

Europeanisation of National Parliaments: Experiences and Best Practices



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What is ahead?

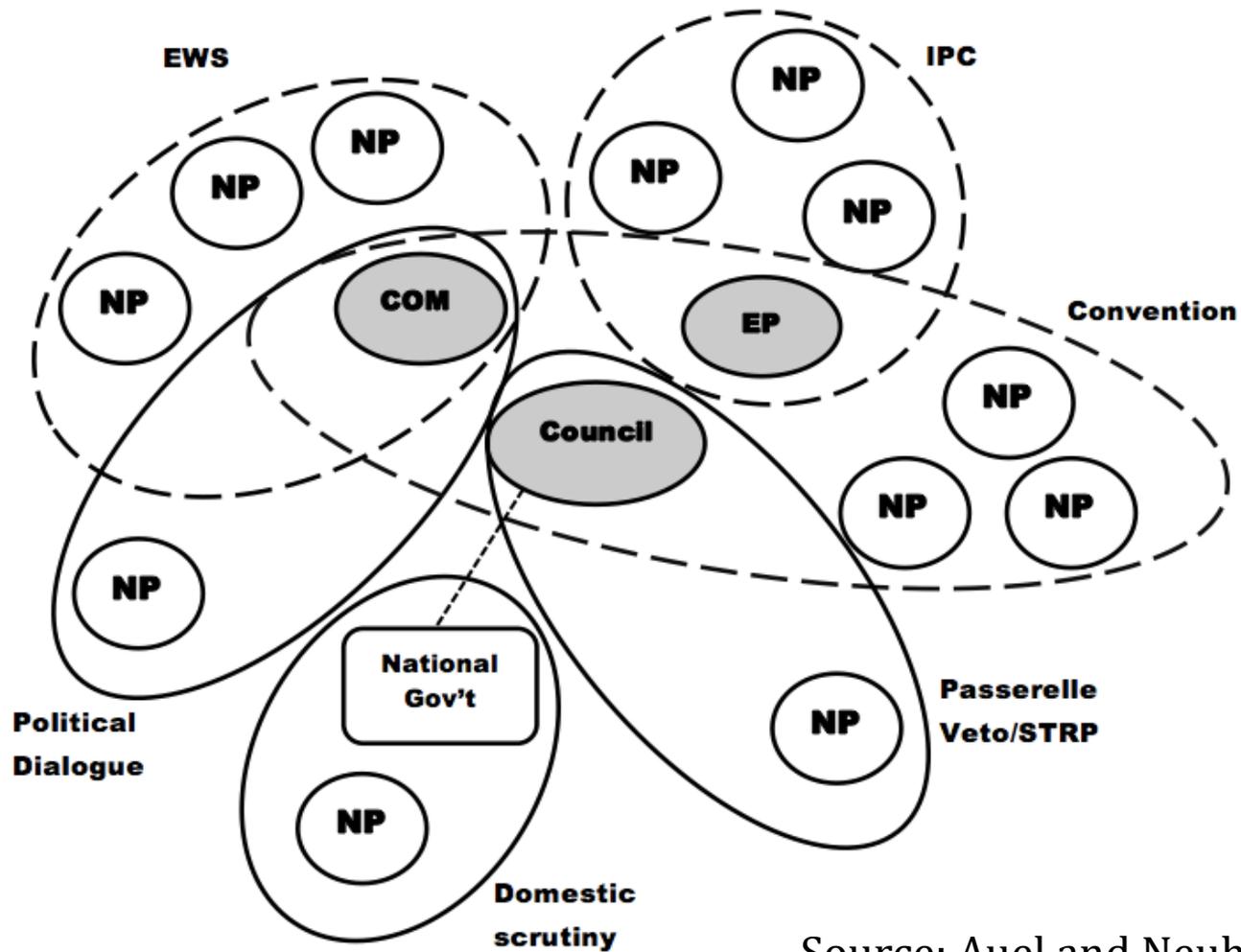
- I. A new role for national parliaments: arenas of parliamentary involvement after Lisbon
- II. Involvement within the **domestic** arena
- III. Involvement within the **European** arenas
- IV. Conditions for active involvement
- v. Concluding remarks



I. New 'Tools' in Lisbon Treaty

- ▣ Expanded information rights
- ▣ Strengthened role in Treaty revisions
- ▣ Subsidiarity Watchdogs: Early Warning System
- ▣ Role in monitoring and evaluation in the area of freedom, security and justice (Europol, Eurojust)
- ▣ Formal Recognition of IPC
- ▣ Add to domestic scrutiny and Political Dialogue

NP as Multi-Arena Players...



