2016). Yet as reported at the time, although Turnbull's tactic "was couched in the language of 'ending the blame game'… [it] was actually calculated to give him a means of shifting, or at least sharing, the blame" (Guardian Australia, 3 April 2016). Turnbull's strategy echoed legislation passed by the Fraser Government in 1978 permitting the states to establish an income tax surcharge or rebate, an offer which was not taken up by the states and was consequently repealed in 1989 (Madden 2006). Rather than welcoming the powers, state premiers speculated that the surcharge "might help the commonwealth escape from some of the odium for a high level of personal income taxes, and aid its attempts to wind back its financial commitments to the states" (Sharman 1993: 228 in Madden 2006), with Queensland premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen remarking that "the only good tax is a Commonwealth tax" (in Craig 1997: 193).

PILLAR 3: AUTHORITY MAXIMIZATION AND THE INSTITUTIONS OF AN EMERGENT NATION STATE

If central actors consider decentralization a means to shift blame or overcome logjams, regions' complicity in such schema is puzzling. In a settled federation where premiers have little incentive to 'nation-build', the Australian states twice rejected a fiscal

decentralization plan that barely concealed the center's blame-shifting intentions. Yet from the perspective of authority-maximizing regional actors in decentralizing states, tax powers and treasuries are important institutions of an emergent nation state.

This expansive treasury model has been echoed in Scotland, Catalonia and Flanders. Despite tax collection being primarily a provincial function in Spain, the Catalan government explicitly prioritized the creation of an "embryo" Catalan Treasury, *Tributs de Catalunya*, which merges the small existing AC tax agency with the far larger provincial bodies, creating an intergovernmental agency of 1,421 staff members distributed across 150 branches (Catalan News Agency, 20 September 2012). Rather than a cost-saving exercise, the reform is best interpreted as part of a strategy to create "state structures", explicit since a December 2012 agreement between Convergence and Union and the Republican Left of Catalonia. Scotland's new tax collection agency, Revenue Scotland, was established on an expansive framework and was considered by the Scottish Government's Fiscal Commission Working Group prior to the independence referendum as a potential "foundation for the formation of a tax administration system for all taxes in Scotland" (Scottish Government 2013a).

Even in Italy, where fiscal decentralization has been accompanied by a significant retrenchment of central funding for devolved functions, 'fiscal federalism' is viewed with suspicion in poorer regions but maintains widespread support in more autonomist regions. In a 2010 Demos survey, just 18% of voters in southern Italy thought that fiscal federalism would make things better, compared with 43% of voters

in the North, and 63% in Veneto's Vicenza province (Diamanti 2010a).[2] In Italy's more autonomist regions, fiscal devolution is considered "a kind of universal remedy, which will result in lower taxes, more autonomy, and more extensive and higher quality public services" (Diamanti 2010a). As in the other autonomist regions, the institutions accompanying fiscal decentralization are of instrumental benefit: "The Taxman…is a flag of center-right liberal federalism… waved by the League" (Diamanti 2010b).

PILLAR 4: POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RISKS IN DECOUPLING FROM THE NATIONAL FISCAL TRAJECTORY

Autonomist regional actors therefore accept the 'decentralization bargain' because it is accompanied by institutions that enhance the region's status and prestige. However, because macroeconomic stabilization and fiscal policy are central government (or Eurozone) functions, devolved income taxes are associated with economic risks that are often well outside regional governments' influence. Such risks are extensive, including budget shortfalls from macroeconomic shocks, boirrowing[3] and asymmetric impacts from industrial or immigration policies. At a mechanical level, receipts from

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[2] The poll question asked: "Di recente il parlamento ha approvato la legge sul federalismo. Secondo Lei che effetti avrà per la sua regione?" – *"Recently the parliament approved the law on federalism. In your opinion what effects will it have for your region?"* Demos survey for the Industrial Association of the Province of Vicenza, 12 June 2010. Available at http://www.demos.it/2010/pdf/1347201006videmos.pdf

[3] See the Appendix for a note on Borrowing Powers.

income taxes levied on a surtax or overlapping basis will be influenced by central policy competence over thresholds and brackets. In Belgium for example, where the regional income tax surcharge is levied directly on the federal tax and not the tax base, changes to federal tax rates or thresholds directly increase or decrease the proceeds of the regional tax.

But there are political as well as budgetary risks from active use of tax powers. Alert to the threat of losses at the next election from unpopular tax changes, regional politicians would be expected to subordinate short-term interests in tax innovation to longer-term nation-building objectives. Maintaining prevailing income tax rates (and thresholds fixed or only marginally changed) represents a lower-risk policy that continues to align regional policy with the trajectory of the rest of the state. If the region broadly maintains the national trajectory, voters will perceive little or no change from tax devolution, weakening the likely effectiveness of the center's 'blame-shifting' strategy. This allows regional elites to continue a strategy of simultaneously defending the regional interest and projecting blame onto the center. Or, as McLean observes in relation to Scotland after tax devolution: "when forced to make cuts, the [Scottish] government will once again blame the English" (2012: 650). The contrasting strategy is to detach from this national trajectory by engaging in tax competition or offering rate changes. This option is higher risk in the short-term because it makes a central 'blame-shifting' strategy more likely to be successful in the event of policy failure.

Importantly, these significant political and budgetary risks mean that income tax may not be representative of autonomist regional elites' motivations in cultivating differences in other areas of public policy. In decentralized education policy for example, evidence from educational curriculum cooperation in Canada is that non-autonomist provincial governments chose to coalesce around a broad-based 'ideational consensus' that found its expression in a series of intergovernmental forums (Wallner 2017). In contrast, autonomous regional elites in Québec used their policy autonomy in education to execute nation-building objectives (Béland & Lecours 2008, Wallner 2017). Because of its "commitment to nationhood, self-determination, and the promotion of its own uniqueness… Québec had significantly less incentive to harmonize course content with the other provinces" (Wallner 2017: 432). In many non-tax areas of public policy, autonomist regional elites might be expected to use policy levers more radically than their counterparts in the less distinctive regions of a state.

Indeed, that income tax is non-representative may also be applicable in relation to other, less-consequential devolved taxes. The relatively-higher visibility of income tax means that rate changing risks are substantially higher than for other own-source regional revenues. In Spain, where a wide range of taxes can be levied by the Autonomous Communities, more significant changes have been applied to relatively minor taxes such as the Death and Gift Tax and discretionary environmental and sin taxes (see Section 2.4.1). This parallels Scotland and Wales' early willingness to adopt

minimum alcohol pricing and plastic bag levies relative to the UK government for England (*The Guardian,* 25 October 2017). In contrast to far-less consequential levies that are clearly linked to environmental- or health policy objectives, income tax increases pose a direct (and sometimes significant) cost on taxpayers, presenting significant risk for regional actors interested primarily in nation-building objectives.

The following section assesses against the practice of regional income tax use in the case countries, arguing that incentives operating on political elites create an institutional configuration that is not associated with the frequent and assertive use of income tax powers in prominent autonomist regions.

2.4 CHARTING THE PARADOX: THE USE OF INCOME TAX IN SPAIN, ITALY, BELGIUM AND THE UK

A common feature of fiscal decentralization in Spain, Italy, Belgium and the UK has been the devolution of part of the central government's Personal Income Tax as the largest (or the second-largest) of new own-source revenues. This section analyses the use of such powers in reference to expectations outlined above. Because of the limited number of years since tax decentralization and the small number of regions (only three in Belgium and one in the UK), any estimates drawn from a regression line would be unstable (e.g. Tabachnick & Fidell 2013). Cross-case parallels are therefore more appropriate for the purposes of this study than large-N quantitative methodologies.

2.4.1 SPAIN

Two distinct sets of territorial financing arrangements have been in place in Spain since the constitution of 1978: the common-system for 15 Autonomous Communities (ACs) and the Foral regime for the Basque Country and Navarre (from *fuero*, "medieval charter or right") (Colino 2012).[4] The foral regime is characterized by full regulatory autonomy over all major taxes (except VAT) and an annual quota paid to the Spanish government for non-devolved expenditures such as defense (Colino 2012).

Aside from the long history of the foral regime, fiscal devolution in Spain is a recent phenomenon (Bird 2015). No fewer than five distinct financing models have been in place since 1986, transforming Spain's territorial financing system from one based on earmarked grants to one based on shared- and own-source taxes. All

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[4] The historic basis for the foral regime was a series of compromises designed to end repeated civil wars between the central Spanish state and Carlist traditionalists in the north east of Spain, and the inability of the State to effectively collect taxes in the region. As a result, Navarre and the three historical provinces today constituting the Basque Country – Araba/Álava, Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia (Biscay) – maintained full control over their own taxation systems, and this local fiscal autonomy resumed throughout the Basque Country and Navarre after Spain's transition to democracy in the 1970s. The Basque Country financing system is regulated under a Financial-Economic agreement (*Concierto Económico*) which cannot be amended by members of parliament representing constituencies outside the Basque Country (Colino 2012). Because the Basque Country and Navarre do not make contributions to Spain's interterritorial financial equalization system and benefit from a "politically determined miscalculation of the quota remitted to the central government" (Colino 2012: 12), per capita funding is at least 60-80% higher than in other Spanish ACs, allowing the Basque Country to spend twice as much on health, education and social services (Colino 2012) and therefore able to reduce taxes at no cost to their taxpayers (see Bird 2015). This analysis therefore concentrates on fiscal decentralization in the common regime.

common-system ACs have progressively gained access to all major tax bases and rates since 1997, with the exception of corporate income taxes (Ruiz Almendral 2013).

The ACs have been active in using some of these tax powers. The Death & Gift Tax's decentralization in 2002 led to significant regional differentiation on partisan lines: Madrid under the Popular Party (PP) being far more willing to cut taxes than Socialist (PSOE) strongholds such as Andalusia (Solé-Ollé 2013). Behavioural effects by taxpayers have been largely absent, because Gift Tax levies are based on the property's location rather than the taxpayer's domicile (Solé-Ollé 2013). Since the late 1980s, ACs have also been allowed to create new taxes but only in areas that are unoccupied by the central government. Although tax proposals have been successfully challenged before the Constitutional Court, new environmental levies and 'sin' taxes have been created under this provision,[5] and Catalonia and Galicia have been active in this field (Solé-Ollé 2013). However, perhaps given the restrictions impeding their more widespread use, Catalonia's 'own taxes' represented just 1.6% of the budget in 2012 (Castells 2014: 282).

A far more substantial (and the largest) source of revenue is the regional income tax, comprising 31.5% of Catalonia's 2012 budget (Castells 2014: 283). Prior to 2009, the ACs were relatively passive in terms of the structure of income tax.

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[5] Adopted own source taxes include gambling taxes (e.g., casinos, bingo, slot machines and lotteries) and environmental taxes (e.g., water, emissions, landfill, incineration or other disposal taxes)

Instead, and in a parallel with Belgium, ACs focused on introducing new fiscal benefits for specific classes of taxpayers such as child and housing credits (Ruiz Almendral 2013, Solé-Ollé 2013). Although virtually none of the ACs modified their tax rates or schedules during the 2000s, Madrid was again a "pioneer" in introducing small rate reductions after 2007 (Solé-Ollé 2013: 352).

A possible explanation for this reticence is that prior to the most recent reforms, ACs could choose whether to exercise their powers to regulate a devolved tax. In the absence of a decision the State would continue to levy the tax and transfer receipts to the region. This guarantee of continued financial transfers on the basis of historical shares created a strong disincentive for ACs to use their new competences (Ruiz Almendral 2012). In a move reminiscent of the Calman Commission that first recommended overlapping income taxes in Scotland, a 2009 Spanish government reform forced the regions to actively legislate for such taxes or forfeit the associated revenues. No AC had requested such a change; rather the reform was "intended to reinforce fiscal responsibility, if only by forcing ACs to exercise their powers" (Ruiz Almendral 2013: 23).

Despite central efforts to impose a more uniform decentralization settlement (Pallarés & Keating 2003), Spanish ACs vary according to their constitutional foundations, the speed at which powers were devolved, and the "differential fact" (Moreno 2001) of ethnic and linguistic identities that give rise to "large differences in self-identification between the historic nationalities and the rest" (Pallarés & Keating

2003: 4). The 1978 constitution prioritized the restoration of autonomous government to the two foral nationalities plus Catalonia and Galicia where regionalism had "gained ground as a legitimate force of democratic resistance against [Franco's] assimilationist and unitary policies" (Swenden 2006: 31). Catalonia is the most prominent historic region in the common system; Galicia has a historic identity and language but a weaker economy and non-autonomist administrations. The 13 other ACs were categorized as 'ordinary', but while several had strong existing identities and self-rule traditions such as Andalusia and the Canary Islands, others such as La Rioja, Cantabria and Murcia had little regionalist sentiment or history of self-government (Heywood 1995 in Swenden 2006). Some newly-established ACs therefore expanded their autonomy more rapidly. Andalusia became a "fast-track" adopter of autonomy, the Canary Islands and Valencia were "intermediate-track", and the remaining 10 ACs were "slow-track" adopters (Swenden 2006: 32). Regionalist identification in autonomist regions has been much more marked than in the other 'ordinary' status regions (Pallarés & Keating 2003: 4).

In practice, despite variation in regional identification, even prior to the 2009 reforms the formal powers of 'slow-track' ACs had caught up with the 'fast-track' regions (Swenden 2006). Not only is tax autonomy currently quite substantial, but there has been an "explosion" in the use of such powers since 2010 (Solé-Ollé 2013). ACs have been able to vary the number of tax brackets applying to earned income tax, change tax rates applying for all or some of these brackets, and alter the income

thresholds applying to each bracket. The use of these policy levers since the introduction of such flexibility is summarized in Table 2.1. An interpretation key is also provided.

Income Tax Policy Innovation: Key

Brackets ↑ or **Brackets** ↓ - Change in the number of tax bands or brackets applying to regional taxable income.

Some Rates ↑ or **Some Rates** ↓ – Change in income tax rates for some but not all bands

All Rates ↑ or **All Rates** ↓ – Change in income tax rates for all bands

Thresholds Δ - Change in the income thresholds applying to the bands

‡ - **Election held**

2015: Major change to Spanish State tax brackets in 2015. ACs **Adopted** or **Did Not Adopt** new structure for regional rates.

Party abbreviations: PSOE–Spanish Socialist Workers' Party; PP–People's Party; PPdeG–People's Party of Galicia; PAR–Aragonese Party; IU–United Left; PSM–PSM Nationalist Agreement; ERC–Republican Left of Catalonia; CC–Canarian Coalition; PRC–Regionalist Party of Cantabria; IVC–Initiative for Catalonia Greens–United and Alternative Left; CiU–Convergence and Union; JxSí–Junts pel Sí; PSPV–Socialist Party of the Valencian Country

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Table 2.1: Income Tax Changes In Common-System Autonomous Communities

Autonomous Community		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 Major change to Spanish tax brackets (see key)	No. Years of Tax Changes *
Historic Communities								
Catalonia	Party Control	PSC-ERC-IVC coalition, CiU min after 12/2010 ‡	CiU min	CiU min ‡	CiU min	CiU min	CiU min (JxSí after 10/1/2016) ‡	1
	Tax Changes		Some Rates ↑ •				Did not adopt.	
Galicia	Party Control	PPdeG maj	PPdeG maj	PPdeG maj ‡	PPdeG maj	PPdeG maj	PPdeG maj	
	Tax Changes						Did not adopt. Some Rates ↓	1
Fast- and Intermediate-track 'Ordinary' ACs								
Andalusia	Party Control	PSOE maj	PSOE maj	PSOE-United Left coalition (after 5/2012) ‡	PSOE-United Left coalition	PSOE-United Left coalition	PSOE-United Left coalition. PSOE min after 6/2015 ‡	
	Tax Changes		Some Rates ↑ Brackets ↑	Thresholds Δ			Did not adopt.	2
Canary Islands	Party Control	CC-PP coalition	CC-PP coalition; CC-PSOE after 5/2011 ‡	CC-PSOE coalition	CC-PSOE coalition	CC-PSOE coalition	CC-PSOE coalition ‡	
	Tax Changes			Some Rates ↑			Did not adopt. Some Rates ↓ Some Rates ↑	2
Valencian Community	Party Control	PP maj	PP maj ‡	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj. PSPV/Commitment Coalition after 6/2015 ‡	
	Tax Changes	All Rates ↓		All Rates ↑			Did not adopt. All Rates ↓	3
Slow-track 'Ordinary' ACs								
Aragon	Party Control	PSOE-PAR coalition	PSOE-PAR. PP-PAR coalit. after 5/2011 ‡	PP-PAR coalition	PP-PAR coalition	PP-PAR coalition	PP-PAR coalition. PSOE min after 7/2015 ‡	
	Tax Changes						Adopted. Some Rates ↓ Some Rates ↑	1
Asturias	Party Control	PSOE min	PSOE min. Asturias Forum after 7/2011 ‡	Asturias Forum. PSOE min after 5/2012	PSOE min	PSOE min	PSOE min ‡	
	Tax Changes		Thresholds Δ Some Rates ↑	Brackets ↑ Thresholds Δ Some Rates ↓	Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↑		Did not adopt. Some Rates ↓	4
Balearic Islands	Party Control	PSOE-PSM-IU-ERC coalition	PSOE-PSM-IU-ERC coalition; PP Maj after 5/2011 ‡	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj. PSOE/PSM-Nationalist Agreement after 6/2015 ‡	
	Tax Changes						Adopted New Structure. Brackets ↑	1
Cantabria	Party Control	PRC-PSOE coalition	PRC-PSOE coalition; PP maj after 5/2011 ‡	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj PRC-PSOE coalition after 7/2015 ‡	

Table 2.1: Income Tax Changes In Common-System Autonomous Communities

Autonomous Community		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 Major change to Spanish tax brackets (see key)	No. Years of Tax Changes *
	Tax Changes		Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↑			Some Rates ↓ Some Rates ↑	Adopted. Some Rates ↓ Some Rates ↑	3
Castile and León	Party Control	PP maj	PP maj ‡	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj ‡	
	Tax Changes						Did not adopt, except new lowest bracket. Some Rates ↓	1
Castile–La Mancha	Party Control	PSOE maj	PSOE maj; PP maj after 5/2011 ‡	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj. PSOE min after 7/2015 ‡	
	Tax Changes						Adopted. Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↓ Some Rates ↑	1
Extremadura	Party Control	PSOE maj	PSOE maj; PP maj after 5/2011 ‡	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj. PSOE min after 7/2015 ‡	
	Tax Changes		Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↑		Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↓	Some Rates ↑	Adopted. Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↓ Some Rates ↑	4
La Rioja	Party Control	PP maj	PP maj ‡	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj ‡	
	Tax Changes						Adopted. Some Rates ↓ Some Rates ↑	2
Madrid Community	Party Control	PP maj	PP maj ‡	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj. PP min after 7/2015 ‡	
	Tax Changes					All Rates ↓	Did not adopt, except new lowest and highest brackets. Some Rates ↓ Some Rates ↑	3
Murcia	Party Control	PP maj	PP maj ‡	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj. PP min after 7/2015 ‡	
	Tax Changes			All Rates ↑ (match Valencia)	All Rates ↑		Adopted. Some Rates ↓ Some Rates ↑	3

Source: Author and EUROMOD Country Reports – Spain.

* Including any policy to change the regional tax system to match the Spanish state bracket structure in 2015.

• Policy decision by previous administration

A number of patterns can be observed. Several ACs including Valencia, Asturias, Extremadura and Madrid used taxation powers frequently whereas others used them rarely (Balearics, Catalonia, Galicia, Aragon, Castile and León, Castile–La Mancha). Second, in a parallel with Italy, some smaller ACs matched income tax policy to those of larger ACs, namely La Rioja (to Madrid) and Murcia (to Valencia), perhaps suggesting 'regional diffusion'. Third, although some changes to income tax policy can be explained by reference to party, with right-wing administrations more likely to cut rates, again there is no rigid pattern. PP administrations in Galicia and Castile & León rarely used such powers but used them widely in Madrid and Valencia. Although the small number of observations complicates the results for PSOE, left-wing administrations did raise taxes in Andalusia and Extremadura, but kept them fixed in Castile-La Mancha, Aragon and the Balearics. With the exception of Valencia where administrations of both the center-right and center-left (after 2015) used powers more frequently, the historic nationalities and faster-track regions used tax powers less frequently than those in the slower-track.

The period analyzed here coincided with an unprecedented economic crisis in Spain. While the ACs introduced stimulus measures for significant industrial sectors such as car manufacturing (Viver Pi-Sunyer 2010), the tax response was starkly dissimilar. Some administrations continued to cut taxes (Madrid, three times); some raised rates (Murcia [twice], Canaries, Catalonia [once each]), while others had a contradictory rate response (Valencia, Extremadura). Still others altered income

thresholds (Andalusia, Asturias), while others increased the number of brackets (Andalusia, Asturias, Cantabria, Extremadura). Likewise, electoral cycles have little purchase in understanding tax changes in the ACs. Only Asturias, Valencia, the Canaries and Murcia undertook tax changes in the year after an election – and alternative explanations can be offered for at least two of these changes: the Canarian Coalition's switch from a center-right to center-left coalition in 2011, and Murcia's 'regional diffusion' with Valencia.

Of all historic regions in the case countries, an electorally-successful 'champion of the region' strategy is perhaps most associated with the 23-year leadership of Catalonia's Jordi Pujol, during which the CiU "cultivated its image as a champion of the Catalan cause" and obtained incremental but significant advancements in regional autonomy (Rico 2012: 230). Instrumental economic grievances reflecting such a strategy feature frequently in the Catalan government's publications and statements. For example, in advance of the 2017 budget statement, the Economy and Tax Office Minister launched a social policy document containing proposals by academics for tacking inequality and poverty. But it was reported that the Minister rejected all of these initiatives by concluding that:

> …the Catalan government is unable to make these changes, because the major taxes are managed by the [Spanish] State.
>
> … [T]his situation has forced him to prepare a budget for next year 'that is neither the one Catalans deserve nor what they need' because it does not correspond to 'the economic and fiscal effort made by the citizens. (Catalan News Agency, 17 November 2016)

Despite all major Catalan parties except the PP supporting greater tax autonomy during the negotiation of Catalonia's 2006 Statute of Autonomy, to date the only change in tax rates was made by a Socialist-led tripartite coalition in 2010. Subsequent pro-autonomy minority administrations have refused to change rates, despite significant pressure to increase rates from the left-wing Popular Unity Candidacy in the 2016 budget negotiations and ERC's participation in the Junts pel Sí government (Catalan News Agency, 10 November 2016). Likewise, although Galicia's dominant party, the People's Party of Galicia, is a regional offshoot of the statewide PP, it has described itself as "autonomist" or "Galeguista" and has adopted the rhetoric, symbolism and cultural characteristics of a regionalist party (Schrijver 2006: 159-162), adapting to the political dynamics of the region. Galicia's government modified income tax rates only once.

2.4.2 ITALY

As in Spain, Italy's territorial financing system is bifurcated between individual arrangements for five 'special statute' regions and a common system for the remaining 15 'ordinary statute' regions. The five special regions – Aosta Valley, Trentino-Alto Adige/South Tyrol,[6] Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Sardinia and Sicily – were designated in

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[6] Legislative, administrative and taxation powers in Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol have been transferred to the two self-governing provinces, Trentino and South Tyrol.

the 1947-48 constitution either to recognize linguistic or ethnic diversities or a long independent history. In addition to regional own-source taxes levied along with ordinary regions (see below), the five regions share receipts from national taxes generated in the region, with the regional percentage varying from approximately 100% in Sicily, 90% in Aosta Valley and Trentino-South Tyrol, 70% in Sardinia and 50% in Friuli-Venezia Giulia (Giarda 2000). Special regions do not participate in equalization schemes; as a result there is wide variation in the underlying fiscal bases both between the five regions and between special and ordinary regions. The combination of high tax-sharing percentages and high per-capita incomes mean that Trentino-South Tyrol and Aosta Valley "experience by far the highest levels of per capita public expenditures" in Italy (Giarda 2000: 7). This is perhaps possible only because of their relative size. While South Tyrol and Aosta Valley have a population of 512,000 and 127,000 respectively, high-income regions in the ordinary regime including Lombardy (10 million), Lazio (6 million) and Veneto (5 million) are indispensable to Italian fiscal equalization.

For ordinary statute regions created in 1970, reallocation of functions between the tiers of government was undertaken during the Prodi administration with the 1997 Bassanini Act (No. 127/1997), establishing a mechanism for devolving powers over a multi-year period (Piperno 2012). On the revenue side, tax autonomy for communes had been introduced with a municipal property tax in 1993 and a maximum 0.5% flat rate Income Tax surcharge (*IRPEF comunale*) in 1998. A

corresponding Income Tax surcharge for regional administrations (*Addizionale regionale IRPEF*) was also introduced in 1998, consisting of a mandatory flat rate of 0.9% and an additional discretionary rate of up to 0.5%.

Unlike Spain, Belgium and Scotland, the largest source of regional own-source tax revenues in Italy is not income tax but rather a business tax, the Regional Tax on Productive Activities (IRAP), also introduced in 1998. IRAP is a tax on the value of net business production and is the main source of revenue for the Italian National Health Service that accounts for 85% of spending by regional administrations (OECD 2015). The standard IRAP rate for private sector activity is currently 3.90% levied on a broad tax base, and may be increased or decreased by up to 0.92% by regions. An unusual feature of Italy's territorial financing arrangements is the central government's ability to require regions to increase IRAP and IRPEF rates to meet deficits in health expenditure (*L'extra deficit sanitario*), such that Sicily, for example, has levied the maximum rate for both taxes since 2011 (ANSA 28 January 2017). Eleven regions currently levy the standard IRAP rate (Aosta Valley, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Piedmont, Lombardy, Veneto, Liguria, Emilia Romagna, Tuscany, Umbria, Basilicata and Sardinia). Southern regions carrying health deficits levy the maximum rate (Lazio, Marche, Molise, Abruzzo, Apulia, Calabria, Campania and Sicily). South Tyrol and Trentino are able to use their preferential financial circumstances to set lower rates of 2.98% and 3.44% respectively (OECD 2014). Most regions therefore choose not to exercise their 0.92% discretionary allowance; as a result there is

therefore general continuity in IRAP rates (excepting regions with health deficits and Trentino-South Tyrol). However, stark regional economic differences generate large disparities in receipts. In 2014, the average net tax declared by businesses paying IRAP (excluding government agencies) ranged from €11,850 in Lazio and €10,620 in Lombardy to €3,380 in Basilicata and just €1,090 in Sardinia (Italia Oggi 22 March 2016).

A 2001 constitutional reform entrenched subsidiary and fiscal federalism into the constitution; however, this tentative step towards further decentralization was followed by almost a decade of hiatus until the passage of implementing legislation in 2009 and two legislative decrees by the Berlusconi government (in which the Northern League participated) in 2010 and 2011 (Piperno 2012). The framework law (n.42/2009) provided regions and communes with an assigned share of the VAT; additional flexibilities over income tax surcharge rates, deductions and allowances; and (as in the Spanish case) the ability to introduce new taxes provided that such levies did not encroach upon existing central tax bases (Piperno 2012). Since 2010 the 'phasing in' of fiscal federalism has been associated with repeated increases in the discretionary element of the income tax surcharge to a maximum rate of 3.33%. From a common base prior to 2010 regional surcharges now vary substantially, from an average rate (across all brackets) in 2014 from 0.7% in South Tyrol and 1.15% in Friuli-Venezia Giulia to 2.04% in Lazio and 2.05% in Molise (La Repubblica 2014).

While the regional surcharges are significantly smaller than the share of income taxes levied in the other three case countries, they provide a source of variation for analysis.

In defining a set of "autonomist regions" for the purposes of analysis, Veneto and Lombardy are a suitable addition to the five special regions. Both have a separate historical identity, a minority language, as of 2017 are administered by the Northern League and have mainstream self-determination movements. Indeed, although the Italian Constitutional Court in 2015 rejected a referendum bill on Venetian independence approved by the regional council in 2014, it upheld proposals for plebiscites on increased autonomy that are expected to be held in both regions in 2017 (Maugeri 2017). As large net contributors to Italian equalization, and echoing Catalonia's efforts to replace its current financing arrangements with the far more generous fiscal autonomy of the Basque-Navarre Foral system, Veneto's stated objective for the 2017 referendum is the South Tyrolean model, retaining 90% of income tax receipts (Maugeri 2016).

As in the Spanish case, there is significant variation in the use of income tax powers, with regions varying the number of brackets, changing tax rates, and modifying income thresholds. Changes since the increased flexibility of regional income tax surcharges are summarized in Table 2.2.

