The Politics of Turning Coat

A Comparative and Historical Analysis of Party Switching

Elisa Volpi

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of Political and Social Sciences
of the European University Institute

Florence, 03 May 2019

European University Institute
Department of Political and Social Sciences

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Researcher declaration to accompany the submission of written work
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I Elisa Volpi certify that I am the author of the work "The Politics of Turning Coat: A Comparative and Historical Analysis of Party Switching" I have presented for examination for the Ph.D. at the European University Institute. I also certify that this is solely my own original work, other than where I have clearly indicated, in this declaration and in the thesis, that it is the work of others.

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This thesis has been corrected for linguistic and stylistic errors. I certify that I have checked and approved all language corrections, and that these have not affected the content of this work.

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Abstract

This dissertation focuses on legislative party switching which occurs when members of Parliament (MPs) change party affiliation during the course of a parliamentary term. Switching is both normatively relevant (as it has the potential to undermine the democratic process), and theoretically significant (as it is linked to the general question of why parties exist and change). The aim of the thesis is three-fold. First, it assesses the importance and scope of the phenomenon in question. By collecting a unique data set of all the inter-party defections that occurred in a sample of 14 Western European countries from 1945 to 2015, the thesis describes how party switching has evolved over time and the patterns that each country has followed. Secondly, the dissertation explores what the determinants of switching might be. Building on the concepts of *exit* and *voice* by Hirschman, I develop several hypotheses about how party switching is influenced by cost considerations that are situated either at the party level (costs of *voice*) or at the institutional level (costs of *exit*). Thirdly, the thesis introduces and studies the distinction between individual and collective forms of party switching, which have rarely been analysed by previous works on the topic. The results of the empirical chapters suggest that the overall level of party switching is mainly determined by party characteristics. In particular switching seems to be related to partiesâĂŹ ideological placement. Moreover, defections are trigged by low institutionalisation (measured both at party level and at the systemic level). In contrast, the role of institutions is very limited, except when I distinguish between the two modalities of switching. Specifically, parliamentary form of government contributes to collective switching as do electoral systems with high candidate visibility. Taken together, these findings contribute not only to shed light on the conditions that make switching more likely to occur, but also to the broader literature on party decline/adaptation and political personalization.

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Usually we conclude acknowledgements by thanking the most important person in our lives. In my case, I have several people to mention, because in the past four years I have realised that I am surrounded by some amazing women whose support has had a substantial impact on my life. In addition to those who have already been mentioned, I wish to thank, first of all, Serena. It is because of her encouragement that I have pursued an academic career and I will always be grateful for the way she welcomed me into her life and family. Thanks to Ester, because she has been one of my most supportive friends during my PhD and has been incredibly good at making

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Chapter 1

Introduction

What legislative party switching is and why we should care about it

1.1 The importance of party unity

A great number of scientific works examining political parties open by stressing the importance of these actors for democracy. In most of these cases, scholars quote Schattschneider (1942), according to whom political parties *created* democracy, and this form of government is *unthinkable* without them. As Katz and Mair (2006) explain, the dominant understanding of democracy in parliamentary systems has been that of *party government*. This model of democracy assigns parties numerous crucial functions: aggregation of different interests, allowing mobilisation and political participation, formulation of alternative policy proposals, and recruitment of politicians and leaders. But it is thanks to the role of political parties in elections that the democratic nature of a system is assured. As Katz (1987) makes clear, the system is democratic and legitimate because parties have been authorised to govern by the people, through free elections. By taking part in the core and defining element of democracy (i.e. elections), parties are seen as the key actors of this system of government. Elections not only assure that those who govern do so by virtue of having won the support a majority of the population, but they also guarantee that those who govern are hled responsible for their actions and decisions. Indeed, according to Ranney (1954), in the subsequent elections voters can sanction or approve the direction parties in power have taken. The serious threat of losing power is the mechanism that ensure parties' accountability.

Katz (1986, 1987) outlines the necessary conditions for party government: 1) decisions are made by elected party officials, 2) policy is decided within parties that

act *cohesively* to enact it and 3) officials are recruited and held accountable through parties. What is central to these requirements is that parties must act in a united manner or, to use Katz's own words, "exhibiting team-like behaviour". Party unity is vital both for policy implementation and to ensure legislators' accountability. If parties are not cohesive, it becomes more difficult for voters to grasp who should be considered responsible for certain results and therefore citizens cannot fully sanction those who are in power at the subsequent elections (Carey 2007). Ultimately, if parties do not act like teams then the transmission belt linking them to voters jams. It is probably for this reason that White (1992) concludes that "if the parties were in trouble, so too was democracy."

This thesis looks precisely at one of the situations in which parties find themselves in trouble. Specifically, this work deals with the situation in which parties are no longer able to keep their ranks together. This phenomenon is called *legislative party switching* and occurs when a member of Parliament (MP), that is an elected official, changes his/her party affiliation within a legislative term. Party switching represents an extreme form of disunity and has potentially serious consequences for various aspects of the party government model.

First of all, as highlighted by Heller and Mershon (2009), legislative defections endanger the accountability chain, because the link between citizens and politicians is undermined if a legislator takes up a new party label without consulting his/her constituents (especially if voters select legislators solely or primarily based on their party affiliation). Moreover, Desposato (2006) underlines how switching increases voters' information costs and destroys the meaning of party labels. As a consequence Desposato sees switching as "a threat to the very core of democratic representation" (p.77). Switching might also jeopardise the survival of cabinets (Giannetti and Laver 2001) and alter the bargaining structure within legislative assemblies, with potential additional repercussions on policy making. Further, party switching - by blurring the boundaries between parties - has the potential to decrease their legitimacy and to alter the patterns of their competition, endangering democratic consolidation and institutionalisation[1] (O'Brien and Shomer 2013; Mainwaring 1998).

Apart from these normative concerns, switching is also theoretically relevant. Indeed, defections challenge the view that parties are unitary actors and their study provides valuable insights into the dynamics of intra-party cohesion and discipline

[1]It might be argued that most of these consequences are more serious when the number of switchers is large, which does not occur very often. However, even just a single defection might have a deep political impact. A remarkable example is the one of the American Senator Jim Jeffords who exited the Republican Party in 2001 and, by doing so, changed the balance of power in the US Senate, giving the control of the majority to the Democrats who actually had not won the previous election.