Source: Auel and Neuhold 2017

Objective of study



- To examine how national parliaments have resorted to the **different tools** at their disposal within the different arenas;
- To then draw **lessons** from these national parliamentary experiences

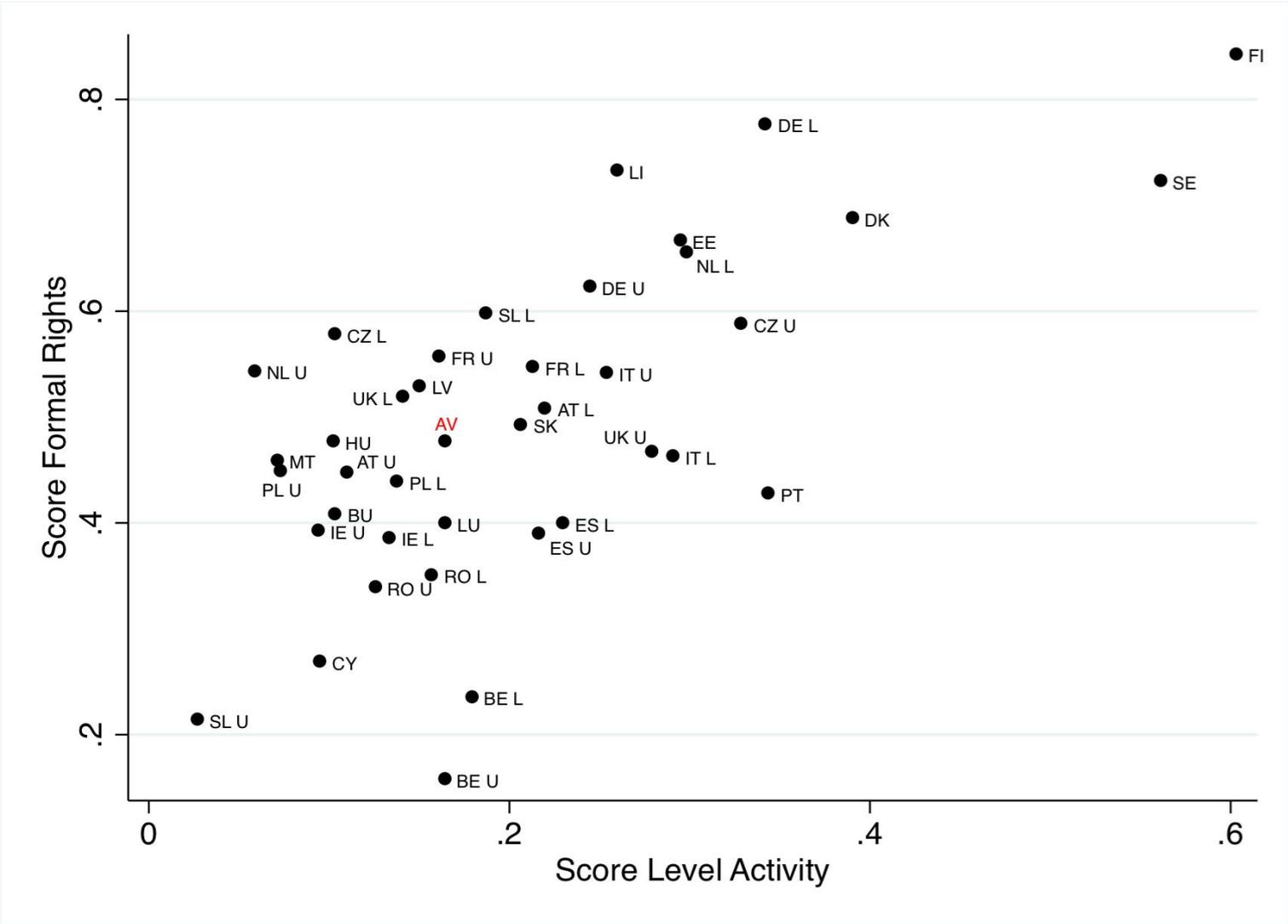
II. Parliamentary involvement within the 'domestic arena'