Income Tax Policy Innovation: Key

In addition to Table 2.1:

Min. Flat Rate –minimum permitted flat rate (prior to 2011) of 0.9%

Max. Flat Rate –maximum permitted flat rate (prior to 2011) of 1.4%

Party abbreviations: PD–Democratic Party; UV–Valdostan Union; SVP–South Tyrolean People's Party; UpT–Union for Trentino; PATT–Trentino Tyrolean Autonomist Party; PdL–People of Freedom; FI–Forza Italia; LNP–Lega Nord Piemont; LV–Liga Veneta; LN–Lega Nord; MpA–Movement for the Autonomies; PRC–Communist Refoundation Party; SEL–Left Ecology Freedom

Table 2.2: Income Tax Changes in the Italian Regions

Region		2009	2010	2011 **	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	No. of Years of Changes*
Special Statute Regions										
Aosta Valley	**Party Control**	UV	UV	UV	UV	UV ‡	UV	UV	UV	0
	Tax Changes	Min. Flat Rate								
South Tyrol	**Party Control**	SVP	SVP	SVP	SVP	SVP ‡	SVP	SVP	SVP	
	Tax Changes	Min. Flat Rate	Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↓	Thresholds Δ				Tax deduction of €20.000	Tax deduction of €28.000	4
Trentino	**Party Control**	UpT (supported by PD, PATT)	UpT (supported by PD, PATT)	UpT (supported by PD, PATT)	UpT (supported by PD, PATT)	After 10/15: PATT (supp. by PD, UpT) ‡	PATT (supported by PD, UpT)	PATT (supported by PD, UpT)	PATT (supported by PD, UpT)	
	Tax Changes	Min. Flat Rate					Brackets ↑	Brackets ↓	Thresholds Δ	3
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	**Party Control**	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL; PD after 04/2013 ‡	PD	PD	PD	
	Tax Changes	Min. Flat Rate				Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↓				1
Sardinia	**Party Control**	PdL ‡	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL; PD after 3/2014 ‡	PD	PD	
	Tax Changes	Min. Flat Rate								0
Sicily	**Party Control**	MpA	MpA	MpA	MpA; PD after 11/12 ‡	PD	PD	PD	PD	
	Tax Changes	Max. Flat Rate								1
Ordinary Statute RegionOrdinary Statutes										
Piedmont	**Party Control**	PD	PD; LNP aft. 3/2010 ‡	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP; PD aft. 5/14 ‡	PD	**PD**	
	Tax Changes	Three Rates				All Rates ↑ Brackets ↑	Some Rates ↓ Some Rates ↑	Some Rates ↑		4

Region		2009	2010	2011 **	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	No. of Years of Changes*
Lombardy	**Party Control**	PdL	PdL ‡	PdL	PdL	PdL; LN aft. 2/2013 ‡	LN	LN	LN	
	Tax Changes	Three Rates				Thresholds Δ Some Rates ↓		Brackets ↑		3
Veneto	**Party Control**	PdL	PdL; LV after 3/2010 ‡	LV	LV	LV	LV	LV ‡	LV	
	Tax Changes	Two Rates	Brackets ↓ to Min. Flat Rate							2
Liguria	**Party Control**	PD	PD ‡	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD; FI after 6/15 ‡	FI	
	Tax Changes	Two Rates								2
Emilia Romagna	**Party Control**	PD	PD ‡	PD	PD		Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↑	PD	PD	
	Tax Changes	Four Rates						Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↑		2
Tuscany	**Party Control**	DS/PD	DS/PD; PD after 3/10 ‡	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD ‡	PD	
	Tax Changes	Min. Flat Rate			Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↑			Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↑		2
Umbria	**Party Control**	PD	PD ‡	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD ‡	PD	
	Tax Changes	Two Rates					Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↑			2
Marche	**Party Control**	PD	PD ‡	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD ‡	PD	
	Tax Changes	Three Rates				Brackets ↑				2
Lazio	**Party Control**	PD	PD; PdL aft. 3/2010 ‡	PdL	PdL	PdL; PD aft. 3/2013 ‡	PD	PD	PD	
	Tax Changes	Max. Flat Rate	Flat Rate ↑				Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↑	Thresholds Δ Some Rates ↑		4

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Region		2009	2010	2011 **	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	No. of Years of Changes*
Abruzzo	**Party Control**	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL; PD after 5/14 ‡	PD	PD	
	Tax Changes	Max. Flat Rate					Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↓	Brackets ↓ to Max. Flat Rate		3
Molise	**Party Control**	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL; PD after 2/2013 ‡	PD	PD	PD	
	Tax Changes	Max. Flat Rate	Flat Rate ↑ (match Lazio)				Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↓		All Rates ↓	3
Campania	**Party Control**	PD	PD; PdL after 3/2010 ‡	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL; PD after 6/2015 ‡	PD	
	Tax Changes	Max. Flat Rate	Flat Rate ↑ (match Lazio)							2
Apulia	**Party Control**	PRC/SEL	PRC/SEL ‡	PRC/SEL	PRC/SEL	PRC/SEL	PRC/SEL	PRC/SEL; PD after 6/2015 ‡	PD	
	Tax Changes	Two Brackets	Brackets ↓ to Mid Flat Rate	Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↓		Brackets ↑ Some Rates ↓				4
Basilicata	**Party Control**	PD	PD ‡	PD	PD	PD ‡	PD	PD	PD	
	Tax Changes	Min. Flat Rate					Brackets ↑ All Rates ↑			1
Calabria	**Party Control**	PD	PD; PdL after 3/2010 ‡	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL; PD after 12/2014 ‡	PD	PD	
	Tax Changes	Max. Flat Rate	Flat Rate ↑ (match Lazio)							2

Source: *Author and EUROMOD Country Reports – Italy.* * Including a policy implementing anything other than the minimum flat rate (0.9%) in 2009

** Excluding a 0.33ppt increase in the regional income tax in all regions agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity program.

The Italian IRPEF evidence mirrors the Spanish case in the far more frequent use of tax powers by certain regions. There is no standard pattern in usage other than the required increases in the mandatory component from 0.9% to 1.23% in 2011 and the required increase in rates in the south to fund health deficits. Regions that faced large health deficits including Lazio, Molise, Campania and Calabria raised surcharges to compensate for a loss of central transfers, particularly in more recent years. In contrast to Spain, party effects are far less important than health deficits or special region status. Patterns are equally not associated with electoral cycles: only eight of 47 total tax changes took place in the year following one of the 35 regional election contests between 2009 and 2016.[7]

More apparent is the unwillingness of non-statewide parties to alter rates. In Aosta Valley the Valdostan Union has never altered IRPEF surcharges. A Christian Democrat Union-led administration in Trentino did not use rate-varying powers, although a Christian Democrat Trentino Tyrolean Autonomist Party-led presidency and neighboring South Tyrolean People's Party have been more willing to alter thresholds since 2014. Rates changed only very marginally under the League in Lombardy (varying upper brackets by 0.01%); and income tax powers in Veneto were not used under a Liga Veneta president. Instead, Veneto maintained a flat rate after 2010, rejecting trends towards a progressive multi-bracket system.

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[7] Trentino (2014), Piedmont (2015), Emilia Romagna (2015), Lazio (2014), Abruzzo (2015), Molise (2014), Apulia (2011) and Basilicata (2014).

2.4.3 BELGIUM

As a result of cross-community negotiations to overcome constitutional crises that have toppled incumbent governments or prevented new administrations from being formed, a series of six state reforms in 1970, 1980, 1989, 1993, 2001 and 2011 transferred a large number of functions previously held by the Belgian government to subnational tiers. An unusual feature of Belgian federalization is the creation of overlapping devolved administrations – linguistically-based Communities and territorially-based Regions. Because the Communities have overlapping jurisdictions in Brussels they do not levy direct taxes but are instead funded by transfers from the federal and regional governments. The Regions gained access to own-source taxes after the 2001 state reform, and a new regional personal income tax to be levied directly by the region significantly enhanced this autonomy at the Sixth State Reform in 2011.[8]

The 2001 reform limited regional powers over income tax to the setting of a surtax or rebate on the federal tax. Flanders introduced a rebate under a coalition led by non-autonomist CD&V (Christian Democratic & Flemish) from 2007, but this was

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[8] Regions set bases and rates for estate, inheritance and gift taxes, registration fees on property transfers, mortgage registration fees, taxes on gambling and betting, taxes on the opening of drinking establishments, tax on automatic amusement devices, radio and TV licence fees, road fund tax on vehicles, vehicle registration fees and Heavy goods vehicle tax (Spahn 2007). After the 2011 Sixth State Reform, the regions also gained autonomy in relation to tax credits for owner-occupied housing incentives, service vouchers, work aimed at energy saving and other housing-related tax credits.

progressively phased out until eventual abolition in 2011 (OECD 2016). As in Spain and Scotland, the 2011 reform delivered a much more substantive regional tax that required active rate setting, but unlike the other cases the Belgian tax is a surcharge on the federal tax liability, or 'a tax on a tax'. Starting with the 2015 tax year, the federal government reduced its tax rate by approximately one quarter (25.99%), room in which regions levy a surcharge on the reduced federal tax.[9] While overall progressivity of the system must be maintained within a 10% level of deviation, regions can set rates for each band separately (Bisciari & Van Meensel 2012).

Neither Flanders (center-right coalition led by the autonomist New Flemish Alliance), nor Wallonia (center-left formed by the Socialist Party and the Humanist Democratic Centre) have modified the standard regional income tax of 35.117% since its introduction. As in the Scottish case below, the three parties to the 2014-2019 Flemish coalition agreement "resolutely opt not to increase tax rates" for the duration of the first term in which new tax powers have been available (Flemish Government 2014: 190). The Brussels-Capital Region, led since 2014 by a six-party coalition from both language groups, has made more (albeit limited) use of these powers. In addition to municipal and regional income tax surcharges, Brussels levied an annual tax of €89 per household and a 1% additional surcharge on the federal income tax

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[9] In the Belgian tax system, the regional income tax rate is expressed as a fraction that has the "autonomy factor" of 25.99% as the numerator and 1 minus the autonomy factor as the denominator. In 2015 and 2016, the regional rate in all three Belgian regions was 35.117% (i.e. $0.2599 \div [1-0.2599]$).

('agglomeration tax') until these were abolished effective 2016. The 2017 budget reduced the standard 35.117% income tax surcharge by 0.5ppt (*De Redactie* 2015).

2.4.4 UNITED KINGDOM (SCOTLAND)

In the asymmetric system of devolution in the UK, devolved tax powers have existed only in Scotland, although partial fiscal decentralization is legislated for Northern Ireland and Wales from 2018.

Along with other autonomist or adaptive statewide parties, the Scottish National Party has long cultivated a strategy that projects itself as a better instrument for defending Scotland's interests from external interests, particularly those of the UK government (for this strategy in Spain, see Pallarés et al. 1997, Rico 2012). Starting in the 1970s, with approximately 90 percent of the UK's oil reserves falling within Scottish waters, the SNP first based the case for independence around instrumental economic interests crystallized in the slogan "It's Scotland's oil", winning 30 percent of the vote and 11 parliamentary seats at the UK's October 1974 General Election (Murkens 2002).

Following voter approval of the second, tax-varying powers question of the 1997 devolution referendum,[10] the Scottish Parliament was granted the right to

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[10] 63.48% of voters approved the statement "I agree that a Scottish Parliament should have tax-varying powers"

increase or decrease the basic rate of UK income tax by 3ppt. This mechanism was similar to the surtax or rebate competence of the Belgian regions after 2001, although levied directly on the tax base rather than on the tax liability. But this Scottish Variable Rate was never used, and continued payments to the UK tax collection agency (HMRC) to maintain capacity to levy the tax at short notice were discontinued by the SNP minority administration in 2010. Instead, a block grant (for which a per-capita based mechanism known as the Barnett Formula calculates annual adjustments) continued to fund the Scottish budget.

As in Belgium and Spain, and drawing from public finance theory, the flypaper effect would anticipate greater regional public spending under intergovernmental grants than own-source taxes, because 'money sticks where it hits' (Rodden 2006: 78). An optional surtax system would be expected to incentivize regions to rely on grants by simply avoiding active tax rate choices. Scotland's financial settlement was therefore overhauled following a review Commission established by pro-Union parties in the Scottish Parliament in 2007 and enacted into law in 2012. Speaking in 2008, and echoing the Spanish government's interest in forcing a substate decision over rates, UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown argued:

> Devolution has worked, but I do see one problem: while there have been good reasons why this is so the Scottish Parliament is wholly accountable for the budget it spends but not for the size of its budget. And that budget is not linked to the success of the Scottish economy. That is why we asked the Calman Commission to look carefully at the financial accountability of the Scottish Parliament. And this is a critical part of Calman's remit. (2008)

In addition to transferring two minor taxes, this second settlement therefore required the Scottish Parliament to make an active choice over income tax rates. Effective 2016, the UK government reduced the basic, higher and additional rates of UK income tax for Scottish taxpayers by 10 percentage points and reduced the block grant by a proportionate amount.

This second fiscal devolution settlement was in place for just 12 months (2016-17), and during this period Scotland did not alter the 10p rate Scottish taxpayers previously paid to the UK government. Following the narrow defeat of the 2014 independence referendum, a third fiscal settlement was rapidly negotiated to give the Scottish Government full control over earned income tax and thresholds (except the 'personal allowance', the level of earnings at which taxpayers start paying income tax) from April 2017.[11] Parties unlikely to form the next administration – Labour, Greens and the Liberal Democrats – proposed income tax rate increases at the 2016 Scottish Parliamentary elections. However, despite a 2014 proposal to increase the additional rate of tax from 45% to 50%, the incumbent SNP government's re-election campaign pledged to not vary rates for the duration of the 2016-21 parliament. The administration instead proposed to increase the additional rate tax threshold less rapidly than proposed by the UK government, a much more latent and status quo action than the pre-devolution policy. Because voters understand tax rate changes far

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[11] Except for taxes on savings and dividend income and control over setting the level of earnings at which taxpayers start paying income tax – the "personal allowance".

more readily than modifications to brackets and thresholds (Blom-Hansen et al. 2006), the initial proposal carried political risks that may have jeopardized the party's catch-all appeal and long-term nation-building objectives.

4.5 INCOME TAX DECENTRALIZATION AS AN EQUILIBRIUM INSTITUTION?

Why would autonomist regional governments that may have championed income tax devolution subsequently use such powers less frequently than more 'centralist' regions of a state?

Recent tax decentralization in Spain, Italy, Belgium and the UK coincided with a global recession that required regions to participate in government-wide fiscal retrenchment, either by levying increased tax rates as part of general government austerity measures (Italy), shared contributions to a deficit reduction target (Belgium), or through reduced transfer payments (Spain, UK). Where powers over rates are devolved, evidence from the US states would expect severe retrenchment to trigger a common tax-raising response, not simply to address budget shortfalls but because an economic crisis reduces the political risks of increasing taxes (Hansen 1983). However, there was no standard reaction to this external shock: considerable variation in tax policy was observed.

In contrast, political party control has some explanatory power in tax policy changes over the past decade. Centre-left parties such as PSOE or the Democratic

Party were more likely to raise taxes, and center-right parties such as the PP and PdL were more likely to reduce them. However, wide discrepancies in tax changes between regions controlled by the same party means positioning on the left-right economic spectrum cannot be the sole explanatory factor. Further, in autonomist regions, parties compete on both the economic dimension and a national identity/center-periphery dimension. Downsian convergence on this dimension incentivizes party elites to adopt 'catch-all' appeals and downplay polarizing income tax policies that would otherwise split their pro-autonomy core vote. As B. Guy Peters argues in relation to the politics of income tax: "The best strategy (politically) is often to ignore the tax systems and allow it to continue pretty much as it has been – perhaps with a few changes around the margins" (2001: 10). Indeed, a "smart intersection" between a regionalist party's strength on the two dimensions is to ignore tax rates entirely and demand their replacement by a new (and presumably more generous) financial settlement (Rico 2012: 221).

But to credit party competition as the primary explanatory factor for differentiated use of devolved income tax powers ignores the intense, nation state-reshaping competition characterizing territorial politics in the UK, Belgium, Italy and Spain. In particular, a region-only explanation overlooks both the center's interests in blame-shifting and the best response by the regions to such a strategy. Despite a dynamic environment in which "competition is the motor of territorial politics"

(Lecours 2004), there appears to be an alignment of central and regional interests to devolve income taxes but for pro-autonomy regions not to vary them.

Aggravated by electorally-successful 'champions of the region against the center' strategies that multiply throughout the national territory by a process of 'ethnoterritorial mimesis' and jeopardize putative nation-state solidarity, strategic central actors (including senior politicians from the leading parties and senior civil servants) are incentivized to 'pass the buck' by trying to force regions to make politically costly choices. Such blame-sharing may involve negotiated settlements such as all-party agreements or constitutional reforms, or by using economic crises to expand subnational competences but restrict monies available to fund them. Because blame-sharing usually represents a useful long-term strategy to both incumbent and future governments, central tier parties may collaborate over such initiatives. Instances of such collaboration include the departing Berlusconi government and incoming Monti government's efforts to "squeeze" the regions by replacing transfers for health deficits with own-source taxes (Ambrosanio et al. 2014: 2); the PSOE-PP agreement on a 2011 constitutional change that Spanish regions must comply with maximum structural deficit and debt limits set by the central government (Ruiz Almendral 2013); and UK Labour's proposals to reduce the UK income tax in Scotland which the incoming Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition in 2010 took up "to force the Scottish Parliament to set a tax" (McLean 2012: 650). But while more 'centralist' regions may use income tax powers to engage in tax competition or to

change income tax progressivity, the principal objective of autonomist governments is not tax innovation but the development of national institutions. In such regions, re-election interests point to the continuation of a 'regional champion' strategy that is most likely to be effective when tax rates broadly correspond to the national policy trajectory. Paradoxically therefore, 'nation-building' regional elites' best response is to accept income tax powers but to decline their proactive use. Rational choice institutionalism can understand this tentative equilibrium position as an efficient institution because it is mutually beneficial to both central and regional elites. This position might also be considered as a Mexican standoff which persists because neither region nor center can proceed or retreat without being exposed to jeopardy.

Occasionally, economic crises may give the central government the upper hand in forcing regions to share blame for politically costly measures, as in Italy. But more generally, an equilibrium where regional governments accept but avoid proactive use of income tax powers is a winning one for regions, because it allows autonomist governments to maintain both short-term electoral strategies and long-term nation-building objectives. But such an equilibrium does not presuppose that further change is impossible: if it is mutually beneficial to renegotiate the resulting incomplete contract, the parties will do so. Income tax autonomy is an efficient instrument – a means to an end – rather than end in itself in the multi-level territorial game.

3

An Electoral Calculus? Dual Incentives and Committee Assignment in the UK's mixed member legislatures

Abstract:

Although mixed-member electoral systems offer an apparent opportunity to observe how different rules shape politicians' behavior, "contamination" between SMD and PR tiers has frequently confounded academic work. Exploiting the unusual treatment of dual candidacy in the UK's devolved legislatures, modelling of committee assignments uncovers a split finding. PR members have a higher committee workload, and there is some evidence that Welsh SMD members' assignments might support personal vote cultivation. However, other theorized connections between committees and members' re-election interests are not found. The influence of electoral rules is conditioned by contextual factors including re-selection rules, chamber size and strong parties.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Whether – and how – institutions and electoral rules shape the activities of politicians once elected is a research question with a long pedigree. If, as Mayhew contends, re-election is the one primary objective shared by all politicians, or "the goal that must be achieved over and over if other ends are to be entertained" (1974: 16), identifying the incentives generated in the operation of institutional and electoral rules shaping members' re-election strategies is of primary importance.

Among the many institutional constraints that limit and shape the activities of political actors, electoral systems have long been considered among the most significant (for example, Carey & Shugart 1995). Candidate-centered electoral systems such as single member plurality should encourage incumbents to cultivate the support of voters in their home district, while party-centered systems such as closed-list PR should focus politicians' attention on their internal 'selectorate' in pursuit of a winnable List position (Gallagher 2005, Depauw & Martin 2009). But testing whether politicians respond to incentives in the expected way is frequently confounded because we cannot untangle the effects of electoral rules from the many unobserved cultural, social and other characteristics specific to a given country. Researchers thus find it difficult to identify precisely how behavior would change if different voting systems were employed (Stratmann & Baur 2002; Ferrara, Herron & Nishikawa 2005).

One way to test the link between electoral rules and member behavior is through mixed-member electoral systems (Ferrara et al. 2005), where researchers can seemingly evaluate the effects of two electoral rules while controlling for all other observed and unobserved variables (Moser & Scheiner 2005). Exploiting this opportunity, some scholars who have studied Germany's mixed member proportional variant claim to have observed the effects of electoral rules operating through the committee assignments process. While certain Bundestag committee assignments are more valuable to SMD members because they better facilitate cultivation of a geographically-based re-election vote, other assignments allow PR members to promote their party's interests and increase their chances of a high list ranking. This bifurcated incentives structure has been termed a "dual incentives" or "dual mandate" effect in mixed member legislatures (e.g. Lancaster & Patterson 1990, Stratmann & Baur 2002). However, other researchers (e.g. Ferrara et al. 2005, Thames 2005, Manow 2015) have found no systematic differences in legislator behavior, primarily due to a lack of independence between the SMD and PR electoral contests – "contamination" – that incentivizes candidates to both cultivate a constituency vote *and* a party vote to retain a high PR-list position (Ferrara et al. 2005).

The UK's devolved legislatures offer an interesting test of the 'dual mandate' structure in mixed systems. First, while most mixed-member systems in use internationally were introduced to replace a previous voting rule, Scotland and Wales' MMP systems have been in place since the establishment of both institutions. This

feature reduces (although does not eliminate) the potential of 'hangover effects' from prior rules that might continue to influence member behavior (Crisp 2007). Second, a ban on dual candidacy imposed at the halfway point of the National Assembly for Wales' institutional life provides a key source of variation: there has been separation of candidates between the SMD and PR ballots in Wales, potentially overcoming the 'contamination' that has afflicted studies to date.

I argue that while differences between members can be observed, namely in committee workload, any clear-cut 'dual mandate' effects claimed elsewhere for the German system are conditioned in the UK cases by re-selection rules, the size of the legislature, and strong parties.

The remainder of this article is structured as follows. First, I consider whether a connection between electoral systems and the behavior of re-election-seeking legislators can be tested in mixed systems. Second, I consider challenges to this approach, in particular the likelihood of contamination caused by members running for re-election on both ballots, and argue that Wales in particular offers an interesting test of the framework due to its ban on dual candidacy from 2007-2016. After outlining hypotheses, data and variables, I test committee assignments for systematic differences between constituency and list members elected in the two legislatures, present results, and conclude.

3.2 ELECTORAL INCENTIVES FROM THEORY TO EVIDENCE

Electoral systems have long been considered fertile ground for investigating the constraints and opportunities provided by institutional rules on political actors. An enduring focus of this large literature explores how elected representatives adapt to the different accountability mechanisms intrinsic to different electoral systems (Gallagher 2005). Under party-centered systems such as closed-list proportional representation, incumbents are reliant on their party's internal selectors for re-election and are therefore encouraged to cultivate favor with this 'selectorate'. In contrast, under candidate-centered systems such as Single Transferable Vote, open-list PR or single member plurality, incumbents rely in part on the personal support of voters for re-election and are therefore expected to actively engage in constituency-related activities (Gallagher 2005, Depauw & Martin 2009). But identifying a causal link between electoral rules and their consequences is frequently confounding. Because we cannot untangle the direct effect of electoral rules from the many other cultural, social and other country-specific influences in a given political system, researchers cannot demonstrate with certainty how outcomes would change if different electoral rules were employed (Stratmann & Baur 2002; Ferrara et al. 2005).

The rapid expansion in use of mixed electoral systems since the 1990s has been identified by several researchers (e.g. Lancaster & Patterson 1990, Stratmann & Baur 2002, Moser & Scheiner 2004) as an opportunity to test how majoritarian and proportional principles of representation modify the behavior of legislators. Voters

participating in mixed-member elections cast their vote via two separate ballot papers: in the first, they vote for a candidate in a single member district (SMD); in the second, for a party list with seats allocated via a proportional formula. By comparing the outcomes of the district- and list-based components of the election, researchers can seemingly evaluate the effects of different electoral rules, apparently controlling for all observed and unobserved country-specific variables (Moser and Scheiner 2005).

Two features common to parliamentary democracies limit the ways in which researchers can the operation of observe electoral incentives that are otherwise possible in studies of the US Congress. First, higher levels of intra-party voting discipline in parliamentary systems implies that exploring roll-call votes for evidence of a "mandate divide" is less likely to be productive. Second, government control of money bills in Westminster systems means that members of such legislatures lack an important means to secure geographically-targeted spending projects for their constituencies (Norris 1997, Norton & Wood 1993, in Martin 2011). Recent work has therefore explored committee assignments as a potential avenue for testing the interactions of electoral rules and behavioral incentives in more depth. For example, positing that legislators are motivated to win re-election, Stratmann and Baur (2002) hypothesize that certain committees in the Bundestag are more valuable to SMD legislators because they better enable them to serve their specific electoral constituencies and increase their likelihood of re-election. SMD members select (or are assigned to) committees that allow them to serve their geographically-based

constituencies (such as Agriculture or Construction), while PR legislators join committees that allow members to promote their party's interests (such as Defense or Development), thereby increasing their own chances of a high-enough rank on their party list to win re-election.

However, despite assertions that mixed systems offer researchers a controlled comparison to identify legislator motivations, several scholars (Bawn & Thies 2003; Ferrara et al. 2005; Hainmueller & Kern 2008) have cautioned that this supposition is "only correct to the extent that the two tiers are truly independent from each other; the operation of each tier must be unaffected by the presence of a second tier characterized by a different set of electoral rules" (Hainmueller & Kern 2008: 2). Certain institutional features of mixed electoral systems may "weaken or altogether break the link between seat type and behavior" (Ferrara et al. 2005: 203), resulting in "contamination" that invalidates the assumption of independence between the tiers.

Contamination between the SMD and PR tiers has overshadowed many recent empirical studies of the controlled comparisons framework. In a comprehensive study of roll-call votes by legislators in Ukraine and Italy, Ferrara et al. find that "seat type is a poor predictor of legislative voting… Once factional affiliation is accounted for, the effects of seat type and dual candidacy are washed away" (2005: 110). Likewise, Thames (2005) found that mandate divides in the

operation of mixed systems in Russia, Ukraine and Hungary were evident only in the Russian Duma – a legislature with a very weakly institutionalized party system.

Chief among the reasons for this skepticism is the presence of dual candidacy, which gives candidates a 'fallback' or 'insurance' seat via the party list should they fail to be elected in a constituency. Dual candidacy would be expected to blunt incentives for legislators to specialize because "the prospect [of] being nominated to both a party list and an SMD race allows incumbents to hedge their bets, focusing some of their attention on demonstrating their partisanship to party leaders and some on showing their dedication to local constituents" (Ferrara et al. 2005: 103). That 80 percent of German legislators are dual candidates at their election reinforces incentives to engage in both party and constituency work (Manow 2015).

Although dual candidacy has been banned in several legislatures elected by Mixed Member Majoritarian (MMM) voting rules, including Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Ukraine, between 2006-2016 the National Assembly for Wales was the only legislature elected by a Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) system to ban dual candidacy (Scully 2014). Wales is therefore an instructive case that allows scholars to investigate whether differences in behavior might be more observable where there is no possibility of running simultaneously on both the PR and constituency ballots. Although the Scotland's MMP system has never banned dual candidacy, the Scottish Parliament is another useful case for a different reason. Not only is Scotland a useful

cross-case comparison to Wales – both institutions operate at the same vertical level of governance, share the same length of institutional history and have parallel institutional structures – but unusually for mixed systems outside of Germany, the Scottish Parliament has never operated by a prior electoral rule. The Scottish and Welsh cases are therefore instructive in helping to identify whether the absence of institutional 'hangover effects' resulting from the operation of prior electoral rules (Crisp 2007) might offset contamination between the PR and SMD tiers.

Whether Scottish and Welsh List members behave differently from their SMD colleagues has been posed elsewhere in the British politics literature. Lundberg (2006) uses survey evidence to compare legislator attitudes in Scotland and Wales in with the German Landtage of Brandenburg and Hesse, finding some evidence that SMD members of all four legislatures were more oriented towards constituency service, whereas List members were more concerned about supporting their party's prospects and working with interest groups. Bradbury and Mitchell (2007), also using survey evidence, find that constituency work was broadly prioritized by constituency members, but that List members' constituency focus was perhaps stronger than expected. Researchers have also focused on perceived or real "electoral poaching" (List members shadowing SMD members), particularly in Scotland where a ban on dual candidacy was not imposed, finding mixed evidence (Carman 2005, Carman & Shephard 2007).

In relation to committee assignments, Battle (2011) finds that PR members of the Scottish Parliament who ran exclusively on the regional list have the most committee assignments and are most active in the legislature. But there is scope to take existing work much further. Battle does not appear to exclude ministers, deputy ministers or other office holders even though they do not sit on committees; and controls for a member's party affiliation, seniority, gender and other factors that may influence patterns of assignment are necessary to draw inferences about the relationship between a member's seat type and their number (and type) of committee assignments.

That Wales' dual candidacy ban was imposed at the half-way point of its institutional life is of particular advantage in investigating contamination effects. If dual candidacy blunts the incentives for legislators to specialize we would expect any evidence of a mandate divide to be stronger in Wales after the imposition of the ban; likewise, comparable estimates between the two periods could provide evidence that the scale of the contamination problem has been overstated elsewhere. Other threats to valid inference may continue to challenge empirical investigation: omitted variable bias can be mitigated but not eliminated by control variables, and selection bias may be present because a candidate's decision to run on the SMD or PR ballot is not randomly assigned. However, empirical investigation of the two cases may offer a new means to address the spillover problem which has so centrally affected research in this field.

Although Wales' dual candidacy ban provides a unique point of departure, important contextual factors exist such as small legislative size and strong party systems that would be expected to at least partially counteract the hypothesized centrifugal effects. A large cross-national literature addresses the importance of chamber size, bicameralism, term lengths, committee organization, and other institutional features in political outcomes (Downs 2014). Legislative size in particular is a critical contextual factor that is underemphasized in existing work. First, where members are required to serve on multiple committees in small legislatures, pressures to populate the committee system may override individual incentives to cultivate a re-election vote. Second, in a distributive politics understanding of legislative organization such as the *Law of 1/n* (Weingast, Shepsle & Johnsen 1981), government spending (or output) would be expected to increase with the number of legislators because individual members internalize all the benefits from distributive projects but only a fraction of the costs. Related to the challenge of populating committees in small legislatures, any pro-spending bias that incentivizes SMD members to seek assignments to "district" committees (Stratmann & Baur 2002) is therefore likely to be mitigated because assignments to any particular committee are harder to achieve. As a result, it might be expected that any bifurcated pattern of committee assignments may be tougher to discern in small legislatures.

3.3 TESTING ELECTORAL INCENTIVES IN WALES AND SCOTLAND

The electoral system selected to return members to the new National Assembly for Wales and Scottish Parliament was a deliberate departure from Britain's First-Past-the-Post tradition. Both legislatures are elected by an MMP variant in which voters cast two ballots and list seats are allocated to parties on a compensatory basis using the D'Hondt formula. The Scottish Parliament is comprised of 73 SMD members and 56 closed party list members from 8 electoral regions; the National Assembly for Wales achieves a lower level of proportionality with 40 SMD members and 20 closed party list members elected in 5 electoral regions. Scottish candidates have been permitted to stand on both ballots since its establishment in 1999. In Wales, although the first two elections in 1999 and 2003 permitted dual candidacy, a 2006 legislative change prohibited candidates from standing on both ballots at elections in 2007 and 2011. Subsequent UK legislation reversing this ban became effective in 2016; however, the 2006 reform permits the evaluation of Welsh data from two Assembly terms in which dual candidacy was permitted, and two in which it was prohibited.