(Owens 2003). Furthermore, the analysis of defections sheds light on what parties are and how they influence legislators' behaviour (Heller and Mershon 2009). Switching is linked to the topic of party change or even more precisely, party decline/adaptation. To put it concisely, by looking at defections we can test what shape parties are in. Indeed, as Rahat and Kenig (2018) note, when MPs defect they are giving up the two rationales for belonging to a party. On the one hand, parties allow legislators to coordinate their actions and to effectively promote policies. On the other hand, parties, thanks to the value of their labels, provide voters the necessary heuristic short-cuts to make electoral decisions. For this reason, according to Rahat and Kenig, increased switching demonstrates that parties are not able to solve MPs' collective action problem and, additionally, that party labels have lost their electoral purpose. As the two authors argue: "the analysis of party switching would be best applied in determining whether parties have really lost their value and are no more than formal and nominal entities or whether they still hold on to the fundamental reason of their existence." For these same reasons, switching does not only represent a useful indicator of party decline, but is also an indicator of political personalisation. Indeed, if organisational loyalty counts less, then we should also expect that MPs will behave in a more individualistic manner, that is, that they will rely less and less on their parties in order to achieve their goals.

In summary, the topic of party switching is both normatively relevant (as it has the potential to undermine the democratic process), and theoretically significant (as it is linked to the general question of why parties exist and change).

1.2 Literature review

Given the importance of party unity for all aspects of the responsible party government model, it is not surprising that parties have long been considered to be unitary actors (Laver and Schofield 1998). This assumption is supported empirically by the fact that (most of the time) parties do act in a united manner (Laver 1999b). However, since the 1970s researchers have shown that some parties are divided into many different subgroups, i.e., *factions* (for an extensive discussion on the topic, see Sartori 1976, and in particular Chapter 4). Research has then been extended to other forms of intra-party divisions, like voting disunity (Kam 2009; Sieberer 2006), disagreement at party congresses (Greene and Haber 2016) and legislative speeches (Bäck, Debus, and Müller 2016), and generally on the lack of loyalty from party members (Close 2016). Among all the possible manifestations of lack of unity, party switching represents an extreme example, both in its collective forms, i.e. mergers

and splits (Mair 1990; Ibenskas 2016; Ceron 2015), and in individual instances, such as party hopping (Ágh 1999).

The study of switching has usually followed two different approaches[2]: the strategic and the institutional (Mershon 2014). The first looks at the individual incentives for defecting. Scholars assume that legislators are motivated by policy, career or (re)election concerns (Strøm 1997; Müller and Strøm 1999) and that they exploit their party affiliation in order to serve these goals. This would indicate that MPs change party when they cannot achieve their objectives.

This stream of literature goes back to the formal models developed by Aldrich and Bianco (1992), Laver and Kato (2001) and Laver and Benoit (2003). In particular the work by Laver and Kato suggests that every party is potentially subject to defections, if we assume that legislators are motivated by career concerns and that their party membership is a strategic choice. This approach to the study of switching has probably been the most popular, as it tries to solve the puzzle of why legislators would give up the party affiliation that allowed them to be elected. Among the several works done on switchers and their motivations, there are, for example, Heller and Mershon (2005, 2008), Desposato (2006), Di Virgilio, Giannetti, and Pinto (2012), O'Brien and Shomer (2013). All these studies use different kinds of proxies in order to check whether switchers are mostly motivated by one of the three aforementioned goals. Usually scholars infer legislators' motivations from characteristics of out-switching parties: For instance, if defectors are interested in obtaining career advancement, then they should leave opposition parties that offer them fewer opportunities for professional advancement. Other scholars instead have deduced switchers' goals from the timing of their change (Mershon and Shvetsova 2008; Pinto 2015). The argument is that legislators will pursue different goals at distinctive moments of the parliamentary cycle. Hence - for example - MPs looking for career benefits will most likely switch during the stage of the legislative term in which cabinet appointments, committee chairs or other prestigious posts are assigned.

The results produced by this kind of analysis are mixed (Radean 2017). For instance, not all the pieces of research confirm the hypothesis that politicians switch

[2]These two approaches are used to uncover the potential determinants of switching. I will only focus on them because this thesis uses defections as a dependent variable. The consequences of switching will not be analysed, but it is worth mentioning that there are also scholars who have explored the effect of switching. For instance, Ibenskas (2017) looks at the electoral faith of splinter vis-à-vis rump parties, while Grose and Yoshinaka (2003) at the electoral success of individual switchers in the American Congress. Others works have dealt with the consequences for legislators' careers (Yoshinaka 2005) or their voting behaviour (Hug and Wüest 2012; Nokken 2000).

to parties with more resources (in support, see, among others Desposato 2006; for opposite findings instead see, for example, O'Brien and Shomer 2013). The same goes for electoral incentives: while Desposato and Scheiner (2008) find that legislators in Brazil and Japan switch to parties that enhance their electoral prospects, this is not confirmed in the American context analysed by Castle and Fett (2000), while Klein (2016) shows how electoral pay-off plays are conditional on the kind of electoral system in place. Similarly, inconsistent findings do not allow us to corroborate the argument that ideological unfitness between parties and legislators leads the latter to change party (McElroy 2009; Heller and Mershon 2008).

Perhaps these conflicting results are due to the fact that most of the aforementioned works are single-case studies, which makes it very difficult to draw generalisations. Actually, the absence of clear findings on individual motivations suggests that MPs' goals might be affected by the institutional context in which MPs are embedded. Indeed, the second approach to the study of switching has stressed how legislators do not act in a vacuum, but that they are influenced by the institutional environment in which they operate. This institutional approach has sought to grasp whether specific institutions alter switching patterns. Specifically, research has been conducted on the influence of electoral systems (McLaughlin 2012), type of regime (Mershon and Shvetsova 2013) and general level of party system institutionalisation (Kreuzer and Pettai 2009). Also in the case of this approach, results are not always consistent with each other, especially when it comes to the effect of electoral rules. While Heller and Mershon (2005) and Mershon and Shvetsova (2013) find that proportional electoral systems encourage defections, in the analyses done by O'Brien and Shomer (2013) and Klein (2016), candidate-centred systems seemed to foster switching (see Chapter 5 for more details and references). Similarly, forms of government do not appear to correlate with different levels of defections (O'Brien and Shomer 2013; Cheibub 2007).