- Process of harmonization over time, partly due to mutual learning, partly due to reforms after Lisbon
- Differences persist with regard to
 - Binding character of ex ante involvement
 - Degree of mainstreaming
 - Timing of involvement
 - Scrutiny of European Councils
 - Parliamentary communication of EU politics

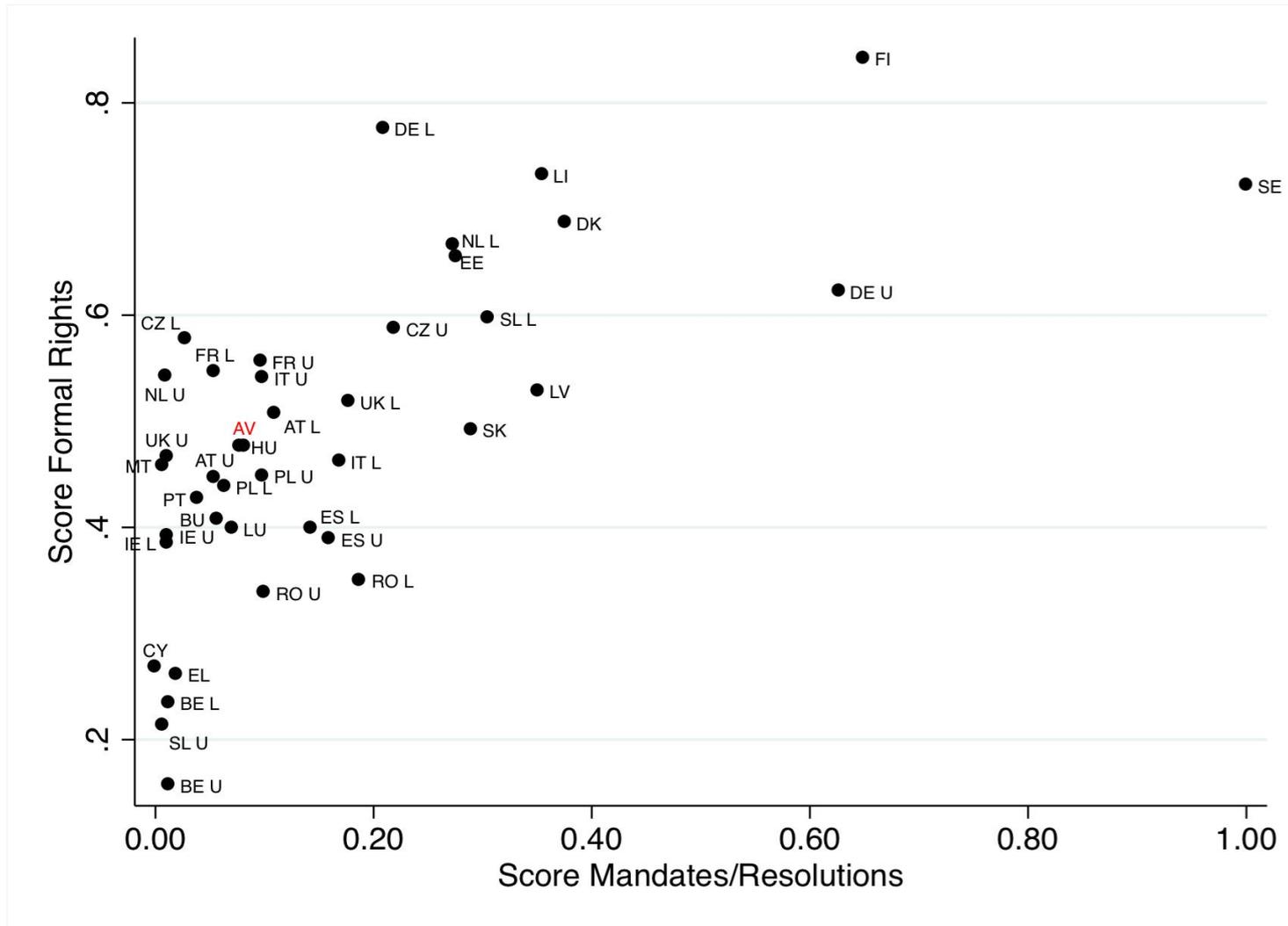
Four roles parliaments play in the domestic arena