A vital contextual factor complicating members' cultivation of a re-election vote are the rules and procedures for candidate selection. Previous research has demonstrated the importance of variations in candidate selection rules for the two components of mixed member elections on voting behavior once elected (Jun & Hix 2010). If nomination and re-nomination procedures are tightly controlled by central parties, then the basic theoretical assumption underpinning the "dual incentives"

hypothesis – that SMD candidates will promote constituency activities to best support their re-election prospects – may not transfer to the UK cases. For SMD candidates, central party influence in Wales and Scotland over initial selection may be a cause for concern. Constituency selections are conducted under a series of rules specified by each party's central organization which vary considerably between the parties. Examples include Welsh Labour's "constituency twinning" to select one female and one male candidate from seats that are geographically-proximate and of approximately equal "winnability" (see Mitchell & Bradbury 2004).

However, there is a significant difference in the degree of central coordination in the initial selection and subsequent re-selection of an SMD member after their first election to a given seat. Once elected to an SMD seat, deselection is extremely rare: indeed, among the 214 SMD members elected between 1999 and 2016 deselection has occurred only four times, twice in Wales and twice in Scotland. The two Welsh cases followed well-publicized rifts between the member and their party, and the two Scottish cases followed an SNP policy change before the 2016 elections to replace all retiring SMD members by candidates selected from All Women Shortlists, encouraging a number of mostly unsuccessful attempts by male candidates to unseat sitting members before an election in which the SNP was expected to perform strongly in constituency races (and therefore return relatively few members via the regional Lists). Stolz argues that this security may result from "high institutional hurdles for de-selection", the "embeddedness of constituency members in the local

party network", or the threat of de-selection being "perceived as arbitrary or unfair" (2010: 94-95). The extremely low probability of deselection for SMD members allows them to focus instead on retaining their seat against other parties. Members' prospects for returning to the legislature once elected are therefore not limited to the same extent by central party control, and their behavior might be anticipated to mirror the traditional cultivation of a personal vote as theorized in the literature.

For PR members, party influence over List reselection is an important assumption underpinning the hypothesis that party-vote cultivation is the best path of securing re-election. Although in all cases List re-selection remains internal to the party, the balance of central- and regional-party members' roles in selecting and re-selecting the List is disputed. Cross-nationally, List selection is associated with centralized control as parties attempt to select the preferred candidates of the leadership (Epstein 1980 in Bradbury 2009). However, despite variations between Scotland and Wales and between the major parties, at least for the first two devolved elections Bradbury (2009) argues that there was a tendency towards decentralization of candidate selection. Empirical testing of committee data can perhaps shed new light on whether the connection between PR members and party-focused activities in the legislature is theoretically sound.

In contrast to the committees of the House of Commons which have limited direct impact on policy-making (Benton & Russell 2012, Mattson & Strøm 1995),

committee assignments are an appropriate focus for studying the effect of institutional rules on legislator behavior in Scotland and Wales. The Scottish Parliament has permanent committees with strong formal powers that facilitate a major role in shaping legislative output (Cairney 2006). Although the Welsh committee system has been less stable due to a rapid accumulation of competences since 1999, Welsh committees also play a major role in legislative output and scrutiny in the unicameral legislature. The importance of committees in both legislatures may therefore be expected to provide incentives to members to seek assignments to committees of policy or political interest.

Although committee appointments are made in the final round by each party's leadership and chief whip, in practice members indicate their preferences to their party and allocations are an iterative process that also accounts for members' constituency interests. For the Welsh Conservatives for example, although the Leader and Chief Whip formally decide members' assignments and there is no distinction between Constituency and List members in the assignment decision, members can and do can express their committee interests and have the option of rejecting a committee offer if they are firmly opposed (Nick Ramsay, Chair of the Welsh Conservative Group, personal communication). For Plaid Cymru, although committees are generally allocated to the party's spokesperson for each portfolio area, other assignments are decided by the Business Manager and agreed by the Group, a decision in which member interests, availability and work balance are taken into

account. Subject committees are generally preferred to committees dealing with the workings on the Assembly, and members who demonstrate a particular constituency interest in a subject area, such as members from rural constituencies being assigned to committees dealing with the environment and farming, may be prioritized for a corresponding committee assignment (Elin Jones, Plaid Cymru Deputy Leader, personal communication). Likewise in Scotland, SNP committee appointments are decided by the Whip; but this decision is again iterative and takes MSPs' personal interests, previous employment and constituencies into account (Fiona McLeod, Scottish Government whip, personal communication). There would therefore appear to be sufficient flexibility in members' committee assignments to test whether an electoral incentive structure features in the number and type of committee assignments.

In contrast to existing studies of MMP in larger countries, the small size of the legislatures in Wales and Scotland may be an important limiting factor because incentive-based "pull factors" of a given assignment are bounded simply by the challenge of populating every committee. Particularly in Wales, there is a limited number of government backbench and opposition members available to populate every committee or to make best use of their assignments. For example, between 2007 and 2011 certain members had four or five assignments at some point during the legislative term: this far exceeds comparable levels in the Bundestag where each member is generally a full member of only one committee. The limited number of

members available to staff committees in the cases analyzed here is therefore an important contextual factor in testing the dual incentives framework.

Using committee assignments to test the "dual incentives" framework, I propose a series of hypotheses that draw on assumptions about rational actors' office-seeking motivations widely posited elsewhere in the literature (Black 1972, Stigler 1972, Alt & Chrystal 1983, Wittman 1989, Schultz 1995, Persson & Tabellini 1999, Stratman & Baur 2002). First, if SMD members have a re-election interest in cultivating a personal vote by engaging in constituency service, and if List members have a party-vote incentive to promote their party's interests in the legislature, the total number of committee assignments should be lower for SMD members than for PR members. Following Martin (2011), this hypothesis should hold in candidate-centered systems where members cannot engage in pork barrel earmarking through committee work. In such systems (as in Wales and Scotland), and if SMD members have a re-election interest, these interests are better served by engaging in constituency work rather than participating in the legislative committees.

H1: SMD legislators will have fewer committee assignments than PR legislators

Although H1 surmises that a high committee workload can potentially reveal something about SMD and List members' responsiveness to different re-election constituencies, not all committees are created equal. If members seek to cultivate a geographically-based personal vote, they might be best assisted in this goal by

participating in committees that can help them engage with issues affecting their constituency, such as committees whose remit includes major industries in their area.

With re-election motivations as the theoretical underpinning, Stratmann and Baur (2002) classify certain Bundestag committees as either "district" committees that allow members to direct support to projects in their constituencies, or "party" committees that would help PR members serve party interests. But transplanting this bifurcation to the UK's devolved legislatures is problematic: not only do certain German (federal) ministerial portfolios not correspond with those in (substate) Wales and Scotland, but legislators in Westminster systems cannot normally secure geographically-targeted spending for their constituencies.

To operationalize the 'usefulness' of a committee assignment in cultivating a constituency vote, it is therefore necessary to construct another measure of a committee's possible value in serving a member's constituency service goals. Constituency service interests would be best assisted by committee work that has a relatively high profile and allows a member to give attention to a pertinent local issue in their district, or to promote the interests of major local businesses or industries, such as agriculture for SMD members representing rural areas.

Tables 3.1 and 3.2 group together by function or portfolio area Scottish and Welsh committees since 1999, ranked by the number of mentions for each committee in a major national newspaper (the *Scotsman/Scotland on Sunday* and the *Western*

Mail in Wales).[12]   Higher profile committees would be expected to receive a larger

number of media citations, and are ranked higher in each table.

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[12] As a broadsheet newspaper based in Edinburgh with a number of correspondents reporting from the Scottish Parliament, *The Scotsman/Scotland on Sunday* was considered likely to have provided a sufficient coverage of committee activities since 1999. Other Scottish broadsheet newspapers such as *The Herald/Sunday Herald* would also have been suitable for this purpose, but duplication was not deemed necessary because the citations reported here are for illustrative purposes and are not included in the regression model. For Wales, the *Western Mail* is the only Wales-based broadsheet newspaper.

Table 3.1: Scottish Parliament Committees, Grouped by Function or Portfolio Area, Ranked by Number of Citations in the *Scotsman* and *Scotland on Sunday*

Committee (Grouped across terms by Function or Portfolio Area)	No. of Citations per Parliamentary Term					
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th (to 05/2014)	Total Citations	Average Citations
1. Justice	323	133	119	155	730	183
2. Enterprise/Economy	177	132	122	142	573	143
3. Education	351	31	54	97	533	133
4. Finance	102	213	123	62	500	125
5. Health	226	85	65	46	422	106
6. Rural Affairs	259	60	24	8	351	88
7. Standards	230	52	37	14	333	83
8. Audit/Public Accounts	81	73	79	33	266	67
9. Public Petitions	92	57	63	27	239	60
10. Local Government	115	37	56	17	225	56
11. Equal Opportunities	77	14	16	25	132	33
12. European/External Relations	62	27	6	13	108	27
13. Subordinate Legislation	38	6	4	3	51	13
Total	2,133	920	768	642	4,463	1,116

Table 3.2: National Assembly for Wales Committees, Grouped by Function or Portfolio Area, Ranked by Number of Citations in the *Western Mail*

Committee (Grouped across terms by Function or Portfolio Area)	No. of Citations per Assembly Term *					
	1st (from 01/01)	2nd	3rd	4th (to 05/2014)	Total Citations	Average Citations
1. Education	145	98	92	81	416	104
2. Health	104	70	83	147	404	101
3. Enterprise / Economic Dev't	152	68	92	86	398	100
4. Environment / Rural Affairs	124	98	58	84	364	91
5. Audit / Public Accounts	93	75	98	85	351	88
6. Culture / Communities	184	58	26	45	313	78
7. Finance	-	-	112	47	159	80
8. Petitions	-	-	38	50	88	44
9. Local Government	28	11	**	45	84	28
10. Standards	27	24	5	14	70	18
11. Legislation / Subordinate Legislation / Legislative Affairs***	12	3	2	18	35	9
12. Equal Opportunities	7	16	11	-	34	11
13. European / External Relations	9	4	11	-	24	8
Total	885	525	628	702	2,740	685

Citation data obtained by a LexisNexis search of Scottish Parliament committee names and variations thereof. Not all committees are shown: Committees included are those with subject

or functional areas that can be linked with committees with similar remits in other parliamentary terms.
* Citation data commences January 1, 2001
** Not included because of cross-counting with the Health committee grouping
*** Not including the five Legislation committees from the Third Assembly

As one of the most prominent devolved policy areas, health has been a major issue in Scottish and Welsh election campaigns since devolution, and SMD candidates have been returned on the basis of campaigns to protect local hospitals. Major parties have registered to appear on the ballot paper alongside the name of local hospitals,[13] and a General Practitioner opposed to health cuts was elected as an Independent in 2003 in a Scottish constituency.[14] With the health committee having a high profile in both legislatures, assignments might therefore offer a platform for SMD members to engage with constituency campaigns that assist their re-election goals.[15] Likewise, an Enterprise or Economy committee appointment might give members an opportunity to support major industries or employers in their constituency, as may the Rural Affairs/Environment committee for rural SMD members. Other high profile committees, such as Justice or Education, are of generalized national importance

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[13] For example, "Plaid Cymru - Save Llandudno Hospital" and "Plaid Cymru - Save Withybush Hospital" appeared on the ballot paper at the 2007 election in the marginal seats of Aberconwy and Preseli Pembrokeshire.

[14] Strathkelvin and Bearsden constituency, won in 2003 by Dr Jean Turner.

[15] See for example "Withybush hospital 'downgrade': More than 700 protest at Welsh Government plans", Wales Online, 18 June 2014

rather than necessarily "useful" for SMD members appealing to an issue of important local campaigning concern to maximize their chances of re-election.[16]

Moreover, in contrast to SMD members, and if members are motivated to win re-eleciton, then their PR list colleagues should prioritize party 'selectorate' interests to ensure placement in a winnable position on the party list. List members might therefore have an incentive to engage with committees that support their party's interests in the legislature and exist to keep the parliament or assembly running, rather than those that are high profile among the general public. Three groupings of committees in both legislatures that meet these criteria are standards, petitions, and subordinate legislation/legislation/legislative affairs.

That the 'usefulness' of an assignment differs for SMD and List members can be stated in two hypotheses as follows:

H2: SMD members will be Overrepresented (and List members Underrepresented) on Committees that can best assist in cultivating a Personal Constituency Vote

H3: PR legislators will be Overrepresented (and SMD legislators Underrepresented) on committees that focus on Parliamentary Functions

Finally, the 2007-2016 prohibition of dual candidacy in Wales offers a unique opportunity to test whether the option of an 'insurance' list seat prompts incumbent

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[16] In relation to Education for example, school closings are often an issue affecting a village or small community rather than an entire constituency, and unlike hospital closings, decisions on school reorganisations are generally the responsibility of local rather than devolved government. These features make Education less "useful" than the Health committee for SMD members aiming to maximise the electoral impact of their constituency work.

legislators to hedge their bets, focusing both on re-nomination to a winnable position on the party list and on local constituency campaigns. If dual candidacy blunts the incentives for legislators to specialize, we would expect any evidence of a mandate divide to be stronger in Wales between 2007-16:

H4: Evidence of a "Mandate Divide" will be more pronounced where Dual Candidacy is prohibited

The rest of this chapter examines these propositions, first outlining the variables and data, then presenting the results of statistical modelling.

3.4 VARIABLES AND DATA

To identify the presence or absence of a mandate divide in the operation of the UK's mixed member systems, I analyze a series of variables focusing on different aspects of members' committee service. Following cues in the literature with respect to the possible incentive effects of mixed systems on legislator behavior, the main explanatory variable of interest for all hypotheses is the seat type of members elected to both legislatures since their establishment in 1999; assigned the value of (1) for SMD (or "First-Past-The-Post") seats, and (0) for List (or "PR") seats.

Hypothesis H1 (Total Committee Assignments) is examined by totaling each member's number of committee assignments per annual legislative session.[17] Where exact dates of committee memberships were available, and if a member served on a committee for only part of an annual legislative session, they were credited with membership if their appointment lasted at least six months.[18] This workload indicator is defined here as dummy variable, taking the value of (1) for a total number of committee assignments that is greater or equal to 2, and (0) otherwise.[19]

Hypothesis H2 (SMD legislators' overrepresentation on constituency-service committees) is tested by a dummy variable with the value of (1) for membership of

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[17] Excludes the regional committees of the National Assembly (1999-2007) to which all Assembly members were assigned.

[18] Where exact dates of membership were not available (Wales 2003-2011), members were credited if their membership was recorded in The Wales Yearbook.

[19] I use a binary rather than a continuous variable for hypothesis H1 because of the relatively small number of observations in the Wales dataset and the large number of assignments that are clustered around the center of the distribution. In the Wales dataset, members' committee assignments are distributed as follows.

Total Committees	Frequency
0	3
1	35
2	74
3	61
4	9
5	1

While using a binary variable could be construed as losing information, using a continuous variable gives prominence to non-representative outlier members (those with 0, 4 or 5 assignments) and produces very volatile results depending on whether and which of these non-representative members are included or excluded from the model. A standard "removal of outliers" procedure in this case is arbitrary and tentative. Given the relatively small number of observations, there is clearly a case for caution in the generalizability of the study results for Wales – further research is needed with additional parliamentary terms of the Assembly.

the Health committee, Enterprise/Economic Development/Economy committee, or the Environment/Rural Affairs committee, and (0) otherwise. Likewise, H3 (SMD legislators' underrepresentation on parliamentary function committees) is a dummy variable taking a value of (1) for members on the standards, petitions, or subordinate legislation/legislation/legislative affairs committees, and (0) otherwise.

H4 ("Mandate divide" is stronger in Wales) is tested by an interaction of the main explanatory variable (SMD seat) and a dummy variable for the two legislative terms during which dual candidacy was banned (2007-16) for each of hypotheses H1-H3. The data comprise the electoral, biographical and committee assignment history of every member of the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales in the first four legislative periods since the establishment of both institutions (1999-2003, 2003-07, 2007-11, and 2011-2016). Committee membership data for Scotland were obtained from the Scottish Parliament website. Committee memberships in the first and fourth terms of the National Assembly were available at that institution's website; assignment data for the second and third terms were unavailable from that source but were instead obtained from *The Wales Yearbook*, an annual reference book for government and public affairs in Wales.

116 individuals have served as members of the National Assembly for Wales and 252 served in the Scottish Parliament between 1999 and 2014, representing 900 and 1,942 annual observations for each serving member in the two datasets

respectively. Given the length of this time series and number of members, two units of observation are possible: members' initial assignments in the first year of each legislative term; or annual observations, one per member per year. Annual observations are useful in identifying within-term changes such as committee reassignments, ministerial promotions, or changes to party affiliations. However, they also overcount members who remain on the same committee for more than one year (as is usual), thereby exaggerating the magnitude of any behavioral differences. As a result, this analysis settles on observing patterns of committee assignment and member behavior in the first year of each legislative term.

I also include a set of control variables to allow consideration of other factors that may account for differences in SMD and PR legislator types in mixed systems. The safety of a member's seat might influence their behavior in the legislature, including their total number of committee assignments or the types of committees on which they serve. For SMD members, *Safe Seat* is an above-median vote margin in their constituency ballot at the last election.[20] List members are considered here to have a safe seat if their list seat allocation was among the top two from the four seats available in each Welsh electoral region, or within the top 3 (of 7) in Scotland. I also include a dummy variable for a member's gender (*Female*), and a measure of the

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[20] Previous election performance is not a perfect indicator of seat safety in subsequent elections, but it is a reasonable proxy and has been adapted as an explanatory variable in the literature (e.g. Heitshusen, Young and Wood 2005; Ferrara et al 2005).

member's length of service in the legislature (*Seniority*). Given the technical nature of certain committee work, *Rare Skills Profession* is a dummy variable to test whether a member's career background is associated with their subsequent assignments to certain committees: (1) if a member has a previous legal or medical career; (0) otherwise. A dummy variable if a legislator is a *Member of the Governing Party* tests whether backbench members of the governing party (or parties in a governing coalition) sit on a disproportionate number of committees to maintain broad proportionality in committee assignments, especially during periods of minority government. Finally, because party affiliations may condition the influence of seat type on behavior (Ferrara et al. 2005, Bawn & Thies 2003), I include dummy variables for the *Conservatives, SNP / Plaid Cymru, Liberal Democrats, Minor Parties* (Scotland), and *Independents* (Wales), with *Labour* as the reference category. Because party membership is correlated with members holding a SMD or PR seat (for example, Welsh Labour and SMD seats), including party dummy variables allows consideration of within-party variation of electoral rules. Because the MMP variant is less proportional in Wales, although the four major parties won seats via both the SMD ballot and the regional list, the strong performance of Welsh Labour in Assembly elections since devolution has resulted in a membership that was disproportionately elected through the SMD ballot.

Two potentially important determinants of committee assignment are not directly included in the model. First, ministers and deputy ministers are generally not

assigned to committees (except, and somewhat unusually, during the first two terms of the Welsh Assembly),[21] and the Presiding Officer or Deputy Presiding Officers are generally assigned to specific legislative business committees. These members are therefore removed from the sample. Second, although previous studies have directly analyzed a candidate's dual candidacy at the time of their initial election (e.g. Ferrara et al. 2005, Battle 2011), the direction of causality means that dual candidacy is challenging to include as a variable in the model. In considering re-election incentives, it is not a member's dual candidacy at the last election but their interest in securing a high party list ranking and a winnable constituency *at the next election* that is relevant to legislator motivations. This temporal discrepancy creates the possibility of reverse causality in modelling the determinants of committee assignments; furthermore, only those explanatory variables that precede in time the dependent variable can be included on the right hand side of a regression equation. Although not directly included, the prohibition of dual candidacy in Wales still informs the overall model because the "firewall" preventing candidates from running

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[21] During the first two Welsh Assembly sessions (1999-2003 and 2003-2007), subject committees were created to mirror the newly-created ministerial portfolios, and unusually, the cabinet portfolio holder was also a member of the corresponding subject committee in the legislature. In the case of ministers being required to sit on committees on account of to their executive portfolio, there is no element of agency in their assignment, and therefore not instructive in analysing the behavior of members once elected.

on both ballots would be expected to sharpen any evidence of a dual mandate via the coefficient on SMD seat (H4).[22]

3.5 RESULTS

Table 3.3 presents results from multiple regression models estimating the effect of a member's seat type on three dependent variables. The first set of models analyzes the determinants of a higher committee workload (defined as greater or equal to 2 assignments). The second set estimate the determinants of assignment to committees that are theoretically of greater interest to SMD legislators ("Constituency Service Committees"); and the third examines those committees that are of greater interest to PR legislators ("Parliamentary Function Committees").

Because a member's appointment to a particular committee type is a binary rather than a categorical variable, a probit model is used to analyze each hypothesis. To interpret these regressions I employ Hanmer and Kalkan's Observed Values method (2013). Instead of setting all other explanatory variables to particular values (such as their sample means or modes) to calculate marginal effects for the variable of

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[22] There are other reasons to be cautious about including dual candidacy as a standalone variable in the model. As shown in Table 3, the use of dual candidacy is highly dependent on party effects in Scotland. In Wales, notwithstanding its prohibition at the 2007 and 2011 elections, it is also difficult to discern enough dual candidacy observations prior to the ban, and these observations are highly correlated with the second Assembly election in 2003. Although 53 of 60 members elected at the 2003 elections were dual candidates, 41 of 60 members elected in 1999 had been candidates on one ballot only.

interest, this method holds each of the other explanatory variables at their observed values for each observation in the data, calculates the marginal effect for each of these observations, then takes the mean average over all of these cases. The advantage of this approach for theory-driven empirical research is that it draws inferences from the entire population of interest from the sample rather than from one single, average case (Hanmer & Kalkan 2013: 269). Marginal effects calculated by this method are shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Electoral System Effects on Committee Assignments: Average Marginal Effects from a Probit Regression Calculated Using the Observed Values Method

Dependent Variable =	H1: Total Committee Assignments ≥ 2		H2: Constituency Service Committees		H3: Parliamentary Function Committees	
Variable	Scotland	Wales	Scotland	Wales	Scotland	Wales
SMD Seat	−0.196*** (0.052)	−0.133** (0.067)	−0.044 (0.053)	0.158* (0.085)	−0.056 (0.046)	−0.116 (0.089)
Safe Seat	0.040 (0.042)	0.040 (0.062)	0.014 (0.043)	0.149 (0.071)	−0.036 (0.039)	0.062 (0.070)
Female	-0.034 (0.041)	0.066 (0.062)	0.005 (0.044)	−0.029 (0.085)	−0.015 (0.041)	0.065 (0.080)
Seniority	−0.006 (0.008)	−0.010 (0.009)	0.001 (0.007)	0.001 (0.012)	−0.012* (0.007)	−0.002 (0.012)
Rare Skills Profession	0.043 (0.067)	0.006 (0.113)	0.136** (0.062)	0.035 (0.146)	0.005 (0.058)	0.133 (0.137)
Member of Governing Party	0.361*** (0.043)	−0.220 (0.545)	0.104** (0.051)	0.039 (0.199)	0.067 (0.045)	0.020 (0.196)
Conservative	−0.220*** (0.071)	−0.467** (0.183)	−0.064 (0.077)	0.027 (0.235)	−0.079 (0.071)	−0.201 (0.232)
SNP / Plaid Cymru	−0.166*** (0.048)	−0.326** (0.152)	−0.028 (0.055)	0.072 (0.187)	−0.027 (0.049)	−0.098 (0.183)
Liberal Democrat	−0.118* (0.068)	−0.274 (0.193)	−0.028 (0.077)	−0.004 (0.236)	−0.035 (0.067)	0.022 (0.233)
Minor Party / Independents	- -	- -	−0.057 (0.101)	- -	−0.204* (0.112)	- -
Legislative Term Fixed Effects	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Pseudo R-squared	0.25	0.11	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.04

Note: Probit results were converted to marginal effects using Hanmer and Kalkan's 'Observed Values' method (2013); the figures here are not coefficients. Delta-method Standard Errors in Parentheses. *$p \leq 0.1$, **$p \leq 0.05$, *** $p \leq 0.01$. n= 431 (Scotland); n=183 (Wales). Note that the Pseudo R-squared for all models increases significantly if office holders are included in the regression rather than removed from the sample.

Analyzing hypothesis H1, which predicts a smaller committee workload for SMD members than PR members, the effect on SMD Seat for both Scotland and Wales is in the predicted (negative) direction and is statistically significant. Consistent with expectations, the estimated marginal effects in the Total Committee Assignments regression for Scotland indicate that SMD legislators are approximately 20 percent less likely to be assigned to 2 or more committees than are list legislators, significant at $P \leq 0.01$. For Wales, the magnitude is slightly lower at 13 percent, but is in the expected direction and significant at the five percent level. For Scotland, a legislator's membership of the governing party is strongly significant, implying that backbench members of the governing party have a higher total number of committee assignments than members of opposition parties. Party effects are significant at the five percent level for Plaid Cymru and the Liberal Democrats in Wales, and for the SNP and Conservatives at the one percent level in Scotland. There are no effects of note for seat safety, gender, or a medical or legal career background. Contrary to expectations that any evidence of "mandate divide" should be stronger in Wales, the marginal effect for Scottish committee assignments is slightly higher than that for Wales, although both are of the expected direction.

Evidence of a dual incentive structure that would encourage SMD members to participate in committees serving a constituency re-election interest (hypothesis H2) is weaker, but remains present for Wales. In relation to constituency service committees (Health, Enterprise/Economy, and Rural Affairs/Environment), the

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marginal effect for Wales on SMD Seat again has the predicted sign and is statistically significant at the 10 percent level, implying that SMD legislators are approximately 16 per cent more likely to sit on committees that advance their constituency re-election interest than are PR legislators. Conversely, the sign for Scotland is negative (although far from statistical significance): there is no evidence that Scottish constituency members are overrepresented on such committees relative to their list counterparts. These results may provide some basis of support for H4, that any mandate divide (if it exists) would be stronger where dual candidacy is not permitted. References to member's SMD seats are made frequently in Welsh Assembly committee proceedings, drawing attention to issues of concern in their constituencies such as ports, small businesses and hospitals, particularly when ministers are giving evidence.[23]

Turning to hypothesis H3, although of the anticipated (negative) sign, the effect of holding an SMD seat on membership of parliamentary service committees is not statistically significant. There is therefore little evidence that PR members are

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[23] See for example, National Assembly Business and Enterprise Committee, Thursday, 02 October 2014
(http://www.senedd.assembly.wales/documents/s32023/2%20October%202014%20morning.html?CT=2) or Thursday, 19 March 2015
(http://www.senedd.assembly.wales/documents/s38148/19%20March%202015.html?CT=2); or the Health and Social Care Committee's sessions of Wednesday, 1 July 2015
(http://www.senedd.assembly.wales/documents/s42219/1%20July%202015.html?CT=2); Thursday, 19 March 2014
(http://www.senedd.assembly.wales/documents/s38249/19%20March%202015.html?CT=2 Wednesday, 11 March 2014
(http://www.senedd.assembly.wales/documents/s38182/11%20March%202015.html?CT=2).

significantly more likely to participate in committees that have low external profile but keep the legislative process operating. In fact, there are no major hypothesized determinants of participation for either legislature that reach significance (excepting the very small sample of independents and members from minor parties and a small negative effect for seniority in Scotland).

Because dual candidacy was banned at the halfway point of the National Assembly for Wales' institutional life, I next analyze whether the marginal effects of seat type on committee assignments was substantively different either side of the ban. I conduct a formal test of the interaction between SMD Seat and a dummy variable representing the terms during which dual candidacy was banned. In two cases (H1 and H3), any dual mandate effect is slightly larger in magnitude after the ban (see online annex), but in general patterns are generally consistent across the institutional life of the National Assembly and appear unaffected by the dual candidacy ban that became effective at the 2007 elections. The marginal effects of the interaction term do not reach conventional levels of statistical significance for any of the hypotheses tested.[24]

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[24] A formal test of the interaction of SMD Seat and Welsh Assembly terms in which dual candidacy was prohibited yielded average marginal effects of 0.050 for H1 (serving on two or more committees); 0.068 for H2 (serving on constituency service committees); and -0.085 for H3 (serving on parliamentary function committees). The P values associated with these marginal effects were outside conventional levels of statistical significance, at P=0.668, P=0.653 and P=0.561 for the three hypotheses respectively.

That these results do not replicate the clear-cut effects claimed elsewhere for the German MMP system can perhaps partly be explained by the difficulty of populating a committee system from a small pool of legislators. Previous studies have generally observed large legislative settings such as Germany, Italy, Hungary, Russia, Ukraine and Japan. In contrast, Scotland and Wales' legislatures have 129 and 60 members respectively. Chamber size is therefore an important contextual variable in limiting members' freedom to respond to behavioral cues from the electoral system.

However, a simple re-affirmation that 'contamination' dilutes the theoretical incentives for members to choose specific committee assignments cannot be the end of the story. In relation to H1, a clear workload split between PR and SMD members was found in both Wales and Scotland. In both legislatures, PR members were associated with a higher number of committee assignments: they are, to coin a term from Battle (2011), the "workhorses" of the committee system. This implies not only that there are some observable differences between list and constituency members in both institutions, but that context specificity is of critical importance in empirical research of dual incentive structures in mixed systems.

3.6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

An extensive research field investigating the influence of electoral rules on legislator behavior has produced contradictory findings in diverse settings (Depauw & Martin

2009). While some researchers have found in mixed systems a "mandate divide" by seat type that is manifested in pork barrel projects, constituency service or committee assignments (Lancaster & Patterson 1990, Stratmann & Baur 2002), others have found that extensive contamination between the PR and SMD invalidates causal inferences from such comparisons (Ferrara et al. 2005, Manow 2015). But while there exists an extensive parallel literature on the consequences of context-specific organizational features such as bicameralism and chamber size, the focus on spillover effects between the tiers as the likely source for the absence of cross-national dual mandate findings may have obscured other important contextual influences on reelection-seeking legislators.

With Wales the only MMP system to ban dual candidacy (2006-2014), this chapter has proposed an identification strategy to exploit a crucial source of variation in the otherwise most-similar institutions of UK subnational government. Compared with systems in which candidates frequently run for election on both ballots, the contamination explanation for the general absence of dual mandate effects might suggest that Wales' ban on dual candidacy would reinforce any bifurcated re-election incentives for SMD and PR members. Conversely, important context-specific features of the legislative and party system in the devolved countries of the UK were anticipated to counteract this potential firewall; in particular strong party discipline and small chamber size which moderate legislator incentives to specialize. The devolved legislatures of the UK were therefore proposed to offer a different set of

conditions for testing a 'dual mandate' framework from previous empirical tests in this field.