According to Mershon and Shvetsova (2013) this lack of findings is attributable to the narrow scope of (the few) comparative studies, that usually cover both a low number of countries and legislative terms and, therefore, can only capture a limited variation at the systemic level. Indeed, if switching is generally an understudied phenomenon (McElroy 2009), comparative works are even rarer. Nielsen, Andersen, and H. H. Pedersen (2018) argue that most of the articles dealing with party switching have focused their attention on the contexts in which defections occur more frequently, like Italy (Heller and Mershon 2005, 2008; Di Virgilio, Giannetti, and Pinto 2012), Brazil (Desposato 2006), Romania (Gherghina 2016), or Japan (Kato

and Yamamoto 2009), with the risk of over-estimating the scope of this phenomenon and with very limited chances to generalise the findings to other contexts.

To date, there have been only three genuinely comparative works on switching, done by O'Brien and Shomer (2013), Mershon and Shvetsova (2013) and Klein (2016). With the exception of Klein, who compares only countries from Eastern and Western Europe from 1990-2013[3], the first two comparative pieces suffer from the fact that they are a-theoretical comparisons, i.e., the selection of cases seems to be data-driven rather than theoretically justified. This means that the choice of countries is based on data availability and the results are therefore very fragmented both geographically and temporally (observations are taken at very distant points in time). The authors prefer to perform non-homogeneous comparisons in order to maximise the number of cases. Moreover, Mershon and Shvetsova include countries, such as Russia, that cannot be considered to be fully democratic and in which, therefore, the meaning of a switch might be completely different.

The second limit of the current literature on switching is that it still lacks a coherent theoretical framework (Nielsen, Andersen, and H. H. Pedersen 2018, p.2): while much has been written about why individual legislators would exit their parties, very little has been done both theoretically and empirically to explain why different countries and parties experience varying levels of defections. Indeed, if we assume that politicians are all motivated by the same set of goals, why are there countries as well as parties that are subject to a greater number of defections? In particular, party-level features have rarely been analysed per se, but rather have been considered as proxies to study individuals and their goals. In other words, in the attempt to uncover individual motivations to switch, previous works have collapsed or overlooked different sources of variance, that might have a potential impact on the scope of the phenomenon and, as a consequence, also on the reasons driving defectors. As a result of this dominant attention on switchers' objectives, "scientific cumulation of theoretical and empirical findings has proceeded at the individual level but has proven quite difficult at the systemic level" (Mershon and Shvetsova 2013, p.9).

Somehow connected to the absence of a coherent theory linking the various levels of analysis (individuals, parties and institutions), the literature on the topic suffers from another shortcoming related to the way switching is operationalised and analysed. In particular, scholars most often treat all forms of switching as equal: the *modality* of the defection is not taken into account. Kreuzer and Pettai (2009) classify switching based on 1) whether it is coordinated or uncoordinated (that is, if it occurs in a group or individually) and 2) its impact on the number of parliamentary

[3]But not all the countries in his sample are surveyed for the entire period of reference.

parties. Yet, other studies on switching have rarely followed up on this classification (with two notable exceptions: Mershon and Shvetsova 2013; Kemahlıoğlu and Sayarı 2017). However, as the results of Chapter 6 suggest, different types of switching might be affected by diverse factors, even just in terms of individual goals. Switchers might be pursuing different objectives when they change party individually or collectively. Accordingly, the absence of consistent findings in the literature might also be due to the fact that the various types of switching have been mostly overlooked by the literature. To put it differently, scholars may have obtained inconsistent results because the variables of interest might not exert the same influence over the diverse types of defections.

To summarise, despite being a phenomenon that has the potential to undermine the responsible party government model of democracy, switching has not received great attention in the literature. Moreover, the current literature on the topic is weakened by the following shortcomings:

1. Scarcity of consistent and homogeneous data that would permit the implementation of focused comparative analysis.

2. Lack of a coherent theoretical framework in which all the potential sources of variance are embedded.

3. A lack of accounting for different types of defections and their potential determinants.

The objective of this thesis is, therefore, to address these three gaps in the literature by:

1. Collecting data on defections from a clearly defined set of democracies (specifically most of Western European countries) for an extensive period of time (70 years) in order to have a homogeneous data set that will allow me to perform a focused comparison[4].

2. Developing a theoretical framework that does not only disentangle the role of legislators and their goals, but also considers the impact of party characteristics and institutional constraints.

3. Taking into account the modality of defections, generating different sets of expectations related to them and testing them empirically.

[4]See Chapter 3 for more details about list of countries covered and case selection.

1.3 Research questions

Having pointed out the gaps in the literature and sketched how this thesis will try to address them, I can proceed to spell out the research questions that will drive this work.

The first intent is to answer a rather simple question, that is, *what have the switching patterns been in Western Europe since the end of the Second World War?* Hence, the initial goal is to *describe* the development of party switching both comparatively and historically. This straightforward inquiry is linked to the issue of party decline versus adaptation. Examining the frequency at which parties in Europe experience extreme forms of disunity may help to evaluate how solid the widespread responsible party model of democracy is. In other words, one indirect contribution of this thesis is to test the "partyness" of politics (Katz 1986) in Western Europe and to contribute to the debate around party change.