- **‘Expert’**: develops in-depth expertise on EU matters
- **‘Policy Shaper’**: parliamentary influence on the government’s negotiation position (ex ante mandates or resolutions)
- **‘Government Watchdog’**: holds governments to account (normally takes place *ex post*)
- **‘Public Forum’**: parliamentary communication function

Relationship between institutional strength and activity in EU affairs



Relationship between institutional strength and mandates/resolutions

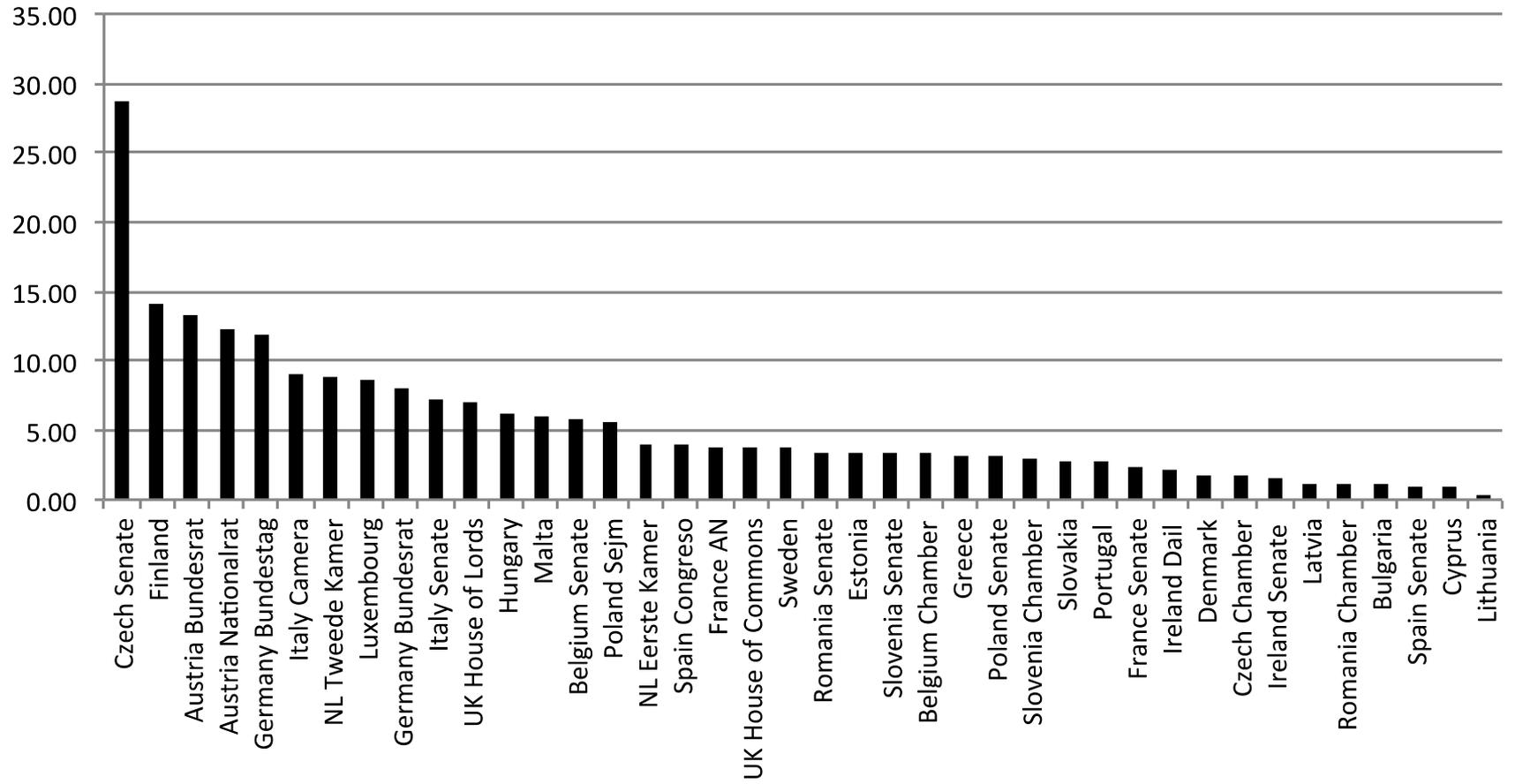


Scrutiny of European Council meetings

		<i>Ex Ante</i>		
<i>Ex post</i>	Limited involvement	Committee	Plenary	Both