Probit regression models using two datasets of members' biographical and electoral history and committee assignments since the establishment of the National Assembly for Wales and the Scottish Parliament detects some evidence for 'two legislator types' that withstands a series of controls. There is evidence for a difference in committee workload between PR and SMD members, with list members associated with a larger number of committee assignments. In Wales, there is also weaker evidence that SMD members are overrepresented on committees that assist with cultivating a constituency vote, such as Health, Enterprise/Economy, and Rural Affairs/Environment. Elsewhere, the clear-cut dual mandate effects claimed for the German system are not evident: there is little evidence that Welsh and Scottish members are generally able to choose assignments in reference to that committee's usefulness in cultivating a party re-election vote in the hypothesized manner, and in Wales there was no difference in patterns of committee assignment either side of a dual candidacy ban imposed after 2006.

However, given the small size of Wales and Scotland's legislatures and the strong party discipline characteristic of traditional Westminster systems, the pattern of heterogeneity in the findings indicates that contextual factors might be expected to condition dual mandate incentives in predictable ways. While strong parties are able

to provide an element of committee workload relief for SMD members facing greater casework demands from their constituencies, this relief does not extend to personal re-election interests that might be advanced through a particular committee assignment choice. Such a split finding would appear to substantiate the importance of candidate selection and re-selection procedures underpinning members' incentives to cultivate a personal vote. Depauw and Martin (2009) find that incentives to cultivate a personal vote are weaker where parties operate selection rules that give greater control by party leaderships. Where candidate reselection procedures are more centralized, incumbents prioritize advancement in the ranks of government to raise their profile; a strategy that generally reinforces party unity by discouraging personal vote cultivation that requires action by members against their own party's position. But if the process of re-selecting SMD candidates and ranking PR lists has become less centralized over the period (see section 3.2), we might anticipate that responding to party leadership cues would be a weaker strategy for both SMD and PR members. In that case, PR members might find direct appeals to party members a more effective re-election strategy than internal legislative work to appeal to party leaderships.

That context specificity matters implies that the heterogeneous and idiosyncratic effects found in the UK's devolved legislatures might be replicated in other traditional Westminster systems with small chambers and strong parties. New Zealand's unicameral parliament might offer a particularly promising case; with 120

members it has a legislative size and national population that is comparable to Scotland's. Given its small size and 13 subject committees, it could be anticipated that the challenges of populating the committee system would counterbalance any underlying specialization incentives. With the apparent importance of context conditionality, New Zealand should represent an important case for testing the dual mandate framework despite the otherwise ostensible parallels to the German Bundestag.

In focusing on spillover effects, existing research on electoral incentives in mixed systems has perhaps obscured important institutional constraints such as strong parties and the assumption that the legislature is big enough to allow specialization. As shown by evidence of differentiated workload management between SMD and PR members in Wales and Scotland presented above, parties and institutions have made innovative adaptations to these constraints, some of which align with divisions between legislator types.

The incentive effects of mixed electoral systems are not clear-cut: patterns that ostensibly appear to be contamination may in fact represent party or institutional adaptation to contextual factors, adaptations that may reinforce rather than weaken divisions between legislator types in mixed member systems. Given the apparent importance of institutional effects such as legislative size and party management in

the operation of such systems, a more systematic understanding of context conditionality is central to a more unified approach in this research field.

4

Why Decentralization Doesn't Always Improve Responsiveness: Evidence from FOI Requests

Abstract:

Decentralization has become an established policy objective across the globe, validated by claims of accountability and proximity that could improve the responsiveness of governments to their citizens. But there is scant empirical evidence for these claims. Recognizing the value of FOI in facilitating large-scale data collection, and that the UK's institutional diversity offers an important source of *between-* and *within-*tier variation, I compile a large new dataset of government responsiveness by emailing two separate FOI requests to 812 UK public bodies with an executive function. Identifying significant variations in timeliness and quality between UK territories, I argue that differing foundational motives can help understand patterns of responsiveness between institutions established as part of transparency-facing reform programs and those designed to resolve conflict. But the absence of empirical confirmation that lower-tier governments are generally more responsive challenges the more fundamental claims about decentralization that have informed academic debate and real-world practice.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, countries across the globe have adopted decentralization reforms both in response to bottom-up demands for greater autonomy and self-government and top-down pressures by international organizations such as USAID and the World Bank (Hindriks & Lockwood 2009). This advocacy was influenced in large part by longstanding theoretical expectations of the 'first generation' of fiscal federalism theory (Qian & Weingast 1997) that expected decentralization and transparency to trigger efficiency gains from increased accountability and proximity that could reconnect citizens with their governments (for example, World Bank 1999, DFID 2002). More recent, empirically-anchored contributions from a 'second generation' (Qian & Weingast 1997) have been far more skeptical, arguing that outcomes under decentralization are at best mixed and largely attributable to incentives intrinsic to institutions in a given country (Rodden & Wibbels 2002). But because measurements of concepts such as accountability and responsiveness are so contestable, there is scant empirical corroboration of these claims and counterclaims.

These extensive decentralization reforms have paralleled a global expansion of Freedom of Information laws, which had been adopted in 115 countries by 2017 (freedominfo.org). Although this expansion has been the focus of many country-specific and cross-case studies, researchers are only slowly recognizing the potential value of FOI as "a powerful tool" and "democratizing force" in empirical research (Savage & Hyde 2014: 304) and tests of public bodies' responsiveness to FOI requests

remain comparatively rare. To fill this gap and to reassess longstanding claims about responsiveness and decentralization, I email two FOI requests to the complete universe of 812 public bodies in the United Kingdom with an executive function at either the central-, devolved- or local government level to construct a large new dataset.

The remainder of this chapter proceeds as follows. After first specifying theoretical expectations about improved responsiveness at the lower tiers of government, I investigate three countervailing hypotheses, namely top-down forms of accountability that should dilute the electoral link between voters and local-tier officials, administrative capacity constraints, and institutions' foundational motives that should incline certain public bodies towards – or away from – greater transparency. I then outline why the UK's significant diversity of institutions offers an ideal test of such perspectives. Third, I identify the methodology and data used to operationalize three hypotheses as part of a large-N research design in which I codify responses from two large waves of FOI requests and create two objective measures of responsiveness. Fourth, I illustrate the results of statistical modeling of these measures, testing organizations' timeliness and quality results against a number of potential correlates. I conclude by discussing the implications of these findings for broader academic understanding of government responsiveness.

2. DECENTRALIZATION AND THREE COUNTERVAILING THEORIES INFLUENCING GOVERNMENT RESPONSIVENESS

2.1 DECENTRALIZATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS

Decentralization – the transfer of national government powers and functions to authorities at regional and local levels – is a policy that has transformed the constitutions of growing numbers of developed and developing countries over the past several decades. By the early 1990s, and influenced by early fiscal federalism theory, advocacy by donor governments and international organizations helped foster a broad consensus that decentralization was a positive force for more satisfied consumer-voters, better democracy and freer markets (Beramendi 2007).[25]

This assertion that decentralization could improve outcomes emerged from two well-developed theoretical claims relating to *allocative efficiency*[26] and the *accountability* of government to citizens (Lockwood 2006). First, if decentralization optimizes allocative efficiency by improving the fit between public goods provision and the preferences of local people, improved policy outcomes and more informed and responsive local governments should be the result (Kincaid 1998 in Yackee &

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[25] For example, a 2002 joint policy note by the international development ministries of the UK (DFID) and the Netherlands (DGIS) observed that "donors generally support decentralization. Decentralized cooperation, circumventing ineffectual central governments, has become a core part of development assistance […] Local governance is closely linked with the empowerment of voiceless groups, such as the poor and women" (2002:1).

[26] In contrast to *productive efficiency* which refers to producing goods and services at the lowest possible cost, *allocative efficiency* refers to the optimal distribution of goods and services, taking into account consumers' (citizens') preferences.

Palus 2010). And second, in "the most important theoretical argument concerning decentralization [and] central to the motivations of real world reformers" (Faguet 2014: 2), decentralization should also improve the *accountability* of government to citizens (Lockwood 2006).

But the very definition of accountability is so contested and "notoriously difficult to pin down precisely" (Hindriks & Lockwood 2005: 3) that empirical research in this area is "fragmented, episodic, and scarce" (Brandsma & Schillemans 2012: 953). Although conceptualized at a basic level as "specific social relation or *mechanism* that involves an obligation to explain and justify conduct" (Schillemans & Bovens 2015: 5), academic uses of the term are so disconnected from each other that "the result is that accountability seems to be an ever-expanding concept, which has come to stand as a general term for any mechanism that makes powerful institutions responsive to their particular publics" (Mulgan 2003: 8 in Schillemans & Busuioc 2014: 193). From political economy for example, accountability variously refers to requirements that spending should be in some way linked to a government's taxation choices (e.g. Darby, Muscatelli & Roy 2002), to constraints on public officials' rent-seeking activities such as corruption, to increased innovation and effort (Lockwood 2008).

However imprecisely defined, realization of these efficiency and accountability gains requires a preference revelation, or linking mechanism, between

citizens and the public decision-making process. In traditional fiscal federalism theory, this mechanism is democratic elections, lobbying, or by "voting with your feet" by moving to other jurisdictions (Rodden 2011), all of which assume knowledge and meaningful local participation by citizens and groups. Hence the importance of access to information and openness as a necessary first condition for preference revelation and accountability (Dethier 2002, Albalate 2013). As Azfar et al. argue, "[u]nless the public knows what goods and services are provided by the government, how well they are provided, who the beneficiaries are, and how much they cost, it cannot demand effective government" (1999: 12).

Although rarely intersecting directly, the theoretical extensions of fiscal federalism theory to participation and access to information share a focus of interest with the small but growing FOI literature. Partly because of the substantial diversity in the size, power and composition of local governments (Piotrowski 2011; Welch 2012 in Worthy 2013) the majority of this literature focuses on central governments, and the resulting small number of FOI studies across more than one tier makes generalization difficult. But a limited number of theoretical and empirical contributions mirror fiscal federalism theory in suggesting that local governments might be relatively more open than central governments. For example, in the United States, Peters & Pierre (1998) argue that higher levels of citizen trust confer a greater degree of legitimacy on state and local governments, giving them greater governing latitude than their federal counterpart. And in considering the relatively recent

passage of FOI laws in the UK, Worthy (2013) argues that "local government was already, in relative terms, more open" than the center, largely because local governments had been subject to public access legislation such as open meeting requirements for far longer.[27]

But despite hundreds of academic articles and thousands of policy reports (Faguet 2014), there has been little empirical investigation of the basic question of whether lower tiers of government are associated with more responsive government (Hindriks & Lockwood 2005, Rodríguez-Pose et al. 2009). While FOI is clearly not the only possible measure of government responsiveness, FOI laws are one of the key ways of promoting transparency (Worthy 2013), and their rapid international expansion allows researchers to test responsiveness not only across countries but between the tiers of government using objective metrics. The remainder of this section outlines three countervailing perspectives challenging conventional wisdom that decentralization should necessarily be associated with improved responsiveness.

4.2.2 ELECTORAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORMS OF ACCOUNTABILITY

It is perhaps unsurprising that theory expects decentralization to be associated with improved government accountability. Local governments have more frequent and

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[27] The Local Government Acts of 1972 and 1985 introduced similar requirements to US 'open meeting' legislation that obliged councils to allow public access to meetings and documents, and national legislation not specific to local government such as data protection and audit regulations also provide access to particular personal records or accounts (Worthy 2013).

personalized public interactions, are constrained by both electoral and "exit-and-voice" accountability (Hirschman 1970), benefit from higher levels of citizen trust, and – from the FOI literature – have been subject to transparency laws for far longer than central governments. But in focusing on electoral or exit-and-voice accountability, fiscal federalism neglects a separate intergovernmental accountability mechanism that shapes the interactions of public officials, namely the hierarchies of principal-agent controls that variously discourage or incentivize public officials to be more or less responsive to citizens.

Of the various alternative accountability mechanisms that could shape actors' incentives, the principal-agent model has "become the predominant paradigm in the study of bureaucracy" (Meier & Krause 2003: 297 in Schillemans & Busuioc 2014). Principal-agent models conceive modern bureaucracies as vast chains of delegations of authority between voters, legislators, government ministers and civil servants, where principals at each stage of the chain delegate power to an agent (Brandsma & Schillemans 2012). In such models, public officials' incentives are shaped not only by elections but by top-down influences such as performance management systems and audit controls.

Fiscal federalism theory has tended to discount the general applicability of this approach because the electoral mandate conferred on elected officials at multiple stages of the chain is not widely replicated in other P-A applications, most obviously

the vertical hierarchy of the firm (Oates 2005). Because of the more personalized nature of citizen-politician interactions at the lower level (at least in contrast to distant ministerial departments and their agencies), even very recent work in this field tends to reiterate the importance of electoral forms of local accountability. For example, arguing that the relative importance of elections is decreasing with the *relative length of the chain* of accountability from voter to officials, Hong (2017) argues that while the actions of central government officials will be shaped more by management systems and less by elections, the reverse is true for officials working for local governments.[28] But while conceptually neat, the characterization of a chain of delegation implies a degree of equality at each link in the chain that may overstate the strength of the accountability connection between voters and local public officials, for two primary reasons.

First, local government elections are often weak mechanisms for preference revelation and for voters to hold local politicians to account. In particular, they are associated with far lower levels of participation and tend to reflect the electorate's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the political environment at the central level rather than issues specific to local races (Heath et al. 1999); in other words, they are *second–*

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[28] Reflecting the common perception of proximate citizen-politician interactions, Hong bases this assumption "on the fact that the gap between a politician facing election (or the voters themselves) and the lowest-level public servant is generally greater in central governments than in local ones." (Hong 2017: 123)

order elections (Berry & Howell 2007, Cutler 2008, Webber et al. 2014, see Marien, Dassonneville & Hooghe 2015).

Second, FOI is generally imposed on lower-tier bodies and subsequently enforced by oversight by 'principals' at the central or regional[29] tier. Full compliance with such regulations is costly, so organizations that are subject to – and not responsible for enforcing – such laws have different interests from these principals. And because principals do not know which records are held or the time or cost required to respond, FOI 'agents' benefit from information asymmetries. But although these characteristics make FOI a particularly appropriate P-A application (in which FOI 'agents' at all tiers incentives to shirk from full compliance), agency supervision theory suggests that the credibility of the principals' control mechanisms against such a potential are not equal for local government and central agencies, and that enforcement should be more efficient at the central level than it is at the local.

In a seminal contribution, McCubbins & Schwartz (1984) distinguish two distinct forms of oversight by principals: *'Fire-alarm oversight'* involving procedures for aggrieved citizens to 'raise the alarm' about agency performance to regulatory bodies; and *'Police-patrol oversight'* involving direct oversight of agency activities such as committee hearings, reports and audits. Fire-alarm oversight is a convenient shorthand for the role of Information Commissioners, ombudsmen or Data Protection

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[29] For example, in Scotland, the Canadian provinces, German Länder and the fifty US states.

Commissioners, the 'enforcer' of FOI regimes in many countries,[30] regulators that can be alerted when *either* central agencies *or* local governments are perceived to have misused their authority. But police-patrol oversight should be far more effective with respect to central agencies than it is for local governments because ministerial principals have *credibility* in enforcing compliance. Such bodies are obliged to publicly account for their performance to ministers and supervisory agencies (Bovens 2007: 4), their chief executives can be dismissed, their services outsourced or privatized, or their whole agency abolished or amalgamated. Of course, ministers *could* abolish or merge recalcitrant local governments, but this is far more expensive and therefore not a credible threat.[31]

In sum, while local government might be expected to be more responsive than central counterparts, agency oversight theory would suggest an association in the opposite direction. Not only is the local government electoral connection weakened by their second-order nature, but the consequences of poor responsiveness should be less severe for local governments than for central agencies. A first hypothesis can therefore be specified as follows:

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[30] In the UK, because Scottish ministers are the source and the Scottish Information Commissioner the enforcer of Scottish FOI legislation, Scottish ministers are a 'principal' subject to the same dynamics as central (UK) ministerial principals and the (UK) Information Commissioner.

[31] Central principals have no comparable role in the employment contracts or performance monitoring of local government chief executives. And low-paid, often part-time local councillors are in a far weaker position in monitoring council chief executives and FOI officials than are cabinet ministers and legislative committees overseeing central agencies.

H1: Central Departments and Agencies will be more responsive to FOI requests than Local Government bodies

4.2.3 THE CHALLENGE OF CAPACITY

Quite apart from principal-agent and electoral accountability mechanisms, decentralization and information access laws create new challenges for public organizations that may have starkly unequal capacities to discharge their responsibilities (Terman & Feiock 2014). Capacity constraints have been particularly prominent since the 2007-08 financial crisis and subsequent public spending constraints in many OECD countries, and such pressures have been particularly acute at the lower tier where governments often do not have legal authority to run large budget deficits. If officials do not have the policy expertise, staffing and/or fiscal resources to discharge their responsibilities (Howlett 2009, Terman & Feiock 2014), lower-tier governments may simply lack the capacity to put into effect the greater responsiveness expected of them in theory.

Given the assumption that local government should be more responsive, it is essential to test such claims. But in contrast to the large principal-agent literature, there is surprisingly little research that considers how local capacity constraints can influence government responsiveness (or even outcomes in general) (Terman & Feiock 2014). Evidence from FOI responses can be used to fill this gap in

understanding with respect to capacity constraints. In reference to these theoretical and empirical arguments made above, I test a second hypothesis, namely:

H2: Governments subject to greater capacity challenges will be less responsive to FOI requests

4.2.4 INSTITUTIONAL INCLINATIONS TOWARDS OPENNESS

A third countervailing factor to the assumptions of decentralization theory concerns organizational culture, and in particular the idea that institutions more inclined towards openness might be more amenable to the demands of FOI. Previous research has indicated the importance of factors such as administrative culture, local advocacy and leadership to institutional openness (Piotrowski 2011, Welch 2012; see Worthy 2013). For example, surmising that local government's history of openness made the local tier better able to deal with FOI requirements, Worthy, John & Vanonni argue that "bodies with greater experience of transparency are better placed to move from formal procedure to embedded norms" (2017: 490).

But any focus on differentiated transparency norms between local and central government bodies neglects the global expansion in the role of the regional tier (Hooghe, Marks & Schakel 2010) that has paralleled the growth of FOI legislation itself. Newly-created political institutions in the modern government era might be more receptive to transparency demands – and more capable of entrenching

transparency into their institutional norms – than bodies with long histories of operating in closed systems.

Not all newly-created intermediate-tier bodies are however created with similar foundational inclinations. In large parts of the world, federalism and decentralization have been adopted as tools in conflict resolution, as in Iraq, Nigeria and Bosnia & Herzegovina. Recasting violence into more peaceful forms of interaction requires complex institutional architectures – such as minority groups' inclusion in powersharing mechanisms like consociationalism (Keil 2012, Wallensteen 2015) – and these conflict resolution imperatives may act contrary to the transparency and responsiveness objectives that have inspired decentralization reforms elsewhere. As The Economist argued in November 2013:

> Peace often fails to bring the prosperity that might give it lasting value to all sides. Powersharing creates weak governments; nobody trusts anyone else enough to grant them real power. Poor administration hobbles business. Ethnic mafias become entrenched. Integration is postponed indefinitely. Lacking genuine political competition, with no possibility of decisive electoral victories, public administration in newly pacified nations is often a mess. (The Economist, 9th November 2013)

Drawing from conceptions of diverging institutional foundations, a third hypothesis anticipates that the foundational imperatives of public bodies will influence their subsequent responsiveness:

H3: Institutions inclined towards openness and transparency will be more responsive to FOI requests than powersharing institutions designed to resolve conflict

Interactions between these hypotheses suggest that expectations of greater responsiveness under decentralization are likely to be insufficient at best.

4.3 TESTING RESPONSIVENESS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

In investigating how the countervailing factors outlined above might influence the responsiveness of central, devolved and local governments in the United Kingdom to FOI requests, two features of the UK case are of particular value to the research design. First, it is a venue for comprehensive FOI legislation covering a sufficiently large number of organizations at all tiers to facilitate data collection and quantitative statistical analysis. And second, significant differentiation in the foundational underpinnings of the regional-tier institutions in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland offers an ideal test in investigating whether institutions inclined towards openness and transparency might be more responsive than consociational institutions designed to resolve conflict.

4.3.1 ELECTORAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORMS OF ACCOUNTABILITY - UK

In contrast to perspectives that local elections offer voters a preference revelation or electoral control mechanism, UK local elections have long been argued to be second-order (or close to second-order) contests (Heath et al. 1999). They are subject to considerably lower turnouts than first-order general elections and "local government

election results are a largely accidental by-product of central government's popularity at local election time" (Miller 1988: 2).

Moreover, along with New Zealand, Britain's *Next Steps* initiative most fully epitomized the New Public Management restructurings undertaken in many OECD countries in the 1980s and 1990s and inspired by bureaucratic control considerations (Schick 2002). As a bureaucratic form embodying the top-down, arm's-length ideal of police-patrol oversight, it is the principal organizational type for UK central government service delivery (James et al. 2011), with approximately 80 percent of civil servants relocated from ministerial departments (Wettenhall 2005: 616). Unlike local government bodies, principal-agent considerations are therefore explicit in the organizational specification of UK central agencies.

4.3.2 THE CHALLENGE OF CAPACITY - UK

'Capacity' is a term with a very broad reach and a number of possible proxy measures, none of which are fully satisfactory on their own. Unfortunately, data is not generally comparable across the vastly different bodies in the sample (compare for example the £4 *million* annual budget of West Somerset District Council – the smallest in England – with the £173 *billion* spent in 2016-17 by the UK Department for Work and Pensions). To consider capacity challenges I therefore limit the investigation to **local government** bodies, a suitable sample for two reasons. Not only do they represent the largest single subset of relatively-comparable organizations in the data (N=433), but

local government is the destination at least 70-80% of all FOI requests in the UK, a proportion which is growing (Worthy & Hazell 2017).

Paradoxically, existing contributions argue that "local authorities have managed this disproportionately large volume more efficiently than central government" (Worthy, John & Vannoni 2017: 490). But this rapid increase in FOI requests coincided with a long squeeze on public finances that has restricted local authority budgets since 2010, a policy which offers one potential source of variation for considering capacity. Because local government funding is a devolved government responsibility in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, changes to local government resource budgets have varied significantly across the UK. In particular, the 2010 policy decision by the incoming UK government to cut spending but protect health and education expenditure in England resulted in disproportionate cuts to English local government resource budgets, a decision that was not matched in Scotland and Wales. English councils spent 22% less in real terms in 2015-16 than they did in 2009-10 (Amin-Smith et al. 2016), compared with reductions of 15% in Scotland and 11.5% in Wales. Given more rapid cuts in funding in England, English councils' responsiveness to FOI requests would be expected to be worse than counterparts in Scotland and Wales.

However, this is a blunt measure of capacity because other social, cultural or political factors may also influence outcomes across the four territories of the UK. A

more granular approach therefore draws on local government budget data collected by the UK Department for Communities and Local Government. Since this data is not directly comparable across the four UK territories, these additional variables represent proxies for two possible capacity measures for the 353 councils in England: the local council's total budget for central services ('back-office' functions) in 2014-15; and the percentage change in this budget over the austerity period between 2010-11 and 2014-15. If resources are an intervening factor in the overall level of organizational transparency (Piotrowski 2011), responsiveness should be increasing with staff and budget size. Because this data is also an imperfect and incomplete measure, additional variables that might influence government responsiveness can also be included, such as Office for National Statistics socio-economic data collated at the local government level, and local council political composition data.

4.3.3 INSTITUTIONAL INCLINATIONS TOWARDS OPENNESS - UK

A key advantage in investigating whether differentiated institutional foundations influence responsiveness is the UK's very considerable diversity in the longevity and foundational underpinnings of its governmental institutions. As one of the oldest consolidated nation-states in the democratic world, the British central government's working norms have long predated modern-era interests in transparency and open government. The prevailing understanding in the FOI literature that UK central government should be less open than local government draws from what might be

understood as a historical institutionalist interpretation: Executive dominance and political traditions entrenched secrecy as a "historical, cultural and institutional phenomenon" in Britain over a period of centuries (Worthy 2017: 17).[32]

But in "the most radical constitutional change [the UK] has seen since the Great Reform Act of 1832" (Bogdanor 2001: 1), devolution recast the administrative apparatus of the UK state by creating three new intermediate-tier institutions with significant 'self-rule' autonomy. And very unusually for a decentralizing state in Western Europe, these new intermediate-tier institutions in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were underpinned by entirely divergent foundational imperatives.

Devolution to Scotland and Wales was born as part of a broad constitutional reform program during the first Blair Government that included the FOI legislation itself, the Human Rights Act and (later) the Supreme Court replacing the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords. Labelled "New Politics" by contemporary Scottish and Welsh commentators (e.g. Cairney 2012, Mitchell 2000, Osmond 1998), the potential for more transparent and responsive government was perhaps the most important non-nationalist justification for the establishment of the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales. While politicians in Wales took up the connections between 'New Politics' and openness shortly after the first Welsh

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[32] Indeed, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 only closely succeeded the Official Secrets Act 1989, a law that further entrenched secrecy norms (Worthy 2017).

elections (e.g. Michael 1999),[33] ambitions for transparency and responsiveness for the new institutions were particularly embedded in Scotland. For several decades, the Scottish home rule movement had drawn together academic, legal, cultural and political figures from across Scottish public life, at venues including the Campaign for a Scottish Assembly, the 1989 Claim of Right and the Scottish Constitutional Convention. James Mitchell argues that while "New Politics" was never precisely defined, it had long "been part of the rhetoric of the Scottish home rule movement" and that "three features stood out from this rhetoric: new institutions, new processes and new political culture" (Mitchell 2000: 5).[34] Indeed 'access and participation' became one of the four key principles adopted by the consultative group tasked with drafting the detailed proposals on how Scotland's devolved institutions should operate (Consultative Steering Group 1999)

In contrast, three distinctive factors underpin devolution in Northern Ireland: conflict resolution through mandatory powersharing; political paralysis; and a direct lineage from the previous Stormont Government and the post-1972 Direct Rule

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[33] In a keynote lecture during his short tenure as the National Assembly's inaugural First Secretary, Alun Michael argued that integral to the 'New Politics' was that "The government of Wales is no longer carried out behind closed doors, but out in the open. And that can only be a good thing for democracy and for the quality of our decision making" (1999: 7).

[34] After 1997, "New Politics" became most associated with Secretary of State for Scotland (and future First Minister) Donald Dewar (Mitchell 2000), but the belief that the devolved institutions should be bestowed different underpinnings substantially pre-dates the Blair Government. In particular, the Constitutional Convention was viewed as "the proving ground for the new politics" (Liberal Democrat leader Paddy Ashdown, quoted in Macwhirter 1990: 34).

machinery. A fourth factor, sectarian partisan competition and historic discrimination by some councils in employment and housing, is also fundamental in understanding Northern Ireland local government.

First, the 1998 Belfast Agreement that re-established devolved government attempted to stem chronic political violence by addressing not only constitutional and security matters but also human rights and social and economic inclusion (Wilford et al 2003: 32), thereby creating a macro architecture in which conflict resolution through political accommodation was the primary imperative (Carmichael 1999).[35] Second, traditional linkages between elections and government formation are obscured in Northern Ireland politics. Because the main British parties do not generally compete in Northern Ireland elections, "the vote had little direct influence on the policy content of government in the province for almost thirty years" (Rhodes et al. 2003: 38), circumstances which offered local politicians "all the advantages of political activity with none of the disadvantages of responsibility" (Prior 1982, cited in Bogdanor 2001: 99). Third, Northern Ireland's devolved institutions are not new but are instead the successor of the 1921-1972 Stormont Parliament and the Direct Rule Northern Ireland Office, a body which was itself "the lineal descendant of the old Stormont Cabinet Office" (Bell 1987: 212). Northern Ireland's Civil Service

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[35] Indeed, the devolved institutions have been claimed to be "inherently unstable" because they "institutionalised sectarianism and sectarian division" (Wilson & Wilford 2003 in McLaughlin 2005: 115) and may have worsened public administration with "less cohesive government" and decisions "made on a lowest common denominator basis" (Birrell 2009: 245).

working for this body "found it difficult to adjust to the accountability demands placed on them by the return of devolved government in December 1999" (Knox 2009: 436).[36] And fourth, these tensions are perhaps even more pronounced at the local level, where local authorities have emerged from an era in which council chambers were described as a "bearpit of sectarianism" (Knox 1998: 1) and where "religious discrimination by some local authorities in employment and housing [became] a motivating factor behind the civil rights protests in 1968 and subsequent outbreak of disturbance" (Knox 1998: 3).

While such disturbances are less apparent since the Belfast Agreement, these divergent institutional underpinnings provide a theoretical basis for anticipating that local governments in Northern Ireland might be less responsive than councils in England, Scotland and Wales, and that Northern Ireland's devolved-tier bodies would also be associated with poorer responsiveness than their counterparts in Scotland and Wales.

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[36] Rhodes et al (2003) argue that "the Assembly, the executive and its constituent departmental structure have been reconfigured in ways that owe little to administrative efficiency and much to political expediency" (2003: 69). This interpretation is perhaps reflected in Northern Ireland's apparent lack of interest amending the Westminster-passed FOI Act despite legislative competence that would allow it to do so. As Wilford & Wilson (2001) argue, "So far the Assembly has followed Westminster in its freedom-of-information regime, not yet exploring as in Scotland a more liberal variant. A combination of the parochialism of some members and the lack of habituation of the Northern Ireland civil service to close democratic scrutiny has led to tensions over access to information held by the executive" (2001: 4).

4.4 MEASURING RESPONSIVENESS THROUGH FOI REQUESTS

The global expansion in right-to-know laws since the late 1990s has spawned a number of country-specific and comparative studies that assess the impact of FOI in a number of different settings (Hazell & Worthy 2010). Despite this growth however, FOI legislation has far less frequently been employed as a methodology in experimental research, although this is beginning to change (e.g. Lewis & Wood 2012, Ross & Whittaker 2009, Cherry & McMenemy 2013, Michener & Rodriguez 2015, Worthy, John & Vannoni 2017).