The aim of this thesis is not only descriptive but also *explanatory*. In contrast to other studies on the topic, I will not address the question of why legislators switch, but will instead focus on two different types of variance: the one between parties, and the one between countries. The underlining research question is therefore the following: *why do different political parties and countries experience varying levels of switching?* Since empirically I will not be able to uncover the definitive *causes* of switching, the previous question should probably be interpreted as follows: *what are the factors that make certain parties and countries more likely to suffer from switching?*

Assuming that both party features and institutional characteristics are correlated with different levels of switching, the final step of the thesis will be to test whether the same variables are also linked to different types of defections. Specifically, I will distinguish between solo and collective forms of switching (see Section 1.4 and Chapter 6 for more details), develop specific expectations for each of these two types and test them using the same data set. The research question related to this last part of the thesis can be restated as: *what are the best predictors of both individual and collective de-affiliation strategies?*

1.4 How switching is defined and measured

The act of changing affiliation is commonly called "party switching", however it is not the only label used in the scientific literature and the media. For example, in the United Kingdom the phenomenon is known as "crossing the floor" (indeed, British

MPs who change party have to cross the room in other to join another party), while in New Zealand it is called "waka-jumping" (Janda 2009). Less frequently, politicians who change their party affiliation are labelled as "turncoats". Others have used the expression "inter-party mobility" (Shabad and Slomczynski 2004) or "parliamentary mobility". In Italy, the phenomenon has also been labelled as "changing uniform" (Verzichelli 2000), but sometimes scholars, as well as journalists (see for example the article by Polito 2017), refer to it as a specific form of *trasformismo* (Valbruzzi 2014).

In addition to the problem of referring to the same phenomenon with many different labels, the tag "party switching" is also vague, as some researchers believe that "switching" itself is just one possible de-affiliation strategy[5] (Kreuzer and Pettai 2003). Moreover, sometimes the label "party switching" is used to refer to a different political phenomenon, the decision of voters to change their electoral preferences (see, among others, Dassonneville and Dejaeghere 2014). In brief, confusion abounds and it makes it difficult to correctly identify what pieces of research have already been written on the topic.

One easy solution is to use the label "party switching" complemented by the adjective "legislative", so that it becomes clear that what we refer to is the practice of changing party in parliament by elected officials. While this is useful to locate the phenomenon of interest within the parliamentary arena and to distinguish it from electoral behaviour, the addition does not solve the issue of conceptual vagueness, that is whether switching or inter-party mobility should be used as the main label. Given that probably the most "consensual definition" (Mershon 2014, p.435) of de-affiliation behaviours is the one proposed by Heller and Mershon (2009, p.8), and they use "legislative party switching" as an umbrella label encompassing all the possible instances of legislators changing affiliation, for the rest of this work I will also use the same expression as the most generic term.

But how can we identify the cases that fall under this label? Or better, what do I consider to be legislative party switching? In order to classify relevant instances of inter-party movements as switching, I used two criteria following the suggestions of Heller and Mershon (2009, p.9). The first principle looks at the *direction* of change, that is where legislators switch to. By applying this criterion, switching can be observed in the following cases: 1) MPs join a party that already exists; 2) MPs

[5]According to the definition of Kreuzer and Pettai (2003), switching occurs only when a single legislator switches from two parties that already exist. The two authors identify another three possible switching strategies: *Fusion*, when two or more factions merge and form a new party; *Fission* when a factional breakaways leads to the foundation of a new political subject; and *Starting-Up* which "involves previously unaffiliated individuals creating a brand-new party and does not involve mobility between an existing exit or entry party" (p.79).

establish a new parliamentary group; and 3) MPs become independent. These are the three very basic instances of what I recorded as switching. According to this definition, switching takes place when there has been an actual change of affiliation, an *active* movement between two groups/statuses[6]. If, for example, an entire party changes its position towards the cabinet (that is, moving from the majority towards the opposition or vice versa), this can be seen as a "passive" change, but it is not an example of switching. The same applies to label changes: if a party modifies its name, this does not fall under the category of switching.

A second relevant dimension of classification has to do with the *modality* of a change and, more specifically, by whether or not movements are coordinated with each other. In this case, what is crucial is not only the direction of the changes, but also their *timing*. When switches take place simultaneously (or nearly) and they follow the same path (that is, they share party of origin and arrival), then they can be considered as coordinated or collective. On the contrary, if a change is isolated in time and/or takes a different direction, then it can be seen as uncoordinated, i.e., a solo switch. This distinction is crucial in this thesis because, as I will argue in Chapter 3 and 6, the logic of these two strategies are dissimilar and therefore they are also influenced by different sets of factors[7]. I shall label every instance of solo defection as "hopping", in line with Ágh (1999). Acquiring the status of independent is also an instance of party hopping. Instead, when legislators change collectively and establish a new group, their action can be defined as a "split", while when they join an existing party, this is an example of a "merger".

How does this definition translate empirically? In order to collect data on switching I relied foremost on information retrieved from the minutes of parliamentary sessions and/or legislative archives[8]. As already mentioned, a change must be *active* in order to be included in the list of defections. Concretely, this means that only when a change has been registered in the parliamentary records has it been added to the data set. Therefore, my operational definition of party switching can be formulated as any change of affiliation as recorded by parliamentary minutes.

By applying this operationalisation, the results is that expulsions are also recorded as switching. Indeed, banishments are usually registered in parliamentary minutes as regular affiliation changes. In other words, in most of the cases, it is almost

[6]For status I mean all instances in which a legislator becomes independent or leaves this position.

[7]Already Antonio Gramsci, in the early 1930s, highlighted the presence of two specific kinds of *trasformismo*. The first one is the "transformism of whole groups of extremists who crossed over to the moderate camp", but there is also a "'molecular' transformism, that is individual political figures moulded by the democratic opposition parties were incorporated one by one into the conservative-moderate 'political class'" (Gramsci 1992, Vol. 3, p.257).

[8]For more details on the data collection process for each country, see Appendix A.

impossible to tell whether a legislator spontaneously defected or whether s/he was expelled, just from reading the parliamentary records. Hence, for the sake of simplicity and accuracy, I did not make a distinction based on the degree of choice granted to switchers. This decision especially matters for Ireland and the United Kingdom where rebel MPs, i.e. those who do not vote according to the party line, are usually punished with the withdrawal of the so-called party whip.