Limited involvement	<i>Bulgaria, Luxemburg, Malta, Romania</i>	<i>Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia</i>	<i>Netherlands</i>	
Committee	<i>Cyprus</i>	<i>Belgium Denmark, Finland, Lithuania, Slovenia</i>	<i>Croatia, France, Portugal</i>	<i>Germany</i>
Plenary	<i>Hungary, Spain, UK</i>	<i>Sweden</i>	<i>Ireland</i>	
Both	<i>Greece*</i>			

Source: Adapted and updated from Wessels et al. 2013

Plenary debating time spent on EU issues (in per cent)



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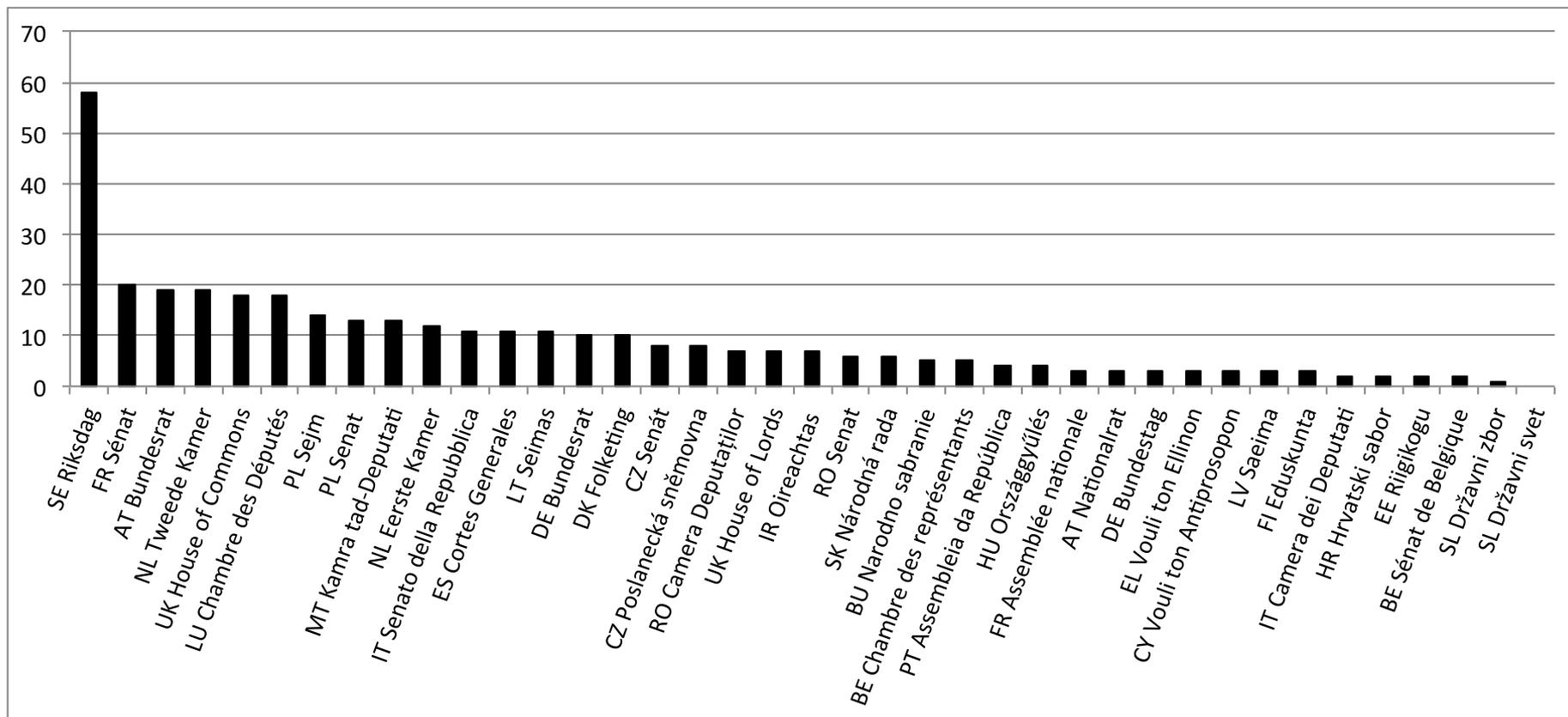
III. How do they use the Lisbon tools?