In contrast to other potential and existing measures of good governance, there are a number of advantages of using emailed FOI requests to obtain an objective, comparative metric of government responsiveness. First, the technique relies on a universal requirement that public bodies must respond to or refuse the request within a statutory period (20-working days in the UK), an expedient obligation in mitigating selection biases that frequently confound survey data (Cherry & McMenemy 2013). Second, by codifying objective metrics from information provided remotely in response to identically-worded emails rather than expert surveys, the data is less likely to capture respondents' impressions that may bias traditional governance indictors (Rodriguez-Pose & Di Cataldo 2015). And third, public bodies at all tiers of government have equal access to email as a universal means of communication. In the

UK, email or websites are the preferred method of public contact for completing tasks such as renewing driving licenses, road tax or passports (OFCOM 2013).

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (applying to England, Wales and Northern Ireland) and the Freedom of Information Act (Scotland) 2002 came into force on 1 January 2005. Both Acts established a general right of access to information held by public bodies and imposed a duty upon public bodies to disclose information held by them on receipt of a request for information. They have extensive coverage of at least 100,000 bodies (Birkinshaw 2010) including central government departments and executive agencies, local councils, the National Health Service, universities, schools, police forces and fire authorities.

The Acts also established Information Commissioners to act as enforcers and champions of the legislation. Information Commissioners are publicly appointed[37] and are independent from government in disseminating information to the public, issuing guidance to public bodies on their obligations under the Acts, and in their enforcement function where public bodies are adjudicated to be in breach of the Acts. Because compliance requirements do not vary between the types of public bodies

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[37] The UK Information Commissioner is appointed on the nomination of the UK Government subject to a pre-appointment hearing of the relevant parliamentary select committee. The Scottish Information Commissioner is appointed on the nomination of the Scottish Parliament.

covered by the Acts, FOI regulations on their own should not affect the opportunities for certain bodies to shirk in complying with disclosure requirements.[38]

4.4.1 METHODOLOGY AND DATA

To operationalize the test of responsiveness to FOI requests, a complete list of email addresses for the universe of public bodies subject to FOI laws was assembled from official registers and the annual reference guides in the devolved countries: the *Scottish Political Guide*, *The Wales Yearbook* and the *Northern Ireland Yearbook*.

Organizations were emailed FOI requests if they were considered to have an executive function at any level of government. Selecting the universe of public bodies intended to avoid sample biases and to generate sufficient responses: despite the legal obligation to respond previous work has reported a low response rate (e.g. Michener & Rodriguez 2015). Along with UK ministerial departments, the devolved governments and local councils, Non-Departmental Public Bodies at both the UK-level (such as the Homes and Communities Agency) and devolved-level (such as the Wales Audit Office) were included. Advisory and Tribunal Non-Departmental Public

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[38] In common with other FOI legislation, there are a number of exemptions for disclosing certain **information**, such as the absolute exemptions covering information received from security bodies, court records, and communications with senior members of the Royal Family. (Information Commissioner's Office: *When can we refuse a request for information*? Accessed 18 November 2017 at https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-freedom-of-information/refusing-a-request/)

Bodies which sit infrequently and/or have a shoestring staff were excluded. Also excluded were town-, community- or parish- councils, universities, schools, police forces and fire authorities. Although public sector NHS bodies in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland were included, NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups in England (which had been recently established at the time of the trial) were excluded. Table 4.1 details the final set of 197 central government bodies and 181 devolved government bodies.

Table 4.1: Central and Devolved Public Bodies Receiving Two FOI requests

Type of Agency	UK	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland
Ministerial Department or Devolved Government	22	1	1	12†
Executive Agency	39	8	0	0
Non-Departmental Public Body	114	34	17	47
Non-Ministerial Department	22	5	0	0
Commissioner	0	6	4	1
NHS body	0	23	10	12
Total	**197**	**77**	**32**	**72**

† In contrast to Scotland and Wales, each Northern Ireland ministerial department is established as separate corporate entity

A series of local government reorganizations effective 1974, 1986, 1995-1998 and 2009 replaced a uniform two-tier system across Great Britain (sic) with a complicated hybrid. Although Scottish and Welsh reforms were straightforward, replacing the previous two-tier system with 32 and 22 single-tier councils, the English system accommodates both continuity two-tier areas and single-tier authorities combining previously-separate county and borough functions (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Local Authorities by Type, United Kingdom

Local Authority Type	Number of Councils
England	
Single-tier areas	
London Borough	32
City of London Corporation	1
Metropolitan Borough Council	36
Unitary Authority	56
Total Single Tier Authorities	**125**
Two-tier areas	
Non-Metropolitan County Council (Upper tier)	27
District or Borough Council (Lower tier)	201
Total Two-Tier Authorities	**228**
Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland	
Unitary Authority (Scotland)	32
Unitary Authority (Wales)	22
District Council (Northern Ireland)	26 †
Total Single Tier outside England	**80**

† Since 1 April 2015, 11 single-tier districts

The final wording of each email was identical for all organizations and is reproduced in Figure 4.1. At the outset of the project I spent several months designing a process that fully complied with the Freedom of Information Act, consulting a number of people with direct experience of drafting and answering FOI requests.[39] In their discussion on the ethics of research involving Freedom of Information Act

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[39] Chris Gilson, Patrick Dunleavy and Rebecca Rumbul provided a great deal of helpful advice at this stage of the research.

requests, Savage & Hyde (2014) argue that two ethical issues may arise that researchers should bear in mind when designing their project. First, public authorities may fail to redact or delete personal data in their responses; and second, "embedded data within a disclosed document which may identify the producer of the document, even if personally identifying information on the face of the document has been redacted" (2014: 310). To avoid any such accidental disclosures, organizations' FOI responses are not published either in individual or consolidated form: the results analyzed here concern the responsiveness of government bodies to my requests rather than the content of their replies.

Importantly, the project involved no deception: I was clearly identified as the requester in both the email address and signature accompanying each request. However, because previous research in this field (Cuillier 2010; Michener & Rodriguez 2015) has shown that public bodies "can react differently according to the identity, or perceived identity, of requesters" (Worthy, John & Vannoni 2017: 492), the emails did not state that they were being sent as part of a research project because of the serious potential risk to the validity of a survey testing the fundamentals of government responsiveness to their citizens. This is an acceptable approach under the FOI Act which is legally "requester blind". Modest administrative inconvenience was anticipated in the passage of the FOI Act in that the law allows organizations to reject burdensome or vexatious requests: not a single organization in the trial rejected an FOI request for this reason. That the two waves of requests were separated by at least

six months also minimized any inconvenience. Finally, I took care to phrase the request as clearly as possible by consulting former FOI officers, thus avoiding cumbersome follow-ups and making the process as straightforward as possible.

The requests were drafted to be reasonable but sufficiently challenging, and needed to be equally relevant across a wide range of organizations with different functions and responsibilities. The questions illuminated two key features of an organization's bureaucratic capacity and quality, namely asset management and procurement. The ability of an organization to keep track of its assets is fundamental to its governance; the first email therefore asked for detailed information on the number of laptops that had been issued to staff. The second email asked for information about single-bidder contracting, a "red-flag" indicator of corruption (Fazekas et al. 2016: 369, also Mungiu-Pippidi 2015). This request asked organizations to state how many contracts had been put out for tender and how many were awarded after a process in which only one contractor submitted a bid. To test data retention quality, both emails asked for the most recent year available at the time of the trial (2013) and for older data (2010).

Figure 4.1: Sample Emails

Subject: Freedom of Information Request

Dear Sir/Madam,

Under the Freedom of Information Act I would like to request the following information about the distribution of laptops to staff:

Could you please provide me with the total number of laptops owned by your organisation that were registered to and/or in the possession of staff members (whether directly employed by your organisation or otherwise) on the following two dates:

a) 1 May 2010 (or nearest available date – please specify), and

b) 1 May 2013 (or nearest available date – please specify).

I would prefer to receive this information electronically as a reply to this email.

Subject: Freedom of Information Request

Dear Sir/Madam,

Under the Freedom of Information Act I would like to request the following information about the issuance of contracts:

1. Could you please provide me with the total number of contracts put out for tender by your organisation during the following two periods:

a) January 1, 2010 - December 31, 2010 (or the nearest available 12-month period – please specify), and

b) January 1, 2013 - December 31, 2013 (or the nearest available 12-month period – please specify)

2. For each of these two periods, please state how many of these contracts were awarded after a tendering process in which only one contractor submitted a bid.

I would prefer to receive this information electronically as a reply to this email.

Because I anticipated receiving large volumes of data, I set up two Gmail accounts under my own name to receive responses from the requested organizations (see Savage & Hyde 2014). The wording of each email was tested using a small trial sample including universities, fire authorities and police forces that were not on the list of recipients. The first email concerning asset management was sent to 849 public bodies between 28 February 2014 and 7 March 2014. Due to the UK Government's abolition of regional probation trusts on 31 March 2014 (between the two waves of FOIs), 812 bodies received the second FOI between 19 August 2014 and 8 October 2014. The subject of both emails was clearly stated as "Freedom of Information Request". I used responses to these two requests to create two large cross-sectional datasets constructed from observations of public bodies' responsiveness at approximately the same point of time (or where any incidental differences in time would be ignored). Combining these two datasets into one by coding organizations' responses using standardized metrics would permit investigation of any variation between the two trials and allow me to create composite measures for the two trials together.

4.4.2 CODING PROCEDURE

After emailing the FOI request to each public body, I logged the timing and content of each response and replied to any requests for clarification. Although coding

responses to FOI requests can pose challenges to researchers, the requests deliberately asked for numerical data (such as the number of single-bidder contracts) that would be suitable for coding. I logged the timing and content of each reply, including the date on which the organization acknowledged and replied to the request, whether they provided precise or approximated information, and whether the information related to the specific dates or time period requested. I also recorded any additional relevant qualitative information provided by the responder. There is no legal requirement for respondents to acknowledge receipt of FOI requests; however, 641 out of 849 public bodies (76%) acknowledged the first email and 627 of 811 (77%) the second, a consistent performance between both waves. I sent each email to the organization's named point of first customer contact, for example, reception@ceredigion.gov.uk. Where no first contact address was listed, or if emails were returned to sender, I redirected requests to the organization's FOI team, for example freedomofinformation@darlington.gov.uk.

There was significant variation in the administration of requests between organizations. Several wrote back to an incorrect email address. One English district council attached unrelated taxi invoices to its acknowledgement. Others used two separate replies but gave different answers to the same question in each response.[40] Despite evidence from Scotland that that councils rarely keep cost records (Cherry &

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[40] Unless an organization's second reply indicated that additional material was being provided to supplement or to correct an earlier response, only the first response was coded.

McMenemy 2013), excessive cost was the most common exemption claimed for refusal, with one central ministerial department estimating that a complete response to the first FOI email would "incur a cost of around £125,000". Others reported an arbitrary cost of replying even when refusing the request, for example: "Information not held. For your information this request has cost the Council £18.75 to process." Organizations frequently self-reported an incorrect 20-working day deadline by which they would respond, or gave an incorrect date on which they had received the email.

4.4.3 RESPONSE VARIABLES

Two variables of interest were constructed from the database to measure the timeliness and overall response quality.

Timeliness: The first measure, a binary variable, assesses the timeliness of an organization's two responses, based on the number of days that it took an organization to respond. I score the organization one if both responses were received within the 20-working day statutory period, and zero otherwise.

Quality: The second score gauges the quality of the two responses. For the first email, I assign a score of one (and zero otherwise) for *each* of the following: the date the data refer to was exactly correct for 2010; the date the data refer to was exactly correct for 2013; the number of laptops had been exactly stated for 2010; and the number of

laptops had been exactly stated for 2013. Organizations that did not provide a response, or where a response was received late, scored zero. An answer providing the correct date and the exact number of laptops for both years and within the statutory deadline receives a maximum score of four. I then standardize this measure to range from zero to one.

For the second email, I assign a score of one (and zero otherwise) for each of the following: the total number of contracts was specified for 2010; the total number of contracts was specified for 2013; the total number of single-bidder contracts was specified for 2010; the total number of single-bidder contracts was specified for 2013; the 2010 information related to the 12-month date range which had been requested; and the 2013 information related to the 12-month date range which had been requested. Thus the maximum possible score is six, and again, this measure is standardized to range from zero to one. I obtain a composite measure of the quality of an organization's responses by taking the average score for each question.

4.4.4. EXPLANATORY VARIABLES

For Hypothesis H1, which investigates whether central bodies perform better than local government bodies, I create a dummy variable for local and central-tier organizations and regress these dummies on the composite measures of timeliness and quality.

Hypothesis H2 anticipates improved responsiveness to be associated with greater capacity. As outlined in section 4.3.2., both a broader and more granular approach can be used to operationalize this hypothesis. At the broader level, I create dummy variables for local government bodies in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Because of smaller grant cuts to local government budgets, Scottish and Welsh councils should be more responsive to FOI requests than those in England. The more granular method uses UK government data[41] to create two continuous variables representing the log of each English council's reported budget for central services ('back-office' functions) in 2014-15 and the percentage change in each council's budget between 2010-11 and 2014-15.

Hypothesis H3, which expects responsiveness to be positively correlated with 'new politics' institutions oriented towards openness, is even more challenging to investigate with quantitative data. To establish whether there is any evidence for the theorized variations in outcomes, I create dummies for 'new politics' institutions (Wales and particularly Scotland) against a dummy for 'consociationalism/conflict

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[41] 2010-11 data: Local authority revenue expenditure and financing England: 2010 to 2011 Individual local authority data. Published 9 December 2010. Revenue Account (RA) budget 2010-11. https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-revenue-expenditure-and-financing-england-2010-to-2011-individual-local-authority-data--6

2014-15 data: Local authority revenue expenditure and financing England: 2014 to 2015 Individual local authority data. Published 23 July 2014, Last updated 22 October 2014. Department for Communities and Local Government. Revenue Account (RA) budget 2014-15 https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-revenue-expenditure-and-financing-england-2014-to-2015-individual-local-authority-data

resolution' institutions (Northern Ireland). Importantly, this approach cannot directly distinguish between the hypothetical 'openness' characteristics of Scotland and Wales or 'conflict-resolving' nature of Northern Ireland: differences could instead be attributed to local factors other than foundational motives. While there is no straightforward quantitative resolution, the research design exploits the significant foundational variations between the UK's various government bodies and evidence from contemporary politics identified in the discussion of hypothesis H3 and the results.

In addition to the main explanatory variables of interest, sufficient data exists for local government bodies to examine a number of other **socio-economic** and **political** variables identified elsewhere in the FOI literature.

Certain socio-economic factors such as fiscal deficits and debt levels are unsuitable here because UK councils cannot incur such deficits. But other measures including **population size** (e.g. Enikolopov & Zhuravskaya 2007) and real **per capita incomes** (e.g. Alt, Lassen & Rose 2006, Piotrowski & Van Ryzin 2007) are added to the model and reported as *Log Population* and *Log Gross Value Added per Head* for each local government area.[42] These models exclude the City of London Corporation because of this area's extremely high GVA and extremely low resident population.

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[42] See Guillamón et al. 2011 for a summary of socioeconomic influences.

To test **party control** (e.g. Piotrowski & Van Ryzin 2007, Guillamón, Bastida & Benito 2011), I include a dummy of the largest political party on the council, and to test **political competitiveness** (e.g. Piotrowski 2011, Worthy 2013), I use a large dataset of local government election results between 1999-00 and 2014-15[43] to create a continuous variable representing the *Effective Number of Parties* (Laakso & Taagepera 1979)[44] represented on the council. I use a multi-year average because the period 2010-15 was associated with an "electoral meltdown" (Cutts & Russell 2015: 70, 72) in local representation by Liberal Democrat councillors in which a previously very-competitive party at local level lost more than 1,300 council seats. This precipitous decline created apparently uncompetitive councils in areas that had been politically competitive for more than a decade. Rather than an unreliable snapshot of party representation during the year in which the survey was undertaken, I therefore show competitiveness as the mean average ENP for each council over the 16 years available.[45]

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[43] I am grateful for the assistance of Colin Rallings and Michael Thrasher in providing access to this data.

[44] The Effective Number of Parties represented on the council is computed by the formula: $= \frac{1}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} p_i^2}$, where N the number of parties with at least one council seat and p_i^2 is the square of each party's proportion of all seats on the council.

[45] Note that in the UK is not possible to test the percentage of voter abstention as a factor influencing transparency as found elsewhere (see Esteller-Moré & Polo Otero 2012) because some elections are coterminous with UK General Elections or devolved government elections which significantly (and artificially) inflate local turnout, and some councils elect by thirds.

5. RESULTS

4.5.1 DESCRIPTIVE MEANS

Before statistically analyzing variation in the **timeliness** and **quality** of UK public bodies' FOI responses for each hypothesis outlined above, I first illustrate descriptive means for both composite measures. **Timeliness** scores are shown in Figure 4.2, disaggregated into three charts each showing various combinations of the tiers and territories of the UK. Just over half of the public bodies (418 out of 812, or 51%) responded to **both** emails within the statutory deadline, a response rate that while poor, exceeds those of prior studies (Cuillier 2010; Michener & Rodriguez 2015; Worthy, John & Vanonni 2017).

Figure 4.2 Timeliness of Responses
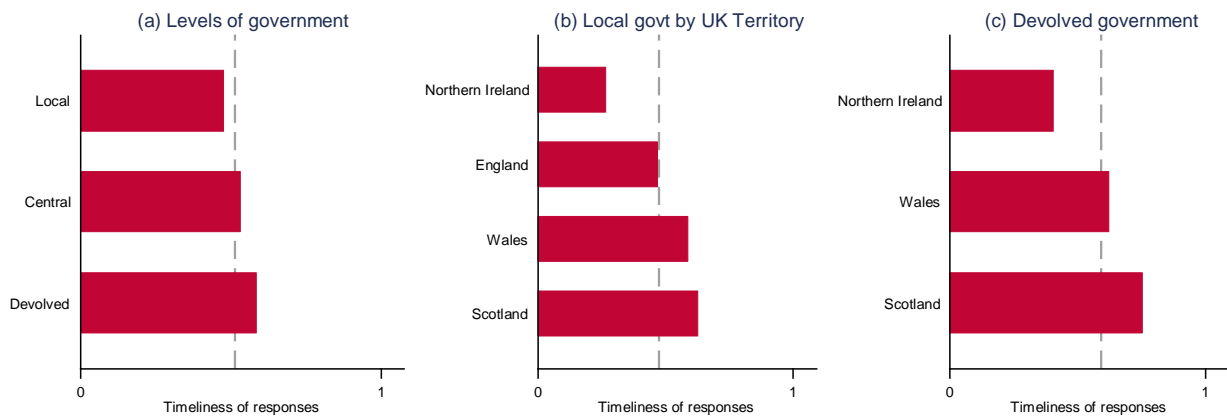
Note: Organizations responding to both emails within the statutory deadline. I calculate the average timeliness of responses by public bodies across levels of government (n = 812), local governments (n = 434) and three devolved governments (n = 181). An organization scores one if both responses were received within the 20-working day statutory period, and zero otherwise. Each bar represents the average for the public bodies in the relevant category. The grey dashed lines indicate the mean for the relevant sample.

Examining Figure 4.2, chart (a) appears to show some variation across the three levels of government, with local government slightly below the average, devolved government slightly above the average, and central government bodies close to it. Devolved government bodies are most timely in their responses, with 59% answering both emails on time. Chart (b) shows local government variation between the UK's territories, with Northern Ireland councils performing well below average, English councils close to it, and Scottish and Welsh councils better than average. Chart (c), corresponding to the expected direction of effects in Hypothesis H3, shows substantial differences between the devolved territories: 75% of public bodies in Scotland always respond by the deadline, 63% in Wales, and only 40% in Northern Ireland.

Figure 4.3 shows variation in the **quality** of responses across the tiers and territories of the UK. Just 101 of 812 public bodies (12%) contacted in both waves provided exactly the information asked for in both emails and on time; 175 (22%) did not provide any accurate information by the deadline. The average quality score is 46%, indicating that less than half of the required information was received by the deadline. Overall, patterns in Figure 4.3 are very similar as those in Figure 4.2, and the correlation between the two measures is .66.

Figure 4.3 Quality of Responses
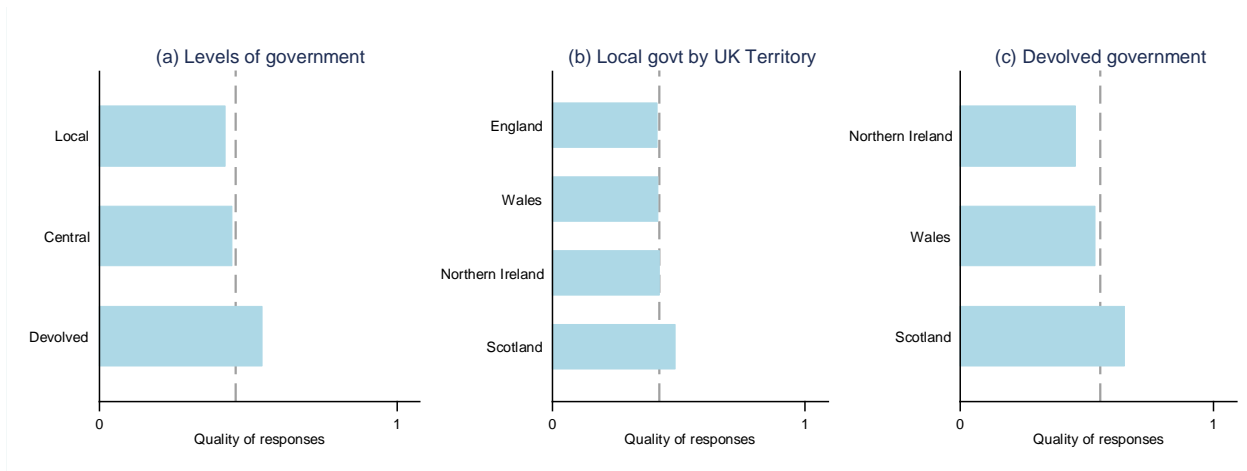
Note: The quality of public bodies' replies to two Freedom of Information requests. Each organization's reply is given a score for quality (see section 4.4.3 for the scoring criteria) which is then standardized to range from zero to one. I take the average score for each FOI request to obtain a composite measure of the quality of each organization's replies. Each bar represents the average for the public bodies in the relevant category and the grey dashed lines indicate the mean for the relevant sample.

4.5.2 STATISTICAL MODELLING

I next investigate these patterns via statistical modelling, taking each hypothesis in turn. While fiscal federalism and an albeit-limited evidence base from FOI theory expect local governments to be more responsive than the center, Hypothesis H1 proposed that a countervailing accountability influence on public bodies might result in improved responsiveness at the central level. Using Probit regression for the binary variable (*timeliness*) and a linear model for the continuous variable (*quality*), Table 4.3 summarizes the relationships between the central and local tiers (the devolved tier is also shown but not analyzed until the discussion of Hypothesis H3). Model 3A shows timeliness and model 3B quality; local government is the reference category.

These results find no evidence to support fiscal federalism/FOI theory or the alternative proposed by Hypothesis H1; instead, central government performance for both the timeliness and quality measures is not different from local government at any conventional level of significance.

Table 4.3 Responsiveness Measures for Devolved and Central Tiers versus Local Tiers

	Timeliness (3A)	Quality (3B)
Devolved	0.112***	0.125***
	(0.044)	(0.03)
Central	0.057	0.024
	(0.043)	(0.028)
Constant		0.424
		(0.015)
Model	Probit	OLS
Observations	812	812
R-Squared	0.03	0.023

Notes: (i) Probit results for model 3A were converted to marginal effects using Hanmer and Kalkan's (2013) 'Observed Values' method: the figures in this column are not coefficients. The Observed Values method holds each of the explanatory variables other than the variable of interest at their observed values for each observation in the data, calculates the marginal effect for each of these observations, then takes the mean average over all of these cases. (ii) The reference category comprises local government bodies across the UK. (iii) Robust standard errors are in parentheses. (iv) * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%

To corroborate this rejection of hypothesis H1, Table 4.4 tests for any territory-specific effects in the central-local relationship by disaggregating the coefficients and marginal effects into associations for local government bodies in each

of the four territories of UK. Model 4A shows timeliness and model 4B quality; UK central government bodies are the reference category. In general there is no difference, except that Northern Ireland councils are less likely to always respond at time, significant at the 5 percent level. Although English councils are less responsive than UK central bodies, this association is of small magnitude and just outside statistical significance at the 10 percent level. Except for Northern Ireland, this evidence again rejects both traditional assumptions about local government responsiveness and the alterative hypothesis that favored central government bodies.

Table 4.4: Local Government responsiveness across the 4 UK territories versus Central Tier bodies

	Timeliness (4A)	Quality (4B)
Scottish Local Government	0.928 (0.095)	0.038 (0.059)
Welsh Local Government	0.058 (0.112)	-0.026 (0.064)
Northern Ireland Local Government	-0.275** (0.108)	-0.023 (0.067)
English Local Government	-0.062 (0.044)	-0.030 (0.029)
Model	Probit	OLS
Observations	630	630
(Pseudo) R-Squared	0.012	0.004

Notes: (i) Probit results as Table 4.3 (ii) The reference category comprises central government bodies. (iii) The Greater London Authority is classified as part of English local government.

I next consider hypothesis H2 and the role of capacity in influencing responsiveness. As discussed in section 4.2.3, there are a large number of possible proxies for capacity and Tables 4.5 and 4.6 consider three of these for the **timeliness** and **quality** measures respectively. The first three territory dummies in each table represent a broader measure, namely smaller cuts to local government budgets between 2010-11 and 2014-15 in Scotland and Wales compared with England. The next two continuous proxy variables represent the narrower measure that uses local government financial resource data for 353 local governments in England. These represent the **percentage change** in the body's central services budget between 2010-11 and 2014-15 (models 5B and 6B), and the log of the body's **total** budget for central services ('back-office' functions) in 2014-15 (models 5C and 6C).

Tables 4.5 and 4.6 also include additional socio-economic and political variables that might influence government responsiveness as outlined in section 4. Models D-G in both tables assess the timeliness and quality scores against *LogPopulation* and *LogGVA;* party political control (dummies for *Labour* and *Conservative);* and for English councils, *the average Effective Number of Parties represented on the council over 16 years* (as a proxy for political competitiveness). Model 5H and 6H presents the full model.[46]

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[46] Because the party control variables have no relevance in the Northern Ireland party system, the Northern Ireland dummy is excluded from these models.

Table 4.5: Local Government Responsiveness to FOI Requests – Average Marginal Effects from a Probit regression (Timeliness Measure)

	Timeliness (5A)	Timeliness (5B)	Timeliness (5C)	Timeliness (5D)	Timeliness (5E)	Timeliness (5F)	Timeliness (5G)	Timeliness (5H)
Explanatory Variable								
Scotland Locals	0.154*				0.156*	0.199**		0.203**
	(0.091)				(0.090)	(0.096)		(0.096)
Wales Locals	0.119				0.101	0.145		0.133
	(0.109)				(0.112)	(0.119)		(0.121)
NI Locals	-0.212**				-0.185*	-0.084		
	(0.105)				(0.111)	(0.140)		
Capacity: % Change in Central Services budget, England only		0.052						
		(0.078)						
Capacity: Log Central Services budget, £, 2014, England only			0.048					
			(0.034)					
Log Population				0.167**	0.063*			0.047
				(0.080)	(0.032)			(0.035)
Log GVA					-0.103			-0.098
					(0.074)			(0.075)
Labour						0.149		0.124
						(0.097)		(0.099)
Conservatives						0.124		0.124
						(0.100)		(0.100)
Effective Number of Parties (16-yr Average, England only)							-0.017	
							(0.061)	
Pseudo R-squared	0.01	0.001	0.004	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.0002	0.02
Number of Observations (iv)	433	353	353	433	433	433	353	407

Notes: (i) Probit results as Table 4.3. (ii) The reference category comprises local government bodies in England. (iii) Delta-method Standard Errors in Parentheses, *p ≤ 0.1, **p ≤ 0.05, *** p ≤ 0.01. (iv) City of London Corporation is removed from models.

Table 4.6: Local Government Responsiveness to FOI Requests – Coefficients from an OLS regression (Quality Measure)

	Quality (6A)	Quality (6B)	Quality (6C)	Quality (6D)	Quality (6E)	Quality (6F)	Quality (6G)	Quality (6H)
Scotland Locals	0.070 (0.057)				0.051 (0.059)	0.100* (0.059)		0.082 (0.061)
Wales Locals	0.005 (0.061)				-0.029 (0.062)	0.132 (0.065)		-0.005 (0.067)
NI Locals	0.009 (0.065)				-0.045 (0.073)	0.070 (0.085)		
Capacity: % Change in Central Services budget, England only		0.043 (0.046)						
Capacity: Log Central Services budget, £, 2014, England only			-0.027 (0.654)					
Log Population					-0.024 (0.021)			-0.031 (0.021)
Log GVA				-0.090** (0.042)	-0.087* (0.045)			-0.097** (0.045)
Labour						0.049 (0.060)		0.067 (0.061)
Conservatives						0.073 (0.061)		0.084 (0.061)
Effective Number of Parties (16-yr Average, England only)							-0.025 (0.038)	
Constant	0.417*** (0.017)	0.417*** (0.017)	0.655*** (0.193)	1.326*** (0.421)	1.579*** (0.492)	0.356*** (0.057)	0.472*** (0.085)	1.690*** (0.478)
R-squared	0.003	0.002	0.005	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.001	0.02
Number of Observations (iv)	433	353	353	433	433	433	353	407

Notes: (ii) The reference category comprises local government bodies in England. (ii) Robust Standard Errors in Parentheses, *p ≤ 0.1, **p ≤ 0.05, *** p ≤ 0.01.
(iii) City of London Corporation is removed from models.

Models 5A and 6A show results for local government responsiveness in the four territories of the UK without controls. Although territory does not explain the *quality* of an organization's responses (model 6A), for the *timeliness* score (model 5A) Scottish councils were 15 percentage points more likely to always respond on time than English councils (significant at the 10 percent level), and Northern Ireland councils 21 percentage points less likely to respond on time than English councils (significant at the 5 percent level). That Scottish councils perform better is consistent with the ordering predicted for hypothesis H2. The coefficient for Welsh councils is positive relative to English councils, although the relationship does not reach conventional levels of significance.