On the contrary, I did not consider as switching all those movements that were rule-driven. In the countries in which a minimum and permanent number of MPs is necessary to form a parliamentary group, it might happen that, because of previous defections, a group no longer meets the numeric requirement and it is forced to dissolve. One could argue that there is no difference between being expelled and rule-driven changes. However, I believe that in the cases of whip withdrawal there is always an element of will: the rebel legislator actively decides to vote against the party line and knows that s/he might be sanctioned for his/her behaviour. In contrast, if a group is dismissed because of regulations, then these moves are not encompassing any active will. Actually, it could be said that these changes are involuntary and a collateral effect of defectors' choice to abandon their party. By excluding these mandatory moves, I make sure not to over-estimate the scope of switching. This caveat is particularly relevant in the Italian case, where the high incidence of switching has often led to the disbandment of groups that no longer met the numeric requirement.

The data set therefore collects all the inter-party movements witnessed by all the elected parties in the countries of interest from 1945 to 2015. This list of all the changes reveals the *quantity* of switching, but does not tell us anything about its *quality* and, more specifically, quality in relation to the distinction between individual and collective defections. Another operational definition is therefore needed to differentiate between solo and mass movements. As already mentioned in the literature review, until now there have been only two other studies trying to deal with the same issue, namely Mershon and Shvetsova (2013) and, more recently, Kemahlıoğlu and Sayarı (2017). These two works use quite different operational definitions of what should be considered as collective switching, but they are both based on a temporal and numerical criteria. Table 1.1 summarises the two definitions applied by the two studies as well as the operationalisation used in this thesis.

Mershon and Shvetsova (2013) look at "accumulated MP interparty mobility in a particular month" (p.135), that is whether in one month there have been more than 20 switches. For Kemahlıoğlu and Sayarı (2017), instead, collective switching takes place if "three or more deputies collectively decide to leave their party to join

Table 1.1: Operational definitions of collective switches

Authors	**Temporal criterion**	**Numeric criterion**	**Qualitative criterion**
Mershon & Shvetsova	1 month	20 switches	None
Kemahlıoğlu & Sayarı	1 month	3 MPs	None
Volpi	1 week	3 MPs or 5 MPs (only Italy, Germany, France)	Coordination

others" (p. 193). None of the works takes into account the direction of the changes, or the real degree of *coordination* between switchers, that is whether they share the group of origin and the one of arrival. The assumption in both works is that when in a month there are many changes, they might all be linked to each others. When many fellow MPs switch group, this might represent an incentive for other legislators to imitate them. Said differently, both for Mershon and Shvetsova, and Kemahlıoğlu & Sayarı, what matters for collective changes is above all the *volume* of switching.

An operationalisation that does not account also for the direction of the switches can be problematic because it might over-estimate the scope of collective defections. This is particularly the case for Kemahlıoğlu & Sayarı who set a rather low numerical criterion, with the consequence that half of the switchers in their data set have exited *en masse*. As a result, by not controlling for the actual *coordination* between defections that occurred within a short time frame, the risk is that changes which were totally un-related to each other fall under the category of collective switching. To put it differently, only looking at the volume of changes does not allow us to distinguish between movements produced by party splits and mergers (that, hence, have an impact on the number of parties) and a high level of "parliamentary volatility", that is many MPs who are only changing label but do not share a common project/will with other colleagues. In short, both Mershon and Shvetsova, and Kemahlıoğlu & Sayarı, face the risk of collapsing two situations together that are potentially very different.

In order to capture changes that are truly coordinated and synchronised, I add a qualitative dimension as well, to time and quantity. In particular, in my data set I classify as collective switching only those changes that 1) involved more than three legislators (the threshold is five MPs for larger assemblies, such as Germany, Italy and France which have more than 500 seats) 2) occur within a maximum of one week and above all, 3) share the group of departure and arrival. More concretely, if in one country four MPs switch from a party A to party B on the same day, they are all classified as group changes. However, if four MPs switch on the same day

from group A but two join group B, and the other two join group C, none of them falls under the category of collective defections. I believe that also looking at the actual path followed by switchers allows us to fully grasp the difference between uncoordinated and coordinated mobility.

1.5 Thesis structure

The present work is organised as follows: Chapter 2 spells out the general theoretical framework used to conceptualise switching. Specifically, I rely on the concepts of *exit*, *voice* and *loyalty* developed by Hirschman (1970) to clarify how party features and institutional designs affect the cost of and the opportunity for switching. The third chapter, instead, is a simple description of the patterns of party switching in general, in the fourteen countries analysed as well as in different party families. The goal of the chapter is to quantify the amount of switching and therefore to identify if there is any variance across countries, parties and time that needs to be explained. In this chapter I will not only look at the overall level of defections, but also at the development of individual and collective switching. Three empirical chapters follow. Chapter 4 studies the impact of party and party-system variables on the scope of defections, while Chapter 5 analyses the impact of three different institutions (namely, form of government, electoral system and parliamentary regulations). Both chapters lay out different sets of hypotheses that are developed following pre-existing literature on the topic but also on legislators' behaviour and generally on party politics. Moreover, in both chapters hypotheses are imagined for the overall scope of switching. It is in Chapter 6 that the difference between individual and collective switching is outlined theoretically (updating the hypotheses presented in the previous two chapters) and then tested statistically. Based on the findings of these three empirical chapters, I will conclude with some general remarks, presenting the contribution as well as the limits of the present work and showing some potential avenues for future research.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

On Switching as '*Exit*'

2.1 Introduction

As already mentioned in the literature review in the previous chapter (Section 1.2), the study of party switching has usually taken two different paths (O'Brien and Shomer 2013). On the one hand, scholars have looked at this phenomenon from an individual level perspective, trying to uncover the goals that legislators seek to achieve by changing their affiliation (Heller and Mershon 2005). On the other hand, other researchers have instead tried to assess the impact that institutions have on the probability that a politician changes party, usually performing a macro-level analysis of this behaviour (McLaughlin 2012). As a result of this bifurcation, the two different perspectives (micro and macro) have rarely been combined in one single theoretical framework. However, both legislators' motivations and institutions contribute to shaping and determining the scope of switching.