- Treaty revisions
- Action before CJEU re subsidiarity

- Early Warning Mechanism
- Political Dialogue
- Inter-Parliamentary cooperation.

How do they use the 'Lisbon tools': EWS

Reasoned opinions (EWS) by Chamber 2010 - 2017



Source: Annual Reports of the European Commission

Three yellow cards....

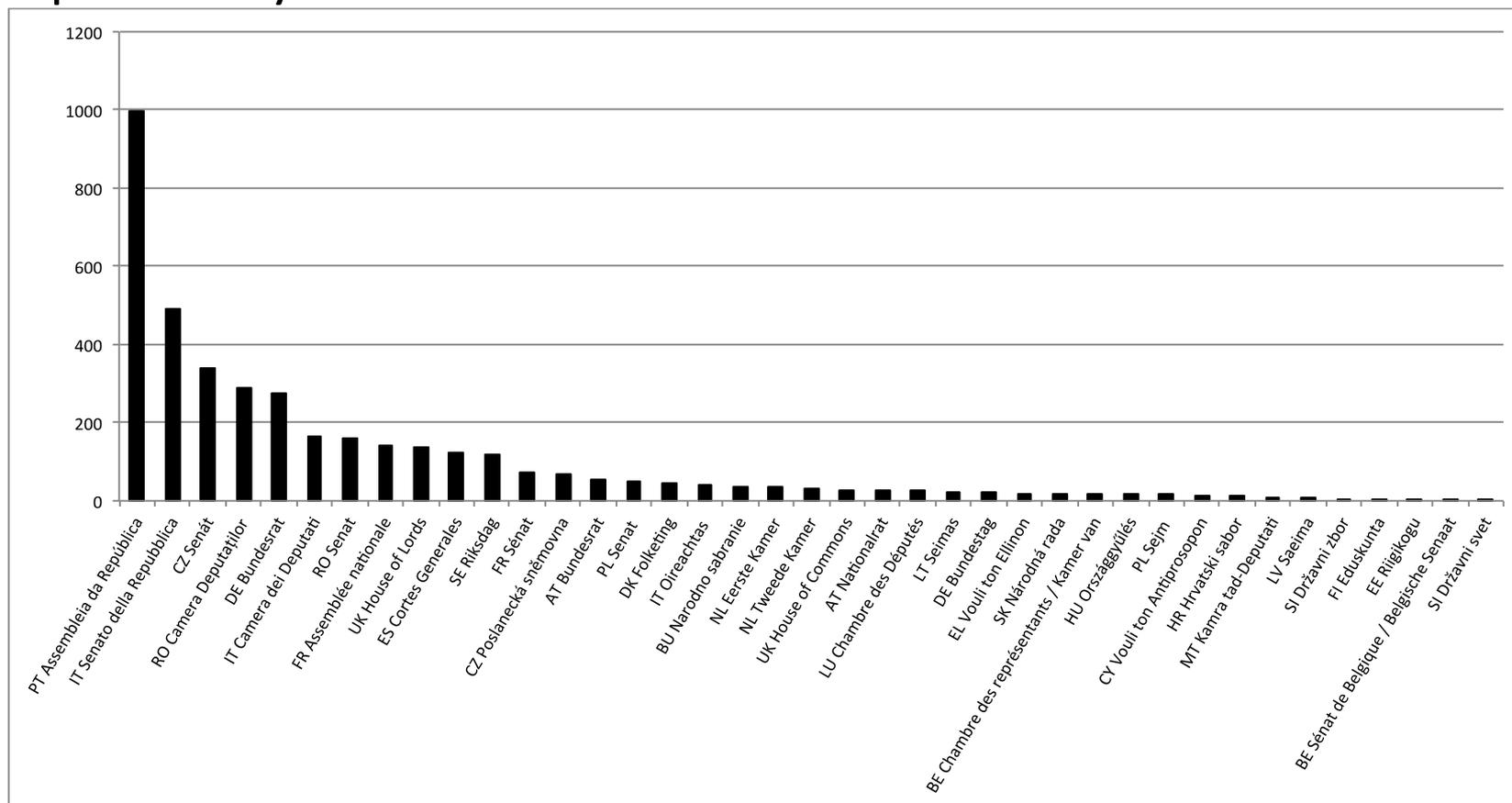
Have been issued on:

- the so-called 'Monti II' Regulation,
- the Regulation on the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office,
- and most recently on the Posted Workers Directive.



How do they use the 'tools': *Political Dialogue*

Opinions by Chamber 2010 - 2017



Source: Annual Reports of the European Commission

Inter-parliamentary cooperation

Main channels:

- ▣ Inter-Parliamentary Conferences COSAC,
- ▣ administrative liaisons in Brussels,
- ▣ Inter-Parliamentary EU information eXchange (IPEX)



Inter-parliamentary cooperation

Proliferation and Specialisation:

- ▣ Inter-parliamentary Conference on CFSP and CSDP (established in 2012)
- ▣ Inter-parliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance (2013)
- ▣ Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol (2017)

Inter-parliamentary cooperation

- Arena for inter-parliamentary exchange of information
- Virtual Third Chamber
- Any influence?
 - Coordination yellow cards
 - Divergent interests and institutional rivalries
- Deliberation - Public impact?
 - Media

IV. Conditions for active involvement

- ▣ Access to information
- ▣ Selection/Prioritisation of dossiers
- ▣ Designating MPs responsible for EU affairs
- ▣ Role of administration



V. Concluding remarks

- No easy answer to the question of whether parliaments play an active role in EU affairs
- Overall, we can find both extremely active chambers and scrutiny laggards – and a large field in between
- Role as MAP not fully developed
- Level of engagement depends both on institutional factors AND motivation



Concluding remarks



Strengthened parliamentary participation rights

- *enable* parliaments to fulfil their roles
- lead to reforms of parliamentary procedures
- and increase MPs' motivation to become engaged across different arenas.

Concluding Remarks

- Quantity vs. Quality: continuous and broad control vs. in-depth scrutiny
- Early Warning Mechanism and Political Dialogue: Efficiency boost or distraction?
- Parliamentary Communication
- IPC: development into European public space?

Last words...

- Any **assessment** of parliamentary involvement also depends on the prior definition of what their role in the EU should consist of.
- Parliamentary involvement ought to help overcome what Lindseth (2010) has termed the 'democratic disconnect' between [citizens's perception of European governance as bureaucratic and distant, on the one hand, and attachments to national institutions as the true loci of democratic and constitutional legitimacy, on the other.