In contrast, the more granular measures of capacity (models 5B, 5C, 6B and 6C) are not associated with improved government responsiveness, providing evidence against Hypothesis H2. For the *timeliness* measure (Table 4.5), a larger log population is associated with greater local government responsiveness at the 5% level as a standalone variable (model 5C), although the strength of this association just slips out of significance in the full model 5H. In Table 4.6, population has no association with the *quality* of a response, but *Log GVA* has a small (negative) effect at the 5 percent level as a standalone variable (model 6C) and in the full model (6H), indicating that *higher* area incomes are associated with *lower* quality responses. In contrast with timeliness, neither territory nor socioeconomic factors have explanatory purchase for quality scores. None of the political variables shown in models 5F, 5G, 6F and 6G are

significant.[47] Perhaps unexpectedly, as with Hypothesis H1 and at least at the granular level, statistical modelling therefore does not corroborate hypothesis H2 that governments subject to greater capacity challenges will be less responsive to FOI requests.

A final hypothesis, H3, anticipated that 'new politics' intermediate-tier institutions in Scotland and Wales founded as part of a broad constitutional reform program would outperform Northern Ireland's conflict-resolving institutions that are lineal descendants of an older, more secretive government apparatus. Returning to Table 4.3, there is strong empirical evidence that territory matters: the top row corroborates the descriptive means in Figures 4.2 and 4.3. Devolved governments and their agencies are 11 percent more likely to respond on time and have a 13 percent higher quality score than UK local governments, both significant at the 1 percent level.

Table 4.7 disaggregates this combined devolved-tier effect into separate results for Scotland and Wales; Northern Ireland is the reference category. These findings are stark: the Scottish Government and its agencies are 34 percent more likely to respond on time and have a 20 percent higher quality score than their Northern Ireland counterparts, both significant at the 1 percent level. Although

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[47] For the timeliness measure, Labour and Conservative as standalone variables are both positive; in fact, the Labour dummy significant at the 5% level. But this is a Northern Ireland party system effect: once NI is included as a control variable the association vanishes

there is no difference in quality, Wales' devolved bodies are 21 percent more likely to respond on time, significant at the 5 percent level and again in the direction anticipated by hypothesis H3.

Table 4.7: Responsiveness by Devolved-Tier Bodies in the UK

	Timeliness (7A)	Quality (7B)
Scotland Devolved	0.335***	0.203***
	(0.063)	(0.058)
Wales Devolved	0.205**	-0.087
	(0.092)	(0.075)
Model	Probit	OLS
Observations	182	182
(Pseudo) R-Squared	0.08	0.07

Notes: (i) Probit results as Table 4.3.

A note of caution is required here because the very low R-squared results reported here indicate very significant unexplained variance. Such omitted variables may include certain organizational characteristics that cannot be captured in quantitative data, and randomness at the level of the individual responder to the FOI request (as Piotrowski & Van Ryzin 2007: 321). The presence of this significant randomness appears to corroborate recent behavioralism research that is seeking to explain why outcomes from most-similar organizations can yield quite dissimilar outcomes (Hafner-Burton et al. 2017). Not only organizations' political or bureaucratic leadership, but the individual officers tasked with responding to FOI requests may differ in their personal partisanship, cognitive biases (such as being

personally pro- or anti-transparency), have greater or lesser experience with FOI, and be more or less able to process a large number of requests. Such individual-level heterogeneity implies that a large amount of individual variation must be expected in understanding institutional responsiveness.

Nevertheless, the strength of the devolved coefficients and marginal effects in Tables 4.3 and 4.7 suggests that hypothesis H3 appears a closer explanation of performance across the UK's territories than administrative capacity constraints or intergovernmental forms of accountability derived from agency oversight theory. While quantitative data is unsuitable for *direct* tests of institutional culture, there are a number of contemporary cues suggesting that such influences may affect the markedly different findings between Northern Ireland and Scotland. In 2015, the Northern Ireland Department of Finance and Personnel was served with the first Enforcement notice of its type by the Information Commissioner's Office,[48] and a series of media reports from this period suggest a climate of non-transparency permeating from the very top of the department:

> "[The Department of Finance and Personnel] *censured for refusal to answer*
>
> *FoI requests*" (Belfast News Letter, 2 February 2015)

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[48] The ICO resorted to its "regulatory powers and in June served an enforcement notice on the Department of Finance and Personnel Northern Ireland, requiring it to respond to four significantly overdue requests" (ICO Annual Report 2015-16: 25)

"*Stormont department ignored FoI request for almost four years*" (Belfast News Letter, 9 June 2015)

"*Alarm over Stormont special advisors vetting FOI requests*" (Irish News, 1 September 2016)

"*Stormont admits: We're now massively less transparent than under direct rule*" (Belfast News Letter, 20 June 2015).

In contrast, in 2016, the Scottish Government became one of the 15 founding subnational government participants of the Open Government Partnership (OGP 2016). Importantly, Northern Ireland's poorer responsiveness cannot be explained by a different regulatory environment or a weaker capacity for public responses than the other devolved governments. Northern Ireland has the same legal Freedom of Information arrangements as England and Wales, and despite a smaller population, and 55 press officers were employed by the Northern Ireland Executive in 2016, compared with 45 by the Scottish Government, 21 by the Welsh Government and 54 by the Republic of Ireland government (Irish News, 23 September 2016).

Secondary evidence of the importance of institutional histories can be derived from the equally poor performance by Northern Ireland's local councils for the timeliness measure. In section 4.3.3., I argue that characteristics of local government in the province – in particular sectarian partisan competition and historic discrimination by some councils in employment and housing – is directly

connected with Northern Ireland's history of conflict. That Table 4.4 shows Northern Ireland's councils to be significantly (and uniquely) less timely in their responsiveness than their counterparts elsewhere again points to the importance of post-conflict sectarian political competition in subsequent responsiveness. FOIs submitted to local councils are directly associated with post-conflict sensitivities because of their capacity to reveal information that could (in a local council's view) undermine that organization's authority with respect to one side of the nationalist/unionist divide.

If markedly different responsiveness both *between-* and *within-* the tiers of government in the UK is reflective of individual- and organizational cultural biases with respect to openness, this is an important result for the government administration literature that would open up a research agenda where new hypotheses could be developed and tested with qualitative methods.

6. CONCLUSION

Does decentralization improve the responsiveness of governments to their citizens? This deceptively simple question has motivated hundreds of articles and policy papers, inspired transparency-enhancing constitutional reform programs in OECD countries, and perhaps most significantly, encouraged advocacy by international organizations that decentralization can improve government accountability and control corruption.

These optimistic prescriptions of early theory had, by the mid-1990s, helped foster a broad consensus that decentralization was associated with efficiency gains for the public and government institutions alike. But despite copious academic output, the difficulty of defining and measuring concepts such as accountability and responsiveness, and how these might vary under different decentralization regimes, meant that empirical evidence for the assumed connections between decentralization and responsiveness has been wanting.

To investigate these longstanding theories that have been hard to substantiate, I take advantage of the UK's comprehensive FOI legislation and intermediate-tier governments established for entirely different foundational motives to undertake an innovative large-N research design. Sending two waves of FOI requests to a universe of 812 UK public bodies with an executive function, I construct two objective measures of the timeliness and quality of an organization's responses from a large database.

In contrast with prevailing expectations, I hypothesize that responses to citizen FOI requests might instead be influenced by three countervailing factors: Ministerial principals and FOI enforcers may have more credibility in containing central government agencies' incentives to shirk from full compliance than for local government bodies; administrative capacity constraints may prevent local bodies from being as responsive as assumed in theory; and institutions established as part of a

transparency-enhancing constitutional reform program may be more responsive than government bodies with longer institutional histories or those designed to achieve conflict resolution. I also test a number of additional socio-economic and political variables highlighted elsewhere, namely population, area incomes, party control and political competitiveness.

Extensive statistical analysis does not corroborate the theorized associations between responsiveness and most of these correlates, excepting limited evidence for population (with respect to the *timeliness* measure) and area incomes (*quality* measure), and stronger evidence for the importance of within-tier variation with respect to institutional openness (hypothesis H3). The models also report a very high degree of randomness, perhaps caused by individual-level heterogeneity in FOI respondents. This heterogeneity may be associated with the cognitive biases and experiences of individual responders (Hafner-Burton et al. 2017), or hidden practices to circumvent and minimize the impact of FOI legislation that are extremely difficult to identify because they are informal and "may be actively denied by governments" (Roberts 2005: 19).

Apart from individual heterogeneity, the best fit in the statistical modelling appears to be the third hypothesis which drew attention to the importance of foundational underpinnings in inclining institutions towards – or away from – greater openness. There is substantial within-tier variation between the UK's devolved

governments: Scottish bodies performed significantly better than their counterparts in Northern Ireland where transparency concerns are subsumed within an architecture in which conflict resolution is the primary objective. Although evidenced by large coefficients and marginal effects in the expected direction and a number of indications from contemporary FOI developments in Northern Ireland, this hypothesis cannot be definitively confirmed because cultural biases such as these cannot be directly measured by large-N quantitative data. Additional qualitative work would be required to corroborate the connections between institutional cultures and responsiveness as developed in this chapter.

Of course, other explanations are possible. The analysis found substantial unexplained variance that suggests omitted explanatory variables, and Northern Ireland's local government indicators improved between the timeliness and quality scores. There is also little difference between the tiers for the quality measure in general. This study also did not consider whether the volume of FOI requests in a given year may affect an organization's performance.

But that such a comprehensive research design could not find evidence of the theorized correlates of anticipated responsiveness poses a significant challenge to the fiscal federalism and emerging FOI literatures. Far from an incidental side benefit, the assumed connections between accountability, transparency and responsiveness and decentralized forms of government are "central to the motivations of real world

reformers" (Faguet 2014: 2). To investigate these assertions this chapter employed a research design that drew from the UK's comprehensive FOI legislation and significant institutional variation to measure the responsiveness of more than 800 public bodies across three tiers of government. Given that it is hard to imagine an alternative design that would allow these claims to be tested in an equally-replicable manner, this absence of empirical confirmation poses a serious challenge to the more fundamental claims about decentralization that have informed both academic debate and real-world practice.

5

Critical discussion and conclusion

> Here we may observe, at close quarters, the interaction of institutions, individuals and ideas – and before time has encrusted the habits, traditions and accepted wisdoms characteristic of more mature (and typically more stagnant) political systems.

> Richard Wyn Jones & Roger Scully 2011: 155

Two decades after the arrival of a 'new wave' of more skeptical and empirically-anchored academic contributions in the comparative literature, any proposition that decentralization might somehow be associated with unidirectional positive outcomes has long since been disproven. Such is the weight of theoretical and empirical evidence rejecting an unambiguous 'devolution dividend' that attention has instead shifted to the incentive structures that make the positive outcomes claimed for decentralized government in theory more likely to be observed in practice.

The introduction to this thesis began by firmly locating its three core papers within the political economy literature in the broader discipline, and in the 'second generation' of contributions in the field of federalism and decentralization. With

Western Europe argued to be the 'epicenter' of the global decentralizing tendency (Russell 2005), I posited that Belgium, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom would constitute an ideal venue to test the theoretical and empirical questions of decentralization that would be the subject of this thesis. All four countries in this set are subject not only to intense center-periphery competition between the tiers of government that has triggered constitution-reshaping political reforms, but are also subject to considerable variation in the extent to which regional populaces in each country are oriented towards the pursuit of collective goals at the regional level (Jeffrey 2012). The United Kingdom in particular offered an ideal test of two important questions. In considering whether different electoral systems encourage reelection-seeking members to behave differently in legislatures, the two mixed-member legislatures of Scotland and Wales offered a crucial source of variation in the operation of electoral rules, contributing new insights from regional case studies to explore persistent questions that are usually tested at the national level. And the UK's comprehensive Freedom of Information regime facilitated investigation of the factors associated with variation in the responsiveness of governments across the tiers of decentralizing states. In considering these research questions, this thesis rejected the validity of a single methodological approach and instead opted to employ the most suitable method available in each of its three core chapters to investigate practical empirical problems in multi-tiered states.

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Harnessing political economy and new institutionalist approaches employed to great effect elsewhere in this field, the three core chapters of this thesis all found that context specificity originating from institutional variation and the diverse cultural and historical underpinnings of a given country systematically influence the direction, magnitude and very presence of the outcomes expected from decentralization theory. But aside from corroborating the merit of an institutionalist approach that has long since been distilled into the axiom that "institutions matter", this thesis makes a number of new and substantive contributions to academic understanding.

Each subsection of this final chapter re-emphasizes these contributions to the discipline. I then comment on the policy implications and external validity of my findings and the methodologies used in this thesis, and suggest potential avenues for future research.

5.1 REJECTING 'METHODOLOGICAL NATIONALISM' IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

The three core chapters of this thesis add substantial evidence corroborating recent work that rejects 'methodological nationalism', or the state as the sole unit of analytical interest in political science (Jeffrey & Wincott 2010). Chapter 2 characterized the unexpected tax policy stalemate after fiscal decentralization as an equilibrium institution, emerging from intense competition between political elites at

the central and regional tiers of government. And in the UK's far-reaching devolution of national executive power to regional governments and legislatures, Chapter 3 found an ideal test of institutional incentives on political actors operating in mixed-member systems. Because MMP had not replaced a previous voting system to elect the Scottish Parliament or National Assembly for Wales, I posited that member behavior should be less likely to be subject to 'hangover effects' (Crisp 2007) from the operation of prior electoral rules. Finally, in considering the burgeoning literature on government responsiveness and Quality of Government indicators, Chapter 4 found that governance scores drawn from studies of central governments or entire countries as a whole are of limited use. Patterns of responses to 812 FOI requests found significant variation in the performance of public bodies operating at the three tiers of government in the UK. Here, I argued that single-country analyses fatally neglect vital inter-tier incentives affecting bureaucratic performance, such as principal-agent dynamics from top-down accountability mechanisms, differentiated administrative capacity constraints faced by the different tiers, and the fact that institutions at any tier that were founded during the open-government era may be more inclined towards openness than bodies with longer histories of operating during periods in which transparency concerns were far less prominent.

5.2 'WITHIN-TIER' VARIATION AT LEAST AS IMPORTANT AS 'BETWEEN-TIER' VARIATION IN DECENTRALIZING STATES

But at least as important as this *between-tier* variation in outcomes between the tiers of government in multi-level states, this thesis draws attention to the critical importance of *within-tier* variation in explaining outcomes under decentralization. All three core chapters strongly corroborate and contribute to emerging evidence of stark within-country diversity, such as the European Regional Quality of Governance Index (Rodríguez-Pose & Di Cataldo 2015). This finding will be of substantial importance to several parallel debates.

In analyzing the tax changes in the decentralizing states of Western Europe, Chapter 2 found that distinguishing regions according to the strength of their regional identities (Henderson et al. 2013) and regional political elites' ability to orient the local populace towards collective goals at the regional level (Jeffrey 2012) is essential in explaining outcomes. Far from being among the most likely to modify tax rates and brackets, the most 'autonomist' regions of a state are not prominent tax innovators after fiscal devolution. This chapter finds that 'centralist' areas with little regionalist sentiment or history of self-government such as Brussels-Capital, Madrid and Lazio made wider use of their new powers than their 'autonomist' counterparts such as Flanders, Catalonia and Veneto after tax devolution. I theorize this surprising outcome as a consequence of the different motivations of political actors in these different classifications of regions. Whereas 'centralist' regional elites may seek to use

their new powers to engage in tax competition (especially by right-leaning administrations) or to respond to budget pressures as anticipated by traditional theory, 'autonomist' regional elites are influenced by competing incentives. Avoiding proactive use of income tax powers allows autonomist political actors to continue an electorally-successful 'champion of the region against the center' strategy and involves far less jeopardy for their long-term nation-building objectives.

Investigating enduring claims that more proximate tiers of government should be more responsive to their citizens, Chapter 4 finds not only significant variation in responses to FOI requests across the different tiers of government in the United Kingdom, but that patterns of responsiveness vary dramatically between the territories of the state. I argue that researchers must remain alert to inter-regional variation in foundational underpinnings of institutions that may incline actors working in such systems towards – or away from – greater openness. For example, identifying significant variation in patterns of FOI responses between Scotland and Northern Ireland, I posit that institutions established as part of a transparency-enhancing constitutional reform program (such as the Scottish Parliament) are likely to be significantly more responsive than bodies designed to achieve conflict resolution (as in Northern Ireland).

Finally, Chapter 3 explicitly draws on institutional variation in electoral rules between the two devolved legislatures of Scotland and Wales in an identification strategy to test a hypothesis that dual candidacy in mixed-member systems should

blunt the incentives for members to 'specialize' in their legislative activities as List or SMD members. But while there is evidence that PR members have a higher committee workload, the major theorized connections between committees and members' re-election interests (and the theorized consequences of dual candidacy restrictions) were not found.

5.3 REJECTING CENTRALIZING COUNTERCLAIMS FROM 'SECOND GENERATION' THEORY

Although all three core chapters of this thesis are rooted in the more skeptical, empirically-focused 'second generation' in the field, I also reject some of the stronger counterclaims derived from theoretical approaches used in the more recent literature. In Chapter 4, while rejecting claims from 'first generation' fiscal federalism that local governments should be more responsive to their citizens, I also reject a counterclaim derived from principal-agent and agency oversight theory that central agencies should outperform lower-tier governments. In fact, the largest differences in bureaucratic performance were found *between* the intermediate-tier governments of Scotland and Northern Ireland. Not only does this finding once again underline the important of within-tier variation in explaining outcomes under decentralization, but it implies that an institution's foundational underpinnings and its inclinations towards transparency and openness are highly significant in understanding patterns of FOI responsiveness.

5.4 LITTLE EVIDENCE OF "TWO CLASSES" OF MEMBERS IN MIXED MEMBER LEGISLATURES

In relation to legislative behavior in mixed-member systems, Chapter 3 found little evidence of the purported existence of 'two member types' or, more pejoratively, 'two classes' of elected representatives that has been a common criticism of Mixed Member Proportional systems in New Zealand (Vowles 2005, Ward 1998) and in Scotland and Wales (Lundberg 2006). The major differences claimed for the committee work of legislators in the Bundestag - that members seek assignments that might conceivably aid their divergent constituency- or party- reelection interests (Stratmann & Baur 2002) – are not found. Far from being split down the middle according to members' re-election interests, committee assignments in Scotland and Wales appears to demonstrate marked consistency between list and constituency members; where behavior varies is in the larger committee workload of list members. Extending and corroborating other work in this field (Jun & Hix 2010, Ferrara et al. 2005, Manow 2015), I argued that the associations between electoral system design and legislative behavior are far from or straightforward. I surmise that candidate selection and re-selection rules, chamber size and party discipline both in the legislature and in the selection process all play very significant roles in marshalling the behavior of legislators in mixed-member systems. These topics would appear a fruitful avenue for future research.

5.5 EMBRACING THE CHALLENGE OF INTERMEDIATE-*N* RESEARCH

As an "increasingly-international enterprise" (Marsh & Stoker 2010: 3), the broadening and deepening of the political science discipline over the past few decades has triggered an explosion in the variety and scope of methods used to investigate a large and growing number of topics and cases (Marsh & Stoker 2010: 11). But meta-analyses of the methodologies used in this voluminous academic work have repeatedly observed a sharp dip in the number of contributions in the discipline that consider an 'intermediate' number of cases, a term encompassing a loose range between one or two and fewer than twenty cases (Sigelman & Gadbois 1983, Bollen et el. 1993 in Ragin et al. 1998). Ragin (1989, 1998) conceives this 'lacuna' as a U-shaped frequency distribution plotting the number of studies against the number of cases investigated in each study. Such a gap exists because intermediate numbers of cases stretch the practicality of qualitative methods in effectively analyzing each case in detail and do not provide enough data points for statistical techniques designed for large numbers of cases or observations.

This thesis faced this 'medium-*N* challenge' in at least two chapters. But in reflecting that "studies with intermediate-sized *N*s may well prove to be more relevant both for building a systematic knowledge of cases and for advancing theory" (Ragin et al. 1998: 751), I rejected any notion that empirical problems cannot be satisfactorily studied unless the '*N*' of cases or observations is large enough. Instead this thesis

employed innovative methodologies to advance knowledge in the field and broader discipline in this intermediate-N range.

Chapter 2 explicitly recognized that the small number of regions and newness of tax decentralization in the four western European countries limits the potential for large-N statistical analysis. Rather than rejecting the possibility of analyzing these new cases, I instead used cross-case comparisons to work around the limited number of years and observations. To supplement limited case evidence from the small number of tax changes in Scotland and the three Belgian regions since tax devolution, I collated two separate tables to catalog regional tax changes in Italy and Spain over the past decade from annexes of annual reports by the EUROMOD project, a European tax-benefit microsimulation model based at the University of Essex.

In Chapter 3, although 900 member-year observations were available to test members committee assignments in the National Assembly for Wales against various hypotheses, I argued that using annual observations would overcount members who remain on the same committee for more than one year and thus exaggerate the magnitude of any behavioral effects. I therefore included each member's committee assignments only for the first year of each legislative term, resulting in a far smaller number of observations. To control for other influences on members' committee assignments, I also investigated the relationships between Scottish and Welsh members' educational and political backgrounds, type of seat, and seniority in the legislature. From print- and web-based sources including parliamentary yearbooks,

committee websites, and member biographies, I constructed two entirely new datasets. Statistically analyzing this new and expansive data, I tested members' committee assignments using marginal effects from probit regressions calculated using Hanmer & Kalkan 2013's 'observed values' method, a marked innovation over prior methods.

5.6 METHODOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS IN QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

To supplement the statistical modelling in chapters 3 and 4, I used a number of methodological innovations that could be of wider interest in the discipline. In chapter 3, and in considering the potential usefulness of a committee assignment in helping a member cultivate a personal re-election vote, I undertook a complete search of all media citations for every committee in both legislatures since devolution using LexisNexis. This search exposed very large variations in the public profile of Wales and Scotland's legislative committees. In Scotland, the Justice committee had an average of 183 citations per term in the *Scotsman* and *Scotland on Sunday*, compared with just 13 for the Subordinate Legislation Committee. And in Wales, the Education, Health and Economic Development committees all recorded more than 100 average citations in the *Western Mail* per term, compared with 11 for the Equal Opportunities Committee and just 8 average citations per term for the European and External

Relations Committee. Little wonder perhaps that these latter two committees were abolished at the start of the fourth Assembly term.

This use of LexisNexis citation searches is a low-cost method of investigating coverage of all aspects of a legislature's work, not only for citations of committee activities as in this thesis, but also to explore media profiles of ministers or backbench members. With the advantage of time, I could have investigated committee or member citations in *local* press outfits such as the *Rhondda Leader* or the *Greenock Telegraph*. Local press citations would offer a potentially more incisive method of capturing the link between a members' committee work and their profile in their home constituency.

Chapter 4 deploys another methodological innovation in this research field. Freedom of Information laws have been subject to a rapid global expansion over the past two decades, such that 115 countries had adopted national-level FOI laws by 2017 (freedominfo.org). But although this expansion has been the focus of many recent country-specific and comparative academic studies, researchers have yet to fully release the potential methodological value of FOI requests in empirical investigations of related research questions (Savage & Hyde 2014). This slow adoption of FOI requests as a research methodology is puzzling given their potential efficacy in allowing single researchers to undertake the type of large-scale data collection that was previously the domain of well-funded and intensive research projects (Savage & Hyde 2014).

FOI responses were also of considerable merit in addressing a persistent problem of measurement in the government responsiveness and Quality of Government literature. Existing governance indicators tend to be aggregated from surveys of representative individuals such as government officials, business owners or academics (Rodriguez-Pose & Di Cataldo 2015). These surveys are vulnerable to charges of bias in their construction, wording or sampling frame and are subjective because replies can be difficult to separate from interviewees' normative judgments of the government in question (Kaufmann & Kraay 2008). Using two waves of FOI requests emailed to all public bodies in the United Kingdom with an executive function at the central, devolved and local tiers, I constructed two large datasets from which I calculated two new measures of the timeliness and quality of each organization's responses and found significant variation across the tiers of government and the different geographical areas of the UK. This emerging new methodological approach could be used far more widely to investigate other topics of interest in the discipline.

5.7 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This thesis therefore makes a number of substantive and methodological contributions to the empirical literature on decentralization. But beyond the academic literature,

the findings from the three core chapters of this thesis also have important implications for contemporary policy debates.

The principal implication to be drawn from the ambiguous and multifaceted findings from this thesis is that the conditions under which decentralization should lead to uniformly positive outcomes remain elusive. A more efficient, proximate government that better responds to its citizens is not achieved with the stroke of a bill-signing pen. For example, fiscal devolution has featured prominently in constitutional reform debates over the past two decades, not only in the four major western European countries considered here, but also in other OECD and developing countries across the globe. But chapter 2 found that the prominent autonomist regions often at the forefront of political campaigns for greater devolution are among the least likely to modify tax rates and brackets after fiscal powers are devolved. I argue that fiscal decentralization itself is an instrument – a means to an end – rather than a policy objective in itself. For central actors, tax devolution is a vehicle to pass the buck for politically-costly income tax decisions, locking regions into blame-sharing and fiscal retrenchment. Political elites in autonomist regions accept this assignment of new powers in order to retain a greater share of own-sourced revenues and establish new tax agencies and treasuries. But in recognizing that assertive use of rate-varying powers carries short-term risks that may jeopardize longer-term autonomy objectives, autonomist regions chose to align their 'fiscal trajectory' with that of the center. The

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effectiveness of the center's efforts to 'pass the buck' is far weaker if voters perceive little or no change from tax devolution.

This finding is significant enough to feature not only in the inevitable policy debates on additional fiscal devolution to Scotland and Wales, and not only before the first new tax powers are transferred to the Northern Ireland Assembly and potentially England's newly-elected metropolitan mayors, but in political systems across the globe that are characterized by intense center-periphery competition.

Of course, this finding does not imply that decentralization should (or could) be abruptly reversed. Rather, and as noted at the start of this concluding chapter, when considering new innovations, policy-makers must pay close attention to the future incentive structures that will encourage senior politicians and officials operating in multi-tiered states to behave in unexpected ways. For example, not only should regional actors be aware that decentralization can be a double-edged sword, shifting blame for expensive or controversial policy decisions or unfunded mandates (including perhaps FOI requests), but central actors should be cognizant that their blame shifting can be rebuffed by strategic regional actors eager to build up the institutions of a nascent state yet anxious to avoid jeopardizing their longer-term autonomy objectives. And chapter 4 finds that the purported responsiveness advantages from a proximate government are far more ambiguous than previously claimed. Where incentives for shirking exist and capacity constraints are high,

governments (at whichever tier) were found to be less responsive to citizen FOI requests. And while devolved governments founded as part of a new politics transparency program were indeed more responsive to citizen FOI requests, devolved governments established to resolve inter-community conflict were less responsive. In short, incentive structures matter profoundly in multi-tiered institutional design.

A final, critical policy implication is that even if decentralization is successful in achieving some of the gains claimed in theory, it is unlikely to simultaneously achieve all of these advantages. For example, where decentralization has been successfully prescribed to mitigate inter-community conflict, it may not be associated with the purported efficiency or responsiveness advantages claimed elsewhere in the literature. Chapter 4 argued that while Northern Ireland's devolved institutions had largely achieved their primary objective of stemming chronic political violence, they may have represented a step back for public administration and the quality of government. This finding gives comparative empirical context to single-case analyses of Northern Ireland that have been skeptical of the quality of devolved government since the end of Direct Rule in 1998. For example, in reviewing Derek Birrell's comprehensive account of the governance of Northern Ireland before and after devolution, Alan Greer observes that Birrell "seems rather wistful at the passing of direct rule and not fully convinced of the merits of devolution" (2012: 282). In his account, Birrell writes:

Devolution provides less cohesive government, not based on collective responsibility. There is also limited evidence of efficient government. The Executive's complex and rigid decision-making procedures and blocking mechanism has led to much slower decision-making than under direct rule and hold ups and policy deadlock have been frustrating for civil servants, pressure groups, the media and the public (Birrell 2009: 246).

Decentralization is therefore subject to trade-offs, and the potential advantages of conflict resolution may be one of the benefits that cannot be observed by testing organizations' responsiveness to FOI requests. Coming full circle from the introductory chapter, this thesis once again establishes that "when it comes to the political and economic consequences of federalism [and decentralization], the devil is in the details" (Beramendi 2007: 759-760).

5.8 EXTERNAL VALIDITY AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH

The introduction to this thesis observed that contributions to the 'second generation' of research in the field of comparative federalism and decentralization have been copious, with hundreds of academic contributions since the turn of the millennium that have addressed a vast range of research questions. Moreover, because the consequences of decentralized governance on policy, political and fiscal outcomes are now understood to be systematically influenced by case-specific institutional configurations, recent contributions have tended to be more incremental than those of the earlier generation. As a result, the core papers of this thesis are targeted in their approach, focusing on explaining outcomes in states characterized by intense center-

periphery political competition. The external validity of these results beyond states undergoing territorial transition can therefore not be assumed. Rather than investigating outcomes in the more extensively-furrowed older federations (particularly between the states of the USA), this thesis directed its attention to the relationship between decentralization, accountability and governance in the dynamic decentralizing states of Western Europe. Indeed, I would not assume that my finding that fiscal devolution is an instrument rather than an end in itself would be replicated in countries where regional political elites do not have nation-building objectives. This likely divergence in outcomes depending on country type was observed in the 2016 example of the Australian state premiers rejecting the same mechanism of fiscal devolution that was accepted by elites in the prominent autonomist regions of Europe (News.com.au, 4 April 2016).

Apart from the unavoidable limitation of short institutional histories since the establishment of both institutions in 1999, the National Assembly for Wales and the Scottish Parliament proved challenging venues in testing how institutional and electoral incentives influence elected members. First, in contrast to the vast literature analyzing roll-call votes in the US Congress for evidence of behavioral differences, very high levels of intra-party voting discipline in Wales and Scotland suggest that exploring voting records for evidence of 'two member types' would be particularly challenging. Second, government control of money bills (as in other Westminster systems) means that MSPs and AMs lack an important means used in other political

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systems to secure pork barrel projects for their constituencies, which could otherwise furnish valuable data to test a historically-important method of cultivating a geographically-based personal vote. Third, although information recording how members split their time between their legislative duties and their home districts would be very useful in identifying legislators' activities as they seek to win re-election, the parliamentary institutions themselves do not record how members spend their time. As a result, any such analysis would be reliant on subjective interview- or survey-data collated from members themselves and subject to the usual likely sample biases. In summary, while Chapter 3 explored committee assignments to test the interactions of electoral rules and behavioral incentives in more depth, there is no perfect proxy for observing how these incentives might operate on members. This is particularly demanding in small legislatures such as the devolved parliaments of Scotland and Wales.