According to Strøm (1997), parliamentarians' own ambitions are probably the most important driver of their behaviour and, as a consequence, of their decision whether or not to keep their party label. As argued by Heller and Mershon (2005), ambitious legislators exploit their party affiliation in order to achieve their objectives. It is probably for this reason that most of the research conducted on legislative party switching has mainly been interested in uncovering defectors' goals. As a result, and also because of data limitations, previous works have mostly analysed single countries rather than comparing different polities, and additionally the influence of the political context on the decision to switch has usually been ignored. There has been very little systematic theoretical effort to speculate on how switching behaviour varies across different institutional environments. In other words, while the literature

has advanced in providing explanations for the individual-level variance, differences between countries and over time have yet to be accounted for.

The importance of macro and meso-level explanations is crucial to understanding why the scope of switching varies systematically between polities as well as historically. Looking only at individual motivations does not allow us to answer to this question. If we assume - like most of the literature has done - that politicians are all driven by the same universal goals, then this assumption does not tell us anything about why the pervasiveness of defections changes significantly across different contexts. There must be something else, related to political configurations and organisations, that makes switching more or less likely to occur.

If we want to explain switching beyond one single case, any theoretical framework must try to combine and reconcile the two different perspectives adopted so far. The first objective of the analytical framework presented in this chapter is precisely to put these micro, meso and macro-level explanations together in one single scheme. Not by chance, one of the few existing comparative studies on legislative party switching, has tried to put forward the argument that both context and individual motivations should be taken into account (O'Brien and Shomer 2013).

There is a second aspect on which my theoretical framework differs from other previous works on switching: its focus on the *cost* of defecting rather than on its benefits. Most of the work done on this topic relies on the idea that switching is mostly beneficial for MPs, and the costs related to this action are rarely fully assessed. This argument has already been proposed by Yoshinaka (2015), who asserts that the idea that defecting includes costs is not the dominant claim in the literature. As a result, usually costs are only briefly mentioned and rarely do scholars try to evaluate them and their implications. Additionally, Yoshinaka underlines how often the literature has focused on electoral costs when exploring the costs associated with switching party[1]. However, not all the costs related to defections are electoral, they may also be related to party organisations and their leaders (as Yoshinaka shows) or other institutional configurations. Following Yoshinaka, but also the work of Mershon (1996) on the costs of making and breaking coalitions, the analytical framework used for this thesis attempts to gauge the costs that institutions and political parties impose on potential switchers.

There is another reason to prefer an analysis of the costs of switching over an analysis of the advantages. In fact, defection costs can be more easily assessed by politicians, as well as researchers, than the benefits they will get from their actions.

[1]Not by chance, the nature of the electoral system is the institution that has received the greatest attention when explaining defections (see, for instance, Thames 2007; or Klein 2016).

While legislators might be aware of how difficult it is to take a new label, they cannot be sure that they will fully benefit from doing so. Clearly, legislators are able to gauge the potential benefits that could be achieved by switching. Actually, we could assume that costs and benefits are related to each other. When defecting is extremely costly, then it is likely that MPs will expect greater benefits in return. The more obstacles legislators have to overcome in order to change party, the more beneficial that action needs to be in order for it to be undertaken[2]. Yet, I would like to underline that these are MPs' *expected* rewards, not necessarily their ultimate achievements.

Another aspect that matters in this respect is whether defectors act based on a short- or long-term perspective[3]. A defection could be beneficial in the short term, but extremely disadvantageous in the long run. Let us consider the following example: there is an MP who is concerned about his/her re-election and switches to a party that guarantees him/her a candidacy. However, in the end, the defector does not get re-elected. Momentarily, the switcher was rewarded, but ultimately the decision did not bring the expected compensation. Therefore, *contingency* plays a very important role in determining the outcomes of a switch, but since this uncertainty (together with legislators' time perspective) is very difficult to model, I decided to look at the costs and not at the gains of switching. Expressed differently, while potential benefits might be identified (e.g. re-selection, re-election, more prestigious posts, cabinet positions), it is more difficult to understand under which structural conditions these benefits are more likely to be distributed. The only structural factor that I could imagine makes a difference in terms of benefits is the size of the governing majority. Oversized governments would be the least beneficial case, as they are less vulnerable to switching, and therefore have less incentives to distribute rewards to potential defectors. Conversely, minimum winning coalitions might be the most favourable situation because of their numeric vulnerability and might offer tempting rewards to those who want to join their ranks. But apart from this variable, I do not see how we can a priori identify structural conditions that make switching more beneficial. I argue,therefore, that costs depend more on the context than benefits and this is coherent with the choice of carrying out the analysis at the macro-level.

This theoretical decision does not rule out the importance that ambition and desired benefits play in driving a politician out from his/her original party. In the real world, legislators make their decision about whether or not to keep their label by weighing both costs and benefits, however, for the aforementioned reasons, I

[2]The institutional configurations that I will identify are most costly, therefore, could be also seen as the contexts in which switching is the most profitable.

[3]Something that is also extremely difficult to measure, especially with my research design.

prefer to put an emphasis on costs rather than on gains. Furthermore, in order to assess what the benefits connected to switching are would require a completely different empirical strategy that does not fit the overall goal of the present work. To identify whether defectors profited from their change of alliance, we should study their political career and verify whether promotions (both in terms of posts or re-election) followed a switch or not. However, that research question would focus more on the effect of switching than on its determinants, which instead are the object of study of this work.

In order to consider in one framework both individual and institutional levels and also to gauge the costs associated with switching, my theoretical scheme uses the concepts of *Exit, Voice* and *Loyalty* developed by Hirschman (1970, 1980). In the rest of the chapter I will first describe how Hirschman defines these three concepts, then I will show how they have been used in the political science literature and more specifically to analyse defections and party splits. Finally, I will introduce my own analytical framework.

2.2 Hirschman's model and its applications in political science

According to Hirschman when a firm experiences a decline in the quality of its products or services, consumers have two potential reactions: either to stop buying from that firm, that is *exit*, or to express their dissatisfaction to the firm's management, that is *voice*. Whether a consumer will opt for *exit* or *voice* depends on a rational evaluation of costs and benefits associated with each option. But a consumer's decision is also profoundly affected by *loyalty*, which reduces the chances that a consumer will make use of the *exit* path, because it makes leaving more costly to them. In Hirschman's scheme, while *exit* has usually been studied by economists, *voice* is seen as the "political action par excellence" (1970: p.16).