In relation to the theme of democratic representation, responsiveness, and accountability, Chapter 4 noted that as a term applied liberally across the economics and political science literature, *responsiveness* is extremely difficult to define, let alone subject to empirical testing. This thesis therefore chose a targeted approach to shed new empirical evidence to a longstanding debate, proposing that if Freedom of Information laws are one of the key ways of promoting transparency (Worthy 2013), public bodies' responses to FOI requests might serve as a proxy that could facilitate testing of longstanding claims made for decentralization in relation to improved

responsiveness. I emailed FOI requests to every public body with an executive function in the United Kingdom to collate an objective, comparative metric of government responsiveness at the organizational level.

But this approach is not without its limitations. If used far more widely in the discipline, there could be a feedback reaction in the performance of public bodies receiving notably larger numbers of requests. And more immediately, assessing a public body's performance through its replies to FOI requests could miss other aspects of an agency's responsiveness. The suggested interaction between responsiveness and bureaucratic capacity constraints theorized in Chapter 4 could be problematic: the downsizing of an organisation's FOI office due to budget cuts could override the more delicate institutional orientations towards openness or principal-agent mechanisms that may otherwise incentivize individuals working in such organisations to respond differently to their citizens. And finally, Chapter 4 did not consider whether an organization's FOI response rate might in fact be an *inverse* measure of agency responsiveness; in other words, that the time organizations use to respond to FOI requests could be spent in engaging with members of the public through other means. Future research should therefore be open to new methods and proxies for revealing how government responsiveness to its citizens varies under decentralization.

In confidently engaging with the 'lacuna' in the discipline in the middle range of cases between quantitative and qualitative research, I argued that intermediate-N

case comparison work can yield important empirical evidence to address practical problems in politics. But limitations remain. With the advantage of time, it would have been desirable to supplement the intermediate-N case comparison work in Chapter 2 with interview data from senior politicians and officials from various central governments, 'centralist' regions and 'autonomist' regions in each of the four case countries. Given the relatively large number of Italian and Spanish regions, case selection for interviews would need to be cognizant of the risk of bias from selecting on the dependent variable. A sample of regions would need to be carefully drawn from the independent variable of 'centralist' and 'autonomist' regions to avoid this bias. There is clear scope here for future research that would expand on the findings identified in Chapter 2 using larger, freestanding case studies of fiscal policy in the four Western European countries.

Cognizant of these confines and prospects for future research, this thesis aimed to demonstrate the potential of empirical research even in complex cases characterized by deep context specificity. With the discipline now understanding that case specific institutional configurations influence outcomes all the way down and all the way across, the study of complex institutions with a limited number of years and observations will be at the heart of the future agenda. Methods and empirical techniques will need to adapt to this heterogeneity, not just between institutional forms, but to the complex constitutional, political-economic and cultural contexts that make multi-tiered states such a captivating and dynamic venue for academic study.

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A

Appendix

Appendices for Chapter 2

Note A1: Note on Regional Borrowing Powers

Table A1: Income Tax Innovation by the Spanish Autonomous Communities – Detail

Table A2: Income Tax Innovation by the Italian Regions – Detail

Appendices for Chapter 3

Table A3: SMD and List members of the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales, and their dual candidacy status

Table A4: Means, Standard Deviations, and Number of Observations

Table A5: The Effect of Wales' Dual Candidacy Ban on Members' Committee Assignments – Average Marginal Effects from a Probit Regression calculated using Observed Values Method

Appendices for Chapter 4

Table A6: Annual Effective Number of Parties (ENP) of Local Councils in England, Scotland and Wales

Note A1: Note on Regional Borrowing Powers

In theory, borrowing powers should offer regional political elites an economic stimulus tool that is lower-risk in the short term because it avoids the negative political consequences of income tax increases. Borrowing should be particularly lower-risk in a 'soft budget constraint' environment, in which the central government gives capital markets an implicit or explicit guarantee that it would meet the regional government's obligations to its creditors in the event of a default. In the absence of a no-bailout clause (or 'hard budget constraint'), expanding subnational access to credit would be expected to generate fiscal indiscipline and significant regional budget deficits (Rodden 2006). In the case countries however, and particularly since the 2007-08 fiscal crisis and subsequent public expenditure restraint, tight limits mean that regional political actors have limited room for maneuver with respect to borrowing:

Spain: During the period analyzed in chapter 2, the fiscal crisis in Spain severely restricted the Autonomous Communities' access to capital markets. In 2012, the Spanish government set up a series of extraordinary financing measures, including a regional liquidity fund (FLA) to "address autonomous regions' debt maturities and obtain the resources needed to fund the borrowing they were allowed under the stability regulations" (Delgado et al. 2016: 10). In 2015 this fund was converted into a Regional Financing Fund that would continue to provide liquidity support to regions as well as access for ACs to the lower borrowing costs available to the central government. As beneficiaries of liquidity support, Cantabria, Castile-La Mancha, Catalonia, Murcia and Valencia are subject to budget and public debt monitoring; all of these ACs significantly reduced issuance from 2011 to 2014 to practically no debt at all (Delgado et al. 2016).

Italy: Italian subnational borrowing levels as a share of GDP are below OECD averages, and the majority of outstanding debt is in the form of bank loans (59% in 2013). As in Spain, and in response to the fiscal crisis and subsequent spending

restraint at lower tiers of government, the Italian central government established a debt buyback scheme in 2013 to repay regional liabilities (UCLG-OECD 2017: 205).

UK: Since the Scotland Act 2016, the Scottish Government has a £3 billion borrowing limit subject to a £450 million annual cap; these are low limits as a percentage of GDP. Because the Scottish Government does not have a prudential borrowing regime in which it could determine its own limits based on debt service affordability, the IFS argued that "the Scottish Government got less in the way of additional borrowing power than it hoped for" in the 2016 negotiations over Scotland's Fiscal Framework (Bell et al 2016: 9).

Belgium: The Belgian regions are subject to a prudential borrowing regime (i.e. no specific legal borrowing limits); however, as a federated entity they participate in Belgium's stability program required by the European Stability and Growth Pact. Fiscal consolidation is an agenda item at Belgium's monthly Coordination Committee meeting between federal, regional and community premiers. The Belgian High Council of Finance sets budgetary targets for each level of government such that all federated entities share the burden of the 'fiscal consolidation path': these targets provide an implicit limit on regional borrowing capacity. In the event of a significant deviation from this path an automatic correction mechanism would require the effected government to take the necessary correction measures; however, this mechanism has never been invoked (Coppens 2015; Personal Communication National Bank of Belgium).

Table A1: Income Tax Changes in the Common-System Autonomous Communities – Detail

Autonomous Community		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015: Major change to Spanish State tax brackets	Changes
Andalusia	Party	PSOE maj	PSOE maj	PSOE-United Left coalition (after 5/12)	PSOE-United Left coalition	PSOE-United Left coalition	PSOE-United Left coalition. PSOE min after 6/15	
	Tax Change	none	Added two intermediate brackets. Increased tax rates for earnings over €80,000.	Lowered Andalusia-only €80,000 bracket to €60,000 and eliminated Andalusia-only €100,000 bracket. Increased tax rates for earnings between €60,000-€100,000 and above €120,000.	none	none	**Did not adopt** the Spanish Government's reduced number of brackets for regional income tax. No change to rates for any regional bracket.	2
Aragon	Party	PSOE-PAR coalition	PSOE-PAR coalition	PP-PAR coalition (after May 2011)	PP-PAR coaltion	PP-PAR coaltion	PP-PAR coaltion (until 7/2015)	
	Tax Change	none	none	none	none		**Did adopt** the Spanish Government's reduced number of brackets. Reduced tax rates for earnings below €12,450 of income. Increased tax rates between €12,450-€17,707 of income. Reduced tax rates between €17,707-€20,200 of income. Increased tax rates between €20,200-€33,007 of income. Reduced tax rates between €33,007-€34,000 of income. Increased tax rates between €34,000-€53,407 of income. Reduced tax rates between €53,407-€60,000 of income. No change in rates for earnings above €60,000.	1
Asturias	Party	PSOE-PAR coalition	PSOE-PAR coalition	PP-PAR coalition (after May 2011)	PP-PAR coaltion	PP-PAR coaltion	PP-PAR coaltion (until 7/2015)	
	Tax Change	none	Reduced the €120,000 threshold to €90,000 of income. Increased tax rates for earnings over €90,000	Added new threshold between €120,000-€175,000 of income. Increased Asturias-only threshold for paying the 21.5% rate from	Added new threshold between €70,000-€90,000 of income. Increased tax rates for earnings over €90,000 of income.	none	**Did not adopt** the Spanish Government's reduced number of brackets for regional income tax, except for the new lowest bracket of €0-€12,450 and removing the Asturias-only bracket between €90,000-€120,000.	4

Autonomous Community		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015: Major change to Spanish State tax brackets	Changes
				€90,000 to €120,000 (effectively reversing previous year change) Reduced tax rates for earnings over €175,000			Reduced rates below €12,450 of income. No change to rates for all other regional brackets.	
Balearic Islands	Party	PSOE-PSM-IU-ERC coalition	PSOE-PSM-IU-ERC coalition; PP Maj after 5/2011	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	
	Tax Change	none	none	none	none	none	**Added 5 new brackets to the Spanish Government's reduced number of brackets.** Reduced tax rates for earnings below €18,000 of income. Increased tax rates between €18,000-€34,000 of income. Reduced tax rates between €34,000-€48,000 of income. Increased tax rates between €48,000-€53,407 of income. Reduced tax rates between €53,407-€75,000 of income. No change in rates for incomes above €75,000	1
Canary Islands	Party	CC-PP coalition	CC-PP coalition; CC-PSOE coalition after 5/2011	CC-PSOE coalition	CC-PSOE coalition	CC-PSOE coalition	CC-PSOE coalition	
	Tax Change	none	none	Increased tax rates for earnings over €53,407	none	none	**Did not adopt** the Spanish Government's reduced number of brackets for regional income tax, except for the new lowest bracket of €0-€12,450 Reduced rates below €12,450 of income. No change to rates between €12,450-€53,407 of incomes. Increased rates above €53,407 of income.	2
Cantabria	Party	PRC-PSOE coalition	PRC-PSOE coalition; PP maj after 5/2011	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	
	Tax Change	none	Added three intermediate brackets. Increased tax rates for earnings over €67,707	none	none	Reduced tax rates for earnings between €17,701.	**Did adopt** the Spanish Government's reduced number of brackets. Reduced tax rates for earnings below €12,450 of income. Increased tax rates between €12,450-€17,707 of income.	3

Autonomous Community		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015: Major change to Spanish State tax brackets	Changes
						Increased tax rates for earnings above €99,407.	Reduced tax rates between €17,707-€20,200 of income. Increased tax rates between €20,200-€33,007 of income. Reduced tax rates between €33,007-€34,000 of income. No change to rates between €34,000-€53,407 of income. Reduced tax rates between €53,407-€60,000 of income. Increased tax rates between €60,000-€80,007 of income. No change in rates for earnings between €80,007-€99,407 of income. Reduced tax rates for earnings above €99,407 of income.	
Castile and León	Party	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	
	Tax Change	none	none	none	none	none	**Did not adopt** the Spanish Government's reduced number of brackets for regional income tax, except for the new lowest bracket of €0-€12,450 Reduced rates below €12,450 of income. No change to rates for all other regional brackets.	1
Castile–La Mancha	Party	PSOE maj	PSOE maj; PP maj after 5/2011	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	
	Tax Change	none	none	none	none	none	**Added 1 new bracket to the Spanish Government's reduced number of brackets (middle-incomes)** No change in rates below €17,707 of income. Reduced tax rates between €17,707-€20,000 of income. Increased tax rates between €20,000-€33,007 of income. Reduced tax rates between €33,007-€34,000 of income. Increased tax rates between €34,000-€35,200 of income. No change in rates between €35,200-€53,407 of income. Reduced tax rates between €53,407-€60,000 of income. Increased tax rates for earnings above €60,000 of income.	1
Catalonia	Party	PSC-ERC-IVC coalition, CiU min after Dec 2010	CiU min	CiU min	CiU min	CiU min	CiU min	
	Tax Change	none	Increased tax rates for earnings over	none	none	none	**Did not adopt** the Spanish Government's reduced number of brackets for regional income tax.	1

Autonomous Community		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015: Major change to Spanish State tax brackets	Changes
			€120,000 (2pp above 120,000; 4pp above 175,000) *				No change to rates for any regional bracket.	
Extremadura	Party	PSOE maj	PSOE maj; PP maj after 5/2011	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	
	Tax Change	none	Added four intermediate brackets, ending standard regional rate of 21.5% at €60,707 of income rather than €120,000). Reduced the threshold for the highest rate of tax (24.5%) to just €7 above the threshold of the next-lower Spanish bracket of €120,000. Increased tax rates for earnings over €60,707.	none	Added two new brackets within the lowest tax bracket, decreasing tax rates for earnings under €14,000 and particularly €10,000.	Increased tax rates for earnings between €17,707-€33,007	**Added 5 new brackets to the Spanish Government's reduced number of brackets.** Eliminated Extremadura's starting bracket of €0-€10,000 of income. Decrease in tax rates for earnings below €12,450 of income. Small increase in tax rates for earnings between €12,450-€17,707 of income. Decreased tax rates for earnings between €17,707-€20,200 of income. Increased tax rates for earnings between €20,200-€33,007 of income. Reduced tax rates between €33,007-€35,200 of income. Increased tax rates between €35,200-€53,407 of income. Reduced tax rates between €53,407-€60,707 of income. Increased tax rates above €60,707 of income.	4
Galicia	Party	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	
	Tax Change	none	none	none	none	none	**Did not adopt** the Spanish Government's reduced number of brackets for regional income tax. Reduced rates below €17,707 of incomes. No change to rates for earnings above €17,707.	1
La Rioja	Party	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	

Autonomous Community		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015: Major change to Spanish State tax brackets	Changes
	Tax Change	Decreased tax rates for all earnings (matches Madrid)	none	none	none	none (decouples from Madrid)	**Did adopt** the Spanish Government's reduced number of brackets. Reduced tax rates for earnings below €12,450 of income. Increased tax rates between €12,450-€17,707 of income. Reduced tax rates between €17,707-€20,200 of income. Increased tax rates between €20,200-€33,007 of income. Reduced tax rates between €33,007-€34,000 of income. Increased tax rates between €34,000-€53,407 of income. Reduced tax rates between €53,407-€60,000 of income. Increased tax rates for incomes above €60,000	2
Madrid Community	Party	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	
	Tax Change	Decreased tax rates for all earnings (matches La Rioja)	none	none	none	Decreased tax rates for all earnings (decouples from La Rioja)	**Did not adopt** the Spanish Government's reduced number of brackets for regional income tax, except for the new lowest bracket of €0-€12,450 and the new upper bracket for incomes above €60,000 Reduced rates below €12,450 of income. No change to rates between €12,450-€60,000 of incomes. Small increase in rates above €60,000 of income.	3
Murcia	Party	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	
	Tax Change	none	none	Increased tax rates to match standard regional level for earnings over €120,000. Increased tax rates above standard regional level for earnings above €120,000. (match Valencia)	Increased tax rates for earnings over €175,000	none	**Did adopt** the Spanish Government's reduced number of brackets. Regional tax rates and brackets reformed to exactly match equivalent Spanish rates and brackets. Reduced tax rates for earnings below €12,450. Increased tax rates between €12,450-€17,707. Reduced tax rates between €17,707-€20,200 of income. Increased tax rates between €20,200-€33,007 of income. Reduced tax rates between €33,007-€34,000 of income. Increased tax rates between €34,000-€53,407 of income. Reduced tax rates between €53,407-€60,000 of income.	3

Autonomous Community		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015: Major change to Spanish State tax brackets	Changes
							No change in tax rates between €60,000-€120,000 of income. Reduced tax rates for incomes above €120,000	
Valencian Community	Party	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	PP maj	
	Tax Change	Small decrease in tax rates for all earnings.	none	Increased tax rates to match standard regional level for earnings over €120,000. Increased tax rates above standard regional level for earnings above €120,000. (match Murcia)	none	none	**Did not adopt** the Spanish Government's reduced number of brackets for regional income tax. Small reduction in rates for all regional brackets.	3

Source: Author and EUROMOD Country Reports – Spain.

* Policy made by previous administration

PSOE – Spanish Socialist Workers' Party; PP – People's Party; PAR – Aragonese Party; IU – United Left; PSM – PSM Nationalist Agreement; ERC – Republican Left of Catalonia; CC – Canarian Coalition; PRC – Regionalist Party of Cantabria; IVC – Initiative for Catalonia Greens–United and Alternative Left; CiU - Convergence and Union

Table A2: Income Tax Innovation by the Italian Regions – Detail

Region	2009	2010	2011*	2012*	2013*	2014*	2015*	2016	Total Changes
Piedmont	PD	PD; LNP after 3/2010	LNP	LNP	LNP	LNP; PD after 5/2014	PD	PD	
	Three tax bands: 0-15,000 (0.9% rate); 15,000-22,000 (1.2% rate) >22,000 (1.4% rate)	none	none (excluding 0.33ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme) Three tax bands: 0-15,000 (1.23% rate); 15000-22,000 (1.53% rate) >22,000 (1.73% rate)	none	Increased taxes. Added two new bands. Five bands: 0-15,000 (1.69% rate) 15,000-28,000 (1.70% rate) 28,000-55,000 (1.71% rate) 55,000-75,000 (1.72% rate) >75,000 (1.73% rate)	Decreased taxes below 15,000; increased above. Five bands: 0-15,000 (1.62% rate) 15,000-28,000 (2.13% rate) 28,000-55,000 (2.31% rate) 55,000-75,000 (2.32% rate) >75,000 (2.33% rate)	Increased taxes above 28,000. Five bands: 0-15,000 (1.62% rate) 15,000-28,000 (2.13% rate) 28,000-55,000 (2.75% rate) 55,000-75,000 (3.32% rate) >75,000 (3.33% rate)	none	4
Aosta Valley†	UV	UV	UV	UV	UV	UV	UV	UV	
	Flat rate (0.9%)	none	none (excluding 0.33ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Flat rate (1.23%)	none	none	none	none	none	0
Lombardy	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL; LN after 2/2013	LN	LN	LN	
	Three tax bands: 0-15,494 (0.9% rate); 19,494-30,987 (1.3% rate) >30,987 (1.4% rate)	none	none (excluding 0.33ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Three tax bands: 0-15,494 (1.23% rate); 19,494-30,987 (1.63% rate) >30,987 (1.73% rate)	none	Change to middle bracket. Three tax bands: 0-15,000 (1.23% rate); 15,000-28,000 (1.58% rate) >28,000 (1.73% rate)	none	Added two new bands. Five bands: 0-15,000 (1.23% rate) 15,000-28,000 (1.58% rate) 28,000-55,000 (1.72% rate) 55,000-75,000 (1.73%	none	3

Region	2009	2010	2011*	2012*	2013*	2014*	2015*	2016	Total Changes
							rate) >75,000 (1.74% rate)		
South Tyrol - Alto Adige†	SVP	SVP	SVP	SVP	SVP	SVP	SVP	SVP	
	Flat rate (0.9%)	Reduction of taxes for lower income taxpayers. Two bands: 0-12,500 (0.0% rate) >12,500 (0.9% rate)	Increase in upper threshold of zero-rate band to 15,000. Two bands: 0-15,000 (0.0% rate) (after accounting for 0.33ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). >15,000 (1.23% rate)*	None	none	none	Tax deduction of 20.000 euro for all taxpayers.	Tax deduction of 28.000 euro for all taxpayers.	4
Trento†	UpT (supported by PD, PATT)	UpT (supported by PD, PATT)	UpT (supported by PD, PATT)	UpT (supported by PD, PATT)	After 10/2015: PATT (supported by PD, UpT)	PATT (supported by PD, UpT)	PATT (supported by PD, UpT)	PATT (supported by PD, UpT)	
	Flat rate (0.9%)	none	none (excluding 0.33ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Flat rate (1.23%)	none	none	Added new lower band. Two bands: 0-15,000 (0.5% rate) >15,000 (1.23% rate)	If taxable income < 15,000 and pension income positive, tax rate 0%, otherwise flat rate 1.23%	Increase threshold to taxable income < 20,000 and pension income positive, tax rate 0%, otherwise flat rate 1.23%	3
Veneto	PdL	PdL; LV after 3/2010	LV	LV	LV	LV	LN	LV	
	Two rates: 0-29,500 (0.9% rate) >29,500 (1.4% rate)	Reduced tax rates to a flat rate (0.9%)	none (excluding 0.33ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Flat rate (1.23%)	none	none	none	none	none	2
Friuli Venezia Giulia†	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL; PD after 04/2013	PD	PD	PD	

Region	2009	2010	2011*	2012*	2013*	2014*	2015*	2016	Total Changes
	Flat rate (0.9%)	none	none (excluding 0.33ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Flat rate (1.23%)	none	Added new lower band. Two bands: 0-15,000 (0.7% rate) >15,000 (1.23% rate)	none	none	none	1
Liguria	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD; FI after 6/2015	FI	
	Two bands: 0-30,000 (0.9% rate) >30,000 (1.4% rate)	none	none (excluding 0.33ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Two bands: 0-30,000 (1.23% rate) >30,000 (1.73% rate)	none	none	none	Added two new bands. Five bands: 0-15,000 (1.23% rate) 15,000-28,000 (1.73% rate) 28,000-55,000 (2.31% rate) 55,000-75,000 (2.32% rate) >75,000 (2.33% rate)	none	2
Emilia Romagna	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	
	Four bands: 0-15,000 (1.1% rate) 15,000-20,000 (1.2% rate) 20,000-25,000 (1.3% rate) >25,000 (1.4% rate)	none	none (excluding 0.33ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Four bands: 0-15,000 (1.43% rate) 15,000-20,000 (1.53% rate) 20,000-25,000 (1.63% rate) >25,000 (1.73% rate)	none	none	none	Added one new band. Five bands: 0-15,000 (1.33% rate) 15,000-28,000 (1.93% rate) 28,000-55,000 (2.03% rate) 55,000-75,000 (2.23% rate) >75,000 (2.33% rate)	none	2
Tuscany	DS/PD	DS/PD; PD after 3/2010	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	
	Flat rate (0.9%)	none	none (excluding 0.33ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's	Two bands: 0-75,000 (1.23% rate)	none	none	Added three new bands. Five bands:	none	2

Region	2009	2010	2011*	2012*	2013*	2014*	2015*	2016	Total Changes
			austerity programme). Flat rate (1.23%)	>75,000 (1.73% rate)			0-15,000 (1.42% rate) 15,000-28,000 (1.43% rate) 28,000-55,000 (1.68% rate) 55,000-75,000 (1.72% rate) >75,000 (1.73% rate)		
Umbria	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	
	Two bands: 0-15,000 (0.9% rate) >15,000 (1.1% rate)	none	none (excluding 0.33ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Two bands: 0-15,000 (1.23% rate) >15,000 (1.43% rate)	none	none	Added three new bands. Five bands: 0-15,000 (1.23% rate) 15,000-28,000 (1.63% rate) 28,000-55,000 (1.68% rate) 55,000-75,000 (1.73% rate) >75,000 (1.83% rate)	none	none	2
Marche	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	
	Three bands: 0-15,500 (0.9% rate) 15,500-31,000 (1.2% rate) >31,000 (1.4% rate)	none	none (excluding 0.33ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Three bands: 0-15,500 (1.23% rate) 15,500-31,000 (1.53% rate) >31,000 (1.73% rate)	none	Added two new bands. Five bands: 0-15,000 (1.23% rate) 15,000-28,000 (1.53% rate) 28,000-55,000 (1.70% rate) 55,000-75,000 (1.72% rate) >75,000 (1.73% rate)	none	none	none	2

Region	2009	2010	2011*	2012*	2013*	2014*	2015*	2016	Total Changes
Lazio	PD	PD; PdL after 3/2010	PdL	PdL	PdL; PD after 3/2013	PD	PD	PD	
	Flat rate (1.4%)	Increase in flat rate to 1.7%	Reduced taxes by 0.30ppt (excluding 0.33ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Flat rate (1.73%)	none	none	Added two new bands. Three bands: 0-28,000 (1.73% rate) If >28,000 0-15,000 (1.73% rate) >15,000 (2.33% rate)	Increase of income threshold and increase in top rate. Three bands: 0-35,000 (1.73% rate) If >35,000 0-15,000 (1.73% rate) >15,000 (3.33% rate)	none	5
Abruzzo	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL; PD after 5/2014	PD	PD	
	Flat rate (1.4%)	none	none (excluding 0.3ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Flat rate (1.73%)	none	none	Added two new bands. Three bands: 0-15,000 (1.54% rate) 15,000-28,000 (1.66% rate) >28,000 (1.73% rate)	Elimination of lower two bands. Flat rate (1.73%)	none	3
Molise	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL; PD after 2/2013	PD	PD	PD	
	Flat rate (1.4%)	Increase in flat rate to 1.7%	none (excluding 0.3ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Flat rate (2.03%)	none	none	Added three new bands. Five bands: 0-15,000 (2.03% rate) 15,000-28,000 (2.23% rate) 28,000-55,000 (2.43% rate)	none	Reduced taxes by 0.30ppt for all five bands. 0-15,000 (1.73% rate) 15,000-28,000 (1.93% rate) 28,000-55,000 (2.13% rate)	4

Region	2009	2010	2011*	2012*	2013*	2014*	2015*	2016	Total Changes
						55,000-75,000 (2.53% rate) >75,000 (2.63% rate)		55,000-75,000 (2.23% rate) >75,000 (2.33% rate)	
Campania	PD	PD; PdL after 3/2010	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL; PD after 6/2015	PD	
	Flat rate (1.4%)	Increase in flat rate to 1.7%	none (excluding 0.3ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Flat rate (2.03%)	none	none	none	none	none	2
Apulia	PRC/SEL	PRC/SEL	PRC/SEL	PRC/SEL	PRC/SEL	PRC/SEL	PRC/SEL; PD after 6/2015	PD	
	Two bands: 0-28,000 (0.9% rate) >28,000 (1.4% rate)	Abolition of upper band. Flat rate 0.9%	Return of two bands: 0-28,000 (1.53% rate) >28,000 (1.73% rate)	none	Added three new bands. Five bands: 0-15,000 (1.33% rate) 15,000-28,000 (1.43% rate) 28,000-55,000 (1.71% rate) 55,000-75,000 (1.72% rate) >75,000 (1.73% rate)	none	none	none	4
Basilicata	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	PD	
	Flat rate (0.9%)	none	none (excluding 0.3ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Flat rate (1.23%)	none	none	Added two new bands. Three bands: 0-55,000 (1.23% rate) 55,000-75,000 (1.73% rate) *** >75,000 (2.33% rate) ***	none	none	1

Region	2009	2010	2011*	2012*	2013*	2014*	2015*	2016	Total Changes
Calabria	PD	PD; PdL after 3/2010	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL; PD after 12/2014	PD	PD	
	Flat rate (1.4%)	Increase in flat rate to 1.7%	none (excluding 0.3ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Flat rate (2.03%)	none	none	none	none	none	2
Sardinia†	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL	PdL; PD after 3/2014	PD	PD	
	Flat rate (0.9%)	none	none (excluding 0.3ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Flat rate (1.23%)	none	none	none	none	none	0
Sicily†	MpA	MpA	MpA	MpA; PD after 11/2012	PD	PD	PD	PD	
	Flat rate (1.4%)	none	none (excluding 0.3ppt increase in regional personal income tax agreed as part of the Italian government's austerity programme). Flat rate (1.73%)	none	none	none	none	none	1

Source: Author and EUROMOD Country Reports – Italy.

PD - Democratic Party; UV - Valdostan Union; SVP - South Tyrolean People's Party; UpT – - Union for Trentino; PATT – Trentino Tyrolean Autonomist Party; PdL - The People of Freedom; FI – Forza Italia; LNP - Lega Nord Piemont; LV – Liga Veneta; LN – Lega Nord; MpA - Movement for the Autonomies; PRC - Communist Refoundation Party; SEL - Left Ecology Freedom.

† Financing arrangements for the special statute regions deviate substantially from the general system in Italy, because regional revenues are raised from taxes shared with the central government. However, although the regional councils in special regions have little scope to alter rates or bases for shared taxes, they can change the regional income tax surcharge along with all other regions participating in the ordinary financing regime (Claeys & Martire 2011 for Aosta Valley)

Table A3: SMD and List members of the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales, and their dual candidacy status

Scotland 1st–4th Parliamentary Terms

	Labour	SNP	Con	Lib Dem	Minor Parties	Total
SMD member, Not dual Candidate at Election	146	27	3	30	2	**208** (40.2%)
List member, Not dual Candidate at Election	33	14	0	9	16	**72** (13.9%)
SMD member, dual candidate at Election	5	63 *	7	8	1	**84** (16.2%)
List member, dual Candidate at Election	5	75	58	8	7	**153** (29.6%)
Total	189	179	68	55	26	517

* Includes Shirley-Ann Somerville, elected less than four months after the 2007 election upon the resignation of Stefan Tymkewycz, a SNP MSP for the Lothians region.