Hirschman's scheme is simple and straightforward and this probably explains its success and numerous applications. In the words of Barry (1974, p.82), "Hirschman succeeds by the use of this simple framework in drawing together a number of apparently disparate phenomena". It is not surprising then that his model has been used in fields such as social psychology, labour economics, management and marketing (for a complete review of the various uses of the model, see Dowding et al. 2000). However, according to Van Haute (2015) political scientists have largely neglected Hirscham's concepts. By the same token, Dowding et al. (2000) state that in comparative politics *exit, voice* and *loyalty* are used as labels for the processes under

investigation, but the model has rarely been formally tested as it has been in other disciplines.

An exception is represented by the theoretical contribution by Van Haute (2015) on the study of party membership. The author uses the concepts developed by Hirschman to study the cases in which party members decide not to renew their affiliation. This situation has something in common with legislative party switching, as the latter can be seen as a special case of members abandoning their party membership. The action is similar, but the determinants are different, given that professional politicians have much more at stake than common citizens. Another application of Hirschman to politics was carried out by Langston (2002) to study party leaders' strategies in Mexico, a regime characterised by an hegemonic party.

Interestingly enough, if generally in political science the use of Hischman's model has been limited, it has been applied and tested to describe such phenomena as switching and party splits. It is indeed pretty straightforward to consider politicians leaving their party (alone or in a group) as instances of *exit*. Starting from the collective form of switching, Eubank, Gangopadahay, and Weinberg (1996) analyse the reactions of party members to the ideological transformation undergone by the Italian Communist Party between 1989 and 1991 using Hirschman's categories. Their findings demonstrate that members made use of both *voice* and *exit* options. In particular they found that the geographical areas that most opposed the party's ideological reform, were also the places that lost most of their party members. Moreover, their findings underline that two types of *loyalty* played a role in the process. The first kind was directed towards the party organisation and it inhibited *exit*. However, the second form of *loyalty*, whose object was instead ideology, was a driver of switching. This distinction, as I will discuss in the following section, is also relevant for my theoretical argument. The same model has been used by Salucci (2008) to examine another split that occurred within the Italian left, that is the breakup of the Democratic Left party, when the party itself decided to merge with the leftist faction of the former Christian Democrats to establish the new Democratic Party in 2008. Overall, these works show that Hirschman's categories can be applied to the study of party change.

Even more directly related to the object of study in this thesis, is the work from Kato (1998) who analyses the disintegration of two Japanese political parties (the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party and the Democratic Socialist Party of Japan) through the framework developed by Hirschman, to which the author makes some substantial amendments. Adopting an individual level perspective and analysing the behaviour of MPs during key parliamentary stages, she finds that *voice* and *exit*

are not two mutually exclusive reactions, but that usually Japanese defectors were also those that made most use of *voice*. In other words, according to Kato, *voice* precedes *exit*.

All the aforementioned contributions show that Hirschman's scheme can be extremely useful when analysing the phenomena that are investigated in this dissertation, that indeed deals with both individual and collective forms of *exit*. I will discuss in further details the use of the three concepts in Hirschman, as well as by other authors, in the remaining sections of this chapter, after having sketched my own theoretical scheme.

2.3 Theoretical model and its components

Let us assume that a party is experiencing a decline in its performances. There will be MPs that are unaware of this decline, or who are still satisfied with the performance of the party. Unaware and content legislators will stay put. On the other hand, when politicians notice the decline, then they can either exercise *voice*, abandon the party, that is *exit*, or wait until the situation improves and stay *loyal*. My central argument is that the availability of *exit*, *voice* and *loyalty* depends on the institutional and political context in which legislators are embedded. In certain polities, institutions combine in a way that makes the *exit* option relatively lacking in costs. This means that politicians do not encounter legal or political obstacles when they want to switch and, additionally, they do not face any serious consequences, neither politically nor legally. In other settings, in contrast, inter-party movements are discouraged by institutions, and switchers face more severe repercussions, like - for example - giving up their seat in parliament. If differing institutions therefore mainly affect the costs of *exit*, the cost of *voice* is instead the result of specific party features. Party characteristics determine the space that members are given to express their dissent, together with any consequences that this option entails. I expect *exit* and *voice* to be inversely related. This means that when the cost of *voice* is very high, it is more likely that politicians will consider the *exit* option and the expected switching rate will increase. On the contrary, when the cost of *voice* is low, politicians have fewer incentives to exit, and therefore the expected switching rate will be lower.

To summarise, as it can be seen in Figure 2.1, politicians' behaviour is mediated by institutional and political factors, which influence the availability of the *exit* and *voice* options and their relative costs. Politicians will behave according to the option they have greatest access to and its consequences. As a result, we will

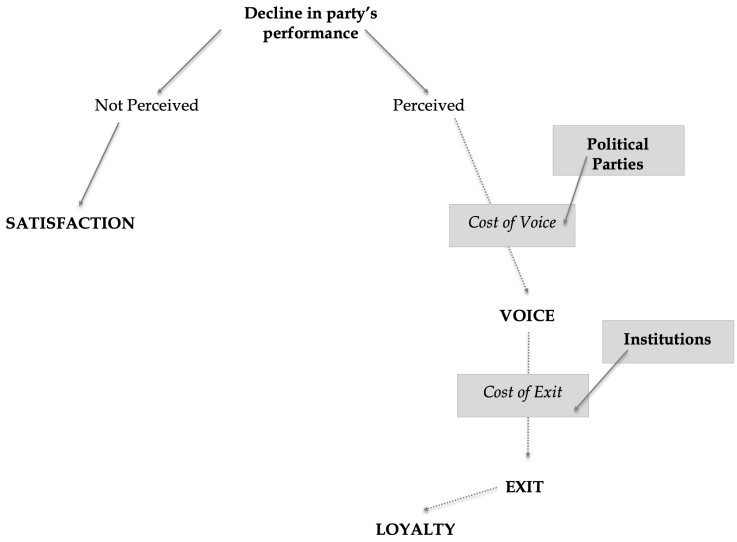


Figure 2.1: Theoretical Framework for Party Switching

witness different aggregated behaviours (i.e. different levels of *exit*) on the basis of alternative institutional settings and party features. As I will explain in greater detail in the following paragraphs, I see *voice* as a predecessor of *exit*, while *loyalty* as the residual option that is selected when *voice* and *exit* are impossible to exercise.