Wales - First and Second Terms: Dual Candidacy Permitted

	Labour	Plaid Cymru	Con	Lib Dem	Ind	Total
SMD member, Not Dual Candidate at Election	25	14	1	2	0	**42** (35.0%)
List member, Not Dual Candidate at Election	1	5	0	0	0	**11** (9.2%)
SMD member, Dual Candidate at Election	31	0	1	4	2	**38** (31.7%)
List member, Dual Candidate at Election	0	10	18	6	0	**34** (28.3%)
Total	57	29	20	12	2	120

Wales - Third and Fourth Terms: Dual Candidacy Not Permitted

	Labour	Plaid Cymru	Con	Lib Dem	Ind	Total
SMD member, Not Dual Candidate at Election	52	12	11	4	1	**60**
List member, Not Dual Candidate at Election	4	14	15	7	0	**40**
SMD member, Dual Candidate at Election	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
List member, Dual Candidate at Election	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
Total	56	26	26	11	1	120

Table A4: Means, Standard Deviations, and Number of Observations

First Year of Assignments per Legislative Term, and Excluding Office Holders

Variable	Mean (Standard Deviation)	
	Scotland n=431	Wales n=106
SMD=1 List=0	**51.0** (2.4)	**57.9** (3.7)
Total Number of Committees	**1.3** (3.4)	**2.2** (0.7)
2 or More Committees=1, 0 otherwise	**32.5** (2.3)	**79.2** (3.0)
Constituency Service committee member=1, 0 otherwise. Consisting of:	**25.1** (2.1)	**50.8** (3.7)
Health committee member=1, 0 otherwise	**8.6** (1.4)	**19.7** (2.9)
Enterprise / Economy committee member=1, 0 otherwise	**8.6** (1.4)	**18.6** (2.9)
Environment / Rural Affairs committee member=1, 0 otherwise	**8.4** (1.3)	**16.4** (2.7)
Parliamentary Functions committee member=1, 0 otherwise. Consisting of:	**19.5** (1.9)	**38.3** (3.6)
Standards committee member=1, 0 otherwise	**6.0** (1.1)	**16.4** (2.7)
Petitions committee member=1, 0 otherwise	**7.4** (1.3)	**6.6** (1.8)
Legislation / Subordinate Legislation / Legislative Affairs committee member=1, 0 otherwise	**6.0** (1.1)	**17.5** (2.8)

Table A5: The Effect of Wales' Dual Candidacy Ban on Members' Committee Assignments – Average Marginal Effects from a Probit Regression calculated using the Observed Values Method

Variable	Dependent Variable =	Wales H1: Total Committee Assignments ≥ 2		Wales H2: Constituency Service Committees		Wales H3: Parliamentary Function Committees	
		Before Dual Candidacy Ban	After Dual Candidacy Ban	Before Dual Candidacy Ban	After Dual Candidacy Ban	Before Dual Candidacy Ban	After Dual Candidacy Ban
SMD Seat		−0.088	−0.124	0.203	0.183*	-0.090	−0.157
		(0.109)	(0.090)	(0.149)	(0.109)	(0.151)	(0.112)
Controls		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant		7.00***	2.08**	-0.919	-0.351	-0.138	0.143
		(0.594)	(0.960)	(0.639)	(0.792)	(0.626)	(0.803)
Pseudo R-squared		0.14	0.18	0.04	0.08	0.08	0.05

Note: Delta-method Standard Errors in Parentheses. *$p \leq 0.1$, **$p \leq 0.05$, *** $p \leq 0.01$. n=93 (Before Dual Candidacy Ban), n=88 (After Dual Candidacy Ban)

Table A6: Annual Effective Number of Parties (ENP) of Local Councils in England, Scotland and Wales

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
ENGLAND																	
Adur	3.2	2.9	2.3	1.9	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.8	1.8	**1.7**
Allerdale	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.8	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	**2.8**
Amber Valley	1.7	1.7	2	2	2	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2	2	2	2	2	**1.9**
Arun	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.6	**1.8**
Ashfield	1.3	1.3	1.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.4	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	2.6	**2.2**
Ashford	3	3	3	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.9	2	1.6	**2.3**
Aylesbury Vale	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2	2	2	2	1.8	**2.1**
Babergh	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	1.8	**3.1**
Barking and Dagenham	1.2	1.2	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1	1	1	1	1	1	**1.3**
Barnet	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2	2	2	2.1	2.1	2.1	**2.2**
Barnsley	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.9	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3	1.9	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.3	**1.9**
Barrow-in-Furness	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.2	2	2	2.3	2.3	2.9	2.9	2.7	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	**2.1**
Basildon	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.2	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	2	2.4	3	2.9	**2.2**
Basingstoke and Deane	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.2	3	3	2.7	2.7	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.7	3	2.6	**2.8**
Bassetlaw	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.3	2	2	2.2	2.2	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.9	**2.1**
Bath & North East Somerset	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.8	2.5	**2.6**
Bedford	3.6	3.6	3	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.2	**3.6**
Bexley	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.8	1.8	**1.7**
Birmingham	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.7	2.8	2.8	3.1	3.1	3	3	3.1	2.8	2.1	2.1	2	2	**2.6**
Blaby	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.1	1.7	**2**
Blackburn with Darwen	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.8	2.9	3.3	3.3	2.9	2.4	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.7	**2.4**

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Blackpool	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1	2	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.7	**2.1**
Bolsover	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	**1.4**
Bolton	2.4	2.4	2.6	2.8	3	3	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.2	1.8	1.8	2	2	**2.5**
Boston	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	**2.5**
Bournemouth	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.1	**1.9**
Bracknell Forest	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.2	1	**1.3**
Bradford	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.9	3.1	3.1	3.1	2.9	3	3	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8	**2.9**
Braintree	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.2	**2.2**
Breckland	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	**1.5**
Brent	2	2	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.3	1.3	**2.2**
Brentwood	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.2	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.8	2.5	2.9	2.1	**2**
Brighton and Hove	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.8	**2.7**
Bristol	2.5	2.3	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.5	2.8	2.9	3.2	3.3	3.4	**2.8**
Broadland	2.1	2.1	2.8	2.6	2	2	2	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.2	**1.9**
Bromley	2.5	2.5	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	**1.6**
Bromsgrove	1.6	1.6	1.6	2	2.1	2.1	2	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.1	2.3	**1.9**
Broxbourne	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.5	**1.2**
Broxtowe	2.6	2.6	2.6	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.2	**2.9**
Buckinghamshire	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.8	1.8	1.8	**1.6**
Burnley	2.8	2.8	2.4	2.7	3.1	3.1	3.4	3	2.8	2.9	2.5	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.1	**2.7**
Bury	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.4	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.9	**2.2**
Calderdale	2.6	2.6	2.9	2.9	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.1	3	2.5	2.5	**3**
Cambridge	2.2	2.2	2.1	2	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.3	**2**

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Cambridgeshire	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2	2	2	2.2	3.1	3.1	3.1	**2.3**
Camden	1.8	1.8	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	1.6	1.6	**2.3**
Cannock Chase	2.1	2.1	2.4	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	3	3	3.2	2.9	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.5	**2.6**
Canterbury	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.5	**2.2**
Carlisle	2.4	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.2	**2.5**
Castle Point	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.7	1.9	2	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2	2	**1.8**
Central Bedfordshire	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.2	**1.4**
Charnwood	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2	2	2	2.1	1.5	**2.3**
Chelmsford	2.5	2.5	2.5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.2	**2**
Cheltenham	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.2	**2.4**
Cherwell	2.1	2.1	1.7	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.4	**1.6**
Cheshire East	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	**2**
Cheshire West and Chester	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.6	1.6	1.6	2	2	2	2	2.1	**1.9**
Chesterfield	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.5	**1.7**
Chichester	2.1	2	2	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.7	1.7	1.3	**1.9**
Chiltern	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.3	**1.7**
Chorley	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.4	2.5	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.2	1.8	1.9	**2.4**
Christchurch	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.3	**1.7**
Colchester	3	3	2.8	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	**2.8**
Copeland	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2	2	2	2	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.3	**2**
Corby	1.2	1.2	1.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.4	**1.8**
Cornwall	2.9	3	3	3	3	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.9	2.9	3	3	3.3	3.3	3.2	**2.9**
Cotswold	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.3	2	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.7	**2.1**

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Coventry	2	2	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	1.9	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	**2**
Craven	2.4	2.5	2.9	3	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.2	2	**2.5**
Crawley	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.8	2	2	2.1	2	**1.9**
Croydon	2	2	2	2	2	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2	2	2	2	2	2	**2**
Cumbria	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	3.1	3.1	3.1	3	3.2	3.1	3.1	**2.8**
Dacorum	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.2	**1.7**
Darlington	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	**2.1**
Dartford	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.6	**2.2**
Daventry	2.5	2.5	1.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.3	**1.5**
Derby	2	2	2.6	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.2	3.2	3.2	2.9	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.4	**2.7**
Derbyshire	1.9	2	2	2	2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	1.9	1.9	1.9	**2.2**
Derbyshire Dales	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	2	1.9	1.9	2	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	**2.1**
Devon	2.4	3	3	3	3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2	2	2	2	2.3	2.3	2.3	**2.4**
Doncaster	2.4	2.4	2.1	1.8	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.4	2.9	2	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.7	**2.5**
Dorset	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.3	2.3	2.3	**2.3**
Dover	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.2	**2.1**
Dudley	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.4	2.4	**2.2**
Durham	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	**1.9**
Ealing	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.6	1.6	**1.9**
East Cambridgeshire	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7	2	2	2	2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	1.2	**2.2**
East Devon	2.1	2.1	2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.1	**2**
East Dorset	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	**1.7**
East Hampshire	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.1	**1.7**

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
East Hertfordshire	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1	**1.5**
East Lindsey	2.4	2.4	2.5	3.2	3.2	3.2	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.2	**2.8**
East Northamptonshire	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	**1.3**
East Riding of Yorkshire	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7	**2.3**
East Staffordshire	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2	2	2	2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.5	2	**2.1**
East Sussex	2.6	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	3.5	3.5	3.5	**2.6**
Eastbourne	1.9	1.9	2	2	2	2	2	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	2	2	2	2	1.8	**1.9**
Eastleigh	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.3	**1.5**
Eden	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.7	1.8	1.8	2	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.4	**2.2**
Elmbridge	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	**2.4**
Enfield	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2	2	2	2	1.8	1.8	**1.9**
Epping Forest	3.8	3.8	3.4	3.1	3.3	3.3	2.6	2.5	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1	1.9	2	2	1.9	**2.6**
Epsom and Ewell	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.7	1.9	1.9	2.1	2.1	2	2	2	2	1.5	**1.9**
Erewash	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2	2	2	2	2	1.9	**2.2**
Essex	2.7	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.6	2.6	2.5	**2.1**
Exeter	2.3	2.3	2.7	2.9	2.9	3	3.3	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	2.8	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.7	**2.8**
Fareham	1.8	1.8	2	2	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.6	**1.7**
Fenland	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.3	**1.3**
Forest Heath	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	**1.5**
Forest of Dean	2.2	2.3	2.3	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.4	3	3	3	3	2.9	**2.8**
Fylde	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2	**2.2**
Gateshead	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	**1.7**
Gedling	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2	2.1	2.1	2	2	**2.4**

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Gloucester	2.8	2.8	2.9	3	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.4	**2.7**
Gloucestershire	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.6	2	2	2	2	3.3	3.3	3.2	**2.7**
Gosport	2.8	2.8	3	3	3	3	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.6	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.8	2.2	2.2	**2.5**
Gravesham	1.8	1.8	1.8	2	2	2	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2	2	2	2	2	**1.9**
Great Yarmouth	2	2	1.9	2	1.8	1.8	2.1	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2	2	2.9	3	**2.1**
Greenwich	1.4	1.4	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	**1.6**
Guildford	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2	2	2	2	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	**2.1**
Hackney	2.8	2.8	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	**1.6**
Halton	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.4	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2	1.6	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	**1.7**
Hambleton	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.1	**1.4**
Hammersmith and Fulham	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2	2	**1.8**
Hampshire	2.4	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.5	2.4	2.4	**2.1**
Harborough	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.5	**2.1**
Haringey	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	2	2	2	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.4	1.4	**1.7**
Harlow	2.2	2.2	3	3	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.1	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.2	1.9	1.9	2.5	2.1	**2.5**
Harrogate	1.8	1.8	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3	2	2.1	2.2	2.1	2	**2.2**
Harrow	2.6	2.6	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2	2	2	2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2	**2.2**
Hart	2.5	2.5	2.1	2.1	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.3	2.3	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.7	**2.6**
Hartlepool	3	3	2.9	3.1	2.8	2.8	2.5	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.2	2	**2.6**
Hastings	2.4	2.4	1.9	1.9	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.6	**2.2**
Havant	3	3	2.2	2.2	1.8	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.5	1.5	**1.7**
Havering	3	3	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2	2	2	2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2	2	**2.3**
Herefordshire	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.3	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.1	**2.8**

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Hertfordshire	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.3	2.3	2.3	**2.2**
Hertsmere	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.1	**1.7**
High Peak	2.3	2.3	2.3	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.3	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.2	**2.8**
Hillingdon	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	**2**
Hinckley and Bosworth	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.3	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2	**2.3**
Horsham	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.3	**1.9**
Hounslow	1.7	1.7	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	3	3	3	3	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.4	1.4	**2.2**
Huntingdonshire	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.5	1.7	1.7	2	1.9	**1.7**
Hyndburn	1.8	1.8	2	2	2	2	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.3	2	2	2	1.8	**2.1**
Ipswich	1.9	1.9	1.7	2	2.6	2.6	3	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.2	1.9	1.9	1.7	1.9	**2.3**
Isle of Wight	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.2	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	**2.5**
Islington	2	2	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6	1	1	**1.7**
Kensington and Chelsea	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.6	**1.5**
Kent	2.5	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	2.7	2.7	2.7	**2**
Kettering	2.5	2.5	2.5	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.6	**1.9**
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.4	2.4	2.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	2	2	2	2.2	1.5	**2**
Kingston upon Hull	1.8	1.8	2.4	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.1	1.9	1.9	2.1	1.9	**2.2**
Kingston upon Thames	2.8	2.8	2	2	2	2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2	2	2	2	2.1	2.1	**2.1**
Kirklees	3	3	3.1	3.1	3.3	3.3	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.1	3.1	3.1	2.9	**3.3**
Knowsley	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.3	1.1	1	1	1	1	**1.3**
Lambeth	2	2	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.1	1.1	**2**
Lancashire	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.5	**2.4**
Lancaster	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	3	3	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.7	**3.1**

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Leeds	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.7	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3	2.6	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	**2.7**
Leicester	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	**1.9**
Leicestershire	2.8	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2	2	2	2	2.6	2.6	2.6	**2.4**
Lewes	2	2	2	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.7	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.3	2.3	**2**
Lewisham	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6	1	1	**1.8**
Lichfield	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.5	**1.8**
Lincoln	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.6	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.7	1.7	1.4	1.5	**1.7**
Lincolnshire	2.5	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	2.8	2.9	2.9	**2.2**
Liverpool	1.9	1.9	1.9	2	1.9	1.9	2	2.1	2.3	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.2	**1.8**
Luton	1.7	1.7	1.7	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	**2**
Maidstone	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.1	3	3	2.6	2.6	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.8	2.8	**2.7**
Maldon	2.4	2.4	2.3	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.2	**1.6**
Malvern Hills	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.4	2.6	2.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.2	**2.3**
Manchester	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.7	2	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.5	1.2	1.2	1	1	**1.6**
Mansfield	1.4	1.4	1.4	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.4	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	2	**1.9**
Medway	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2	2	**2.3**
Melton	2.8	2.8	2.8	2	2	2	2	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.7	2.1	2.1	1.2	**2**
Mendip	3.1	3.1	3.1	1.9	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	**2.2**
Merton	1.9	1.9	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.1	2.1	**2.2**
Mid Devon	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2	**2.5**
Mid Suffolk	3.3	3.3	3.3	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.9	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	1.8	**2.7**
Mid Sussex	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2	2	2	2	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1	**1.9**
Middlesbrough	1.6	1.6	1.6	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.8	**2.1**

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Milton Keynes	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.8	3	2.8	2.8	2.7	3	3	3	2.9	2.8	**2.8**
Mole Valley	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.2	**2.5**
New Forest	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.1	**1.7**
Newark and Sherwood	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.1	**2.7**
Newcastle upon Tyne	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.1	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	**1.8**
Newcastle-under-Lyme	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.6	3	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.4	3.2	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.8	**2.8**
Newham	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1	1	1	1	1	1	**1.1**
Norfolk	2.7	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.7	3.1	3.1	3.1	**2.4**
North Devon	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.8	**2.6**
North Dorset	2.6	2.6	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.9	1.9	2	2	1.5	**2.3**
North East Derbyshire	1.8	1.8	1.8	2	2	2	2	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.7	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	**2.1**
North East Lincolnshire	2.7	2.6	2.6	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1	2.8	2.6	2.6	3.2	2.8	2.2	2.3	2.9	3	**2.8**
North Hertfordshire	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.3	2	2.2	2.1	2.1	2	1.9	2	2	1.8	1.7	**2.1**
North Kesteven	3.5	3.5	3.5	3	3	3	2.8	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2	2	2	2.1	1.8	**2.6**
North Lincolnshire	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2	2	2	2	1.9	**2.1**
North Norfolk	3.9	3.9	3.9	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.2	2	2	2	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.1	1.8	**2.4**
North Somerset	2.8	2.8	2.8	3	3	3	2.9	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.7	2	2	2	2	1.8	**2.3**
North Tyneside	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.2	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.4	**2.3**
North Warwickshire	2	2	2	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	1.9	1.9	2	2	2	2	2	2.1	1.9	**2.1**
North West Leicestershire	1.6	1.6	1.6	2.6	2.6	2.4	2.4	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2	**2**
North Yorkshire	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2	2	2	2	2.3	2.3	2.3	**2.4**
Northampton	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.1	**2.4**
Northamptonshire	2.2	2	2	2	2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7	2.2	2.3	2.3	**2**

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Northumberland	2.1	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.7	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.3	2.8	2.8	2.8	**2.9**
Norwich	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.6	2.6	3.1	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	2.7	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	**2.6**
Nottingham	1.7	1.7	1.7	2	2	2	2	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1	**1.6**
Nottinghamshire	2	2	2	2	2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.7	**2.4**
Nuneaton and Bedworth	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.9	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.2	1.7	1.7	1.4	1.4	**1.8**
Oadby and Wigston	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.7	**1.5**
Oldham	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.2	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	**2.1**
Oxford	2.8	2.8	2.1	2.1	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.9	**2.5**
Oxfordshire	3.1	3.1	3.1	3	3.1	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	3	3	3	**2.6**
Pendle	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.4	3.1	3.1	3.3	3.3	3	3	3	3	**2.8**
Peterborough	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.3	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.9	2	2.6	2.6	2.9	3	**2.4**
Plymouth	1.8	1.8	1.8	2	2	2	2.2	2	1.8	1.8	1.9	2	2	2	2.2	2.2	**2**
Poole	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.4	1.6	**2.1**
Portsmouth	2.8	2.8	3	2.9	2.6	2.6	2.4	2.6	2.4	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	3.1	3.2	**2.6**
Preston	3.2	3.1	2.9	3	3.2	3.2	3.2	3	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3	**2.8**
Purbeck	1.8	1.8	2	2.4	2.4	2.4	2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.2	1.5	**2.2**
Reading	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.9	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.9	2.7	2.5	2.5	2	2	**2.1**
Redbridge	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.6	2.1	2.1	**2.4**
Redcar and Cleveland	2.6	2.7	2.7	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.1	3.1	3.3	3.3	2.6	2.5	2.5	3	3	**3**
Redditch	2.1	2.1	2.4	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.2	2	2	2.1	2.2	2.1	**2.3**
Reigate and Banstead	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.5	**1.8**
Ribble Valley	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.3	**1.8**
Richmond upon Thames	2	2	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2	2	2	2	1.7	1.7	**1.8**

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Richmondshire	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.2	2	**2.6**
Rochdale	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.8	2.9	1.8	1.8	1.5	1.6	**2.3**
Rochford	3	3	1.8	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.5	2	1.7	**1.7**
Rossendale	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.1	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.4	2	2	1.9	2.2	**2**
Rother	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.1	1.5	**1.9**
Rotherham	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.5	1.6	**1.4**
Rugby	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.1	3.1	2.7	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.6	2.7	**2.8**
Runnymede	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.3	**1.4**
Rushcliffe	2.5	2.5	2.5	2	2	2	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.6	**2**
Rushmoor	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.4	2	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.6	2	2	2.1	1.9	**2.1**
Rutland	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.9	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.9	2.1	**2**
Ryedale	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	1.9	1.9	2.3	2.2	1.9	**2.6**
Salford	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.9	2.3	2.3	2.1	1.7	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	**1.6**
Sandwell	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.8	2	2	1.6	1.5	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	**1.6**
Scarborough	3.6	3.5	3.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.6	**2.9**
Sedgemoor	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2	2	2	2	1.7	**1.9**
Sefton	3	2.9	3.2	3.2	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.5	2.5	2.2	2.1	**2.8**
Selby	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.2	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	**2.1**
Sevenoaks	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	**1.8**
Sheffield	2	2	2.1	2	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.8	**2**
Shepway	2.5	2.6	2.5	1.9	1.9	3	2.9	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.7	**1.9**
Shropshire	3.3	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.3	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.5	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	2.1	2.2	2.2	**2.6**
Slough	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.2	3.6	3.6	3.2	3.1	2.6	2.6	2.5	2	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.6	**2.3**

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Solihull	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.5	2.9	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.2	**2.5**
Somerset	1.9	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2	2	2	2.1	2.6	2.5	2.5	**2.2**
South Bucks	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	**1.3**
South Cambridgeshire	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.1	2.8	2.6	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.2	2	**2.7**
South Derbyshire	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2	2	2	2	1.8	**1.9**
South Gloucestershire	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.9	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.4	**2.6**
South Hams	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.5	**1.8**
South Holland	2.4	2.4	2.3	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.6	**1.9**
South Kesteven	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.4	**2.3**
South Lakeland	3.1	3.1	3	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.1	2	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	2	2.1	**2.3**
South Norfolk	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.3	**1.7**
South Northamptonshire	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.4	**1.7**
South Oxfordshire	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	2	2	2	2.1	1.2	**2.1**
South Ribble	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.6	2	2	2.1	2.1	2.1	**2.5**
South Somerset	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	2	2	2	2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	**2.1**
South Staffordshire	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.3	**1.5**
South Tyneside	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.3	2.3	2	1.7	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.1	**1.7**
Southampton	2.6	2.6	2.9	3.2	2.9	2.9	3	2.9	2.5	2.5	2.2	2.2	2	2	2.1	2.1	**2.5**
Southend-on-Sea	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.5	2.4	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	3	2.9	3.3	3.1	**2.6**
Southwark	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.6	1.6	**2.2**
Spelthorne	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	2	2	1.2	**1.5**
St Albans	3	3	3	3	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.6	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.5	**2.6**
St Edmundsbury	2.4	2.4	2.6	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.5	**1.9**

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
St Helens	2	2	2.1	2.2	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.2	1.7	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.3	2
Stafford	2.6	2.6	2.6	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2	2.1	2.2	2.2	1.7	2.1
Staffordshire	1.9	2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.5	2.2	2.2	2.2	2
Staffordshire Moorlands	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.2	3.1
Stevenage	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.9	1.9	1.6	1.6	1.3	1.6	1.5
Stockport	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.9	3	2.9	2.9	3.1	2.7
Stockton-on-Tees	1.9	1.9	2	2.9	2.9	3.1	3.1	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3	3	3	3	2.4	2.9
Stoke-on-Trent	2.7	2.7	3.1	3	2.4	2.4	2.7	2.9	3	3	3	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.8	2.6	2.5
Stratford-on-Avon	2.6	2.6	2.4	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.8	2	2	2.1	2	2.1	2.5	1.9	1.3	2.1
Stroud	3.1	3.1	2.5	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.5	3	3.3	3.2	2.8	2.9	2.8
Suffolk	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.4
Suffolk Coastal	2.1	2	2	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.6
Sunderland	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.8	2	2	1.8	1.7	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.5
Surrey	2.2	2	2	2	2	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9
Surrey Heath	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.8
Sutton	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.6
Swale	2.8	2.8	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.6	2.7	2.5	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.3
Swindon	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.4	1.9	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.9	2	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.2
Tameside	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.4
Tamworth	2.1	2.1	1.6	2	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.6	2	2.1	2.2	2	1.9
Tandridge	1.9	1.9	1.9	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.7
Taunton Deane	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.1	2.5
Teignbridge	3.1	3.1	3.1	3	3	3	3	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.1	2.7

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Telford and Wrekin	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.7	3	2.8	2.7	2.9	2.7	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.3	**2.5**
Tendring	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.3	**3**
Test Valley	1.9	1.8	1.8	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.5	**1.8**
Tewkesbury	3.5	3.4	3.4	3	3	3	2.9	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2	2	2	2.3	1.3	**2.6**
Thanet	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.1	**2.2**
Three Rivers	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.3	**2.2**
Thurrock	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.7	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.6	3	**2.1**
Tonbridge and Malling	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.3	**1.7**
Torbay	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.6	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.5	1.9	**1.9**
Torridge	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.5	2.2	**2.3**
Tower Hamlets	1.4	1.4	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.2	2.6	2.4	**2.1**
Trafford	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2	2	2	2	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	**2.1**
Tunbridge Wells	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.3	**1.6**
Uttlesford	2.8	2.8	2.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	2.3	**2.1**
Vale of White Horse	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2	2	2.1	2.1	1.6	**1.9**
Wakefield	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.5	2	2	2.1	2.1	2.5	2.5	2.3	2	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3	**1.8**
Walsall	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	**2.5**
Waltham Forest	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	1.6	1.6	**2.5**
Wandsworth	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.8	1.8	**1.5**
Warrington	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.2	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.7	**2.1**
Warwick	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	2.8	2.8	3	3	2.7	2.7	2.7	3.1	2	**3.1**
Warwickshire	2.5	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	3	3	3	**2.7**
Watford	2.7	2.7	2.9	2.5	1.8	1.8	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.9	2.1	2.1	2	2	2.5	**2.1**

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Waveney	2.4	2.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2	**2.3**
Waverley	2.1	2.1	2.1	2	2	2.1	2.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1	1	1.1	1.1	1.2	**1.6**
Wealden	2	2	2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	**1.9**
Wellingborough	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.7	1.6	**1.6**
Welwyn Hatfield	2	2	2	2	1.9	1.9	2	1.7	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.6	1.8	1.8	2	2	**1.8**
West Berkshire	2.1	2.1	2.1	2	2	2	2.1	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.2	**1.8**
West Devon	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.9	3	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.1	1.8	**2.6**
West Dorset	3.3	3.3	3.3	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2	2	2	2	1.7	**2.4**
West Lancashire	2.1	2	2	2	2	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2	1.9	2	2	2	2	**2**
West Lindsey	3.2	3.2	3.3	2.8	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2	**2.4**
West Oxfordshire	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.1	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.5	**1.9**
West Somerset	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.6	**2.2**
West Sussex	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.4	2	2	2	2	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.2	2.2	2.2	**2.1**
Westminster	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.6	**1.5**
Weymouth and Portland	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.4	3	3	2.7	2.9	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.2	**3.3**
Wigan	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.4	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.3	2.6	2.6	2	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.3	**1.8**
Wiltshire	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	**2.2**
Winchester	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.1	**2.3**
Windsor and Maidenhead	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.1	**2**
Wirral	2.6	2.6	2.8	3	2.9	2.9	2.9	3	3.1	3.1	2.8	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.2	**2.7**
Woking	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.4	2.4	2.3	2	2	2	2.1	2	1.9	1.9	2	2	**2.2**
Wokingham	2	2	2.1	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.3	**1.6**
Wolverhampton	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.8	1.8	1.9	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.1	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.5	**2**

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Worcester	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.2	**2.5**
Worcestershire	2.8	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.7	2.6	2.6	**2.6**
Worthing	2	2	2	2	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.7	1.5	**1.8**
Wychavon	2.3	2.3	2.2	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.3	**1.7**
Wycombe	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.9	2	2	1.9	1.6	**1.7**
Wyre	2	2	2	2	2	2	1.9	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	**1.7**
Wyre Forest	2.7	2.7	1.9	2.1	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.7	2.6	2.8	1.7	**2.5**
York	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.8	3.7	**2.6**
WALES																	
Blaenau Gwent	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	**1.7**
Bridgend	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3	3	2.9	2.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	**2.5**
Caerphilly	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	**2.3**
Cardiff	2	2	2	2	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	**2.6**
Carmarthenshire	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	3	3	3	3	**2.8**
Ceredigion	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	3	3	3	3	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.6	**2.8**
Conwy	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.6	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.2	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.3	**4.3**
Denbighshire	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.6	**3.3**
Flintshire	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.1	3.1	3.1	3	**2.9**
Gwynedd	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	**2.6**
Isle of Anglesey	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.2	2.4	**2.2**
Merthyr Tydfil	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2	2	2	2	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6	**2.1**
Monmouthshire	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.5	2	2	2	2	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	**2.6**
Neath Port Talbot	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.6	**2.2**

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Newport	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.9	3.1	3.1	3.1	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	**2.1**
Pembrokeshire	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1	2	2	2	2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.6	1.6	**2**
Powys	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	**1.9**
Rhondda Cynon Taf	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.2	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.5	**1.9**
Swansea	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.4	2	2	2	2.1	**2.7**
Torfaen	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	2	2	2	2	**2**
Vale of Glamorgan	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	3	3	3	3	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	3.1	3.3	3.3	3.2	**2.9**
Wrexham	3	3	3	3	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.7	**3.2**
SCOTLAND																	
Aberdeen City	2.7	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	**3.2**
Aberdeenshire	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	**3.4**
Angus	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	**2.7**
Argyll & Bute	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	3.1	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.3	3.3	3.6	3.6	**2.8**
Scottish Borders	2.8	2.8	3.2	3	3	3	3.2	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	**3.5**
Clackmannanshire	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	**2.5**
West Dunbartonshire	2	2	2	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.8	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	**2.2**
Dumfries and Galloway	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	**3.9**
Dundee City	2.7	2.7	2.7	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3	3	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	**2.9**
East Ayrshire	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	**2.2**
East Dunbartonshire	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.8	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	**3.4**
East Lothian	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	**2.7**
East Renfrewshire	2.7	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	**3.2**
Edinburgh	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.7	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	**3.4**

Council Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Falkirk	3	3	3	3.1	3	3	3.1	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	**2.9**
Fife	2.6	2.6	2.8	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3	3	3	3	**3.2**
Glasgow City	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.3	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	**1.9**
Highland	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	**2.7**
Inverclyde	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	**2.6**
Midlothian	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	**2**
Moray	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	**2.7**
North Ayrshire	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.1	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3	3	3	3	**2.7**
North Lanarkshire	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	**1.9**
Perth & Kinross	3.7	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	**3.5**
Renfrewshire	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	**2.4**
South Ayrshire	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	**2.7**
South Lanarkshire	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3	**2.2**
Stirling	2.3	2.3	2.2	2	2	2	2.2	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3	3	3	3	**2.8**
West Lothian	2	2	2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	**2.3**
Orkney Islands	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	**1**
Shetland Islands	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	**1.3**
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	**1.7**