In the following paragraphs I will spell out in detail all the elements of the model, starting from the sources of MPs' dissatisfaction with party performances, the meaning of *loyalty*, the relationship between party characteristics and the costs of *voice* and, finally, between institutions and the costs of *exit*.

2.3.1 Decline in quality: Sources of MPs' dissatisfaction

In Hirschman's scheme, *voice* and *exit* are both trigged by "an absolute or comparative deterioration of the quality of the product of services provided" by a given firm[4] (1970: p.4). Hirschman does not explore the causes of this quality decline as they are meant to be unspecified and random and he also does not provide the reader with an objective measure for the fall in quality. According to Van Haute (2015),

[4]Already on this point Hirschman has been criticised by Barry (1974) according to whom it is not only the decline in quality that produces a reaction by consumers, but also differential quality across products. In other words, there is not a specific reason to believe that *exit/voice* will be set in motion only by a decline in quality (Dowding et al. 2000), but also by a misapprehension about the quality of the product in the first place. However, I think that Hirschman implicitly acknowledges this scenario, because he talks about a "*comparative* deterioration". It can be argued, in fact, that realising that there are better products/services is equivalent to experiencing a quality fall. Instead of recognising that a product is not as good as it used to be, a consumer becomes aware that that product was not as good as s/he previously assumed.

for the study of party organisations, it is not so important for there to be a tangible drop in quality, because what matters is the *perception* of this decline. Political parties provide their members with goods that are not only material. Because of their "abstract" nature it is extremely difficult to judge whether their value has decreased. Hence, the *feeling* that a party is no longer able to supply a certain service is already sufficient to activate a reaction in its members, even when an actual decline has not taken place.

Why would an MP be dissatisfied with the current status of his/her party? Or, to put it differently, why would a legislator feel that his/her party is not providing him/her with the same standard of goods? The literature usually assumes that politicians are driven by three main concerns: policy, office or votes (Müller and Strøm 1999; Fenno 1973). However, I argue that fundamentally politicians are either concern about their own personal interests or for the status of a common good.

The classification of goals derived by Müller and Strøm (1999) was originally imagined for political parties. The two authors argue that there are three models of party behaviour, namely, office-seeking, policy-seeking and vote-seeking parties, but that scholars have often used the same categories to describe the behaviour of individuals. This procedure implicitly assumes that composite actors (parties) and individual ones (MPs) share the same goals. However, parties have a limited set of objectives, which transcend individual members' own objectives. Single politicians, instead, may act to serve interests that do not completely overlap with those of their party organisations, but this fact does not change the nature of their party's objectives. In other words, political parties' goals are not the result of the sum of the goals of their members. Therefore, the use of the same categories of objectives for organisations and individuals is not particularly useful, because there is a risk of confusing and reducing the range of individuals' potential goals that is, in reality, much wider.

Other scholars use Fenno's (1973) classification of congressmen's goals when they act in committees. Fenno argues committee members are driven by three specific motivations: 1) being re-elected, 2) approving good public policies, 3) increasing prestige within the chamber. However, as Smith (1986) points out, "the goals Fenno identifies are goals of members in committee; they are not necessarily goals the same members pursue outside of their committees". In this case, scholars apply a framework imagined for a specific context (namely Congress' committees) to MPs' behaviour and affiliation strategies in parliament. But this procedure is equally misleading, because it assumes that MPs behave in the same way when acting in large assemblies and small panels.

To summarise, my argument is that in order to study switching behaviour we should design specific categories of goals, instead of using those that were imagined for other settings or, even worse, for different kinds of actors. What motivations should be seen as relevant for MPs to switch, then? Probably, the easiest way to think about all the potential sources of MPs' dissatisfaction is to imagine them as a continuum that ranges between two poles: one category related to legislators' pure personal interest, while on the other end there is what shall be called "common interest".

Concerns such as re-election and career advancement can be seen as instances of what I term personal benefits or opportunism. On the opposite, conflicts dealing with policy, ideology[5], or leadership[6] might be seen as related to the category of general interest. In this last case, legislators are dissatisfied not because of their individual status, but because of certain dynamics developing within their party to which they might even be willing to sacrifice their personal advantage. Following this argument, I think that we can simplify the scheme by saying that legislators might be dissatisfied with their party either because their group is not providing them with the expected personal benefits, or because they are unhappy with the current situation within the party. These two categories can be seen as the main sources of quality decline within party organisations.

Sources of dissatisfaction are also relevant, because, as I will argue later, they also contribute to the origin of differing types of switching. We can imagine that politicians driven by opportunism will mainly change party individually. Why so? First of all, when a legislator switches alone s/he maximises the benefit associated with the switch. Secondly, s/he can be almost sure about the outcome of the defection. Acting with others, instead, not only implies that rewards will have to be shared, but also that the outcome will not necessarily be the one they aimed for. It is for this reason, that I assume that politicians whose dissatisfaction does not relate to personal concerns, will most likely switch together with other colleagues. Interestingly enough, Dowding et al. (2000), in their revision of Hirschman's model, distinguish between collective and individual forms of both *exit* and *voice.*

Having clarified what are in my scheme the origins of legislators' dissatisfaction, I can now turn to the explanation of what leads them to eventually *exit* their original party.

[5]Ideology includes all those cases in which a political party undertakes an ideological shift that is not supported by all its members, as analysed in the works by Eubank, Gangopadahay, and Weinberg (1996) or Salucci (2008).

[6]We could imagine a situation in which legislators are not supportive of a new leadership, like in the case of the English Labour Party after Jeremy Corbyn was appointed leader in 2015 (for more on the topic, see Dorey and Denham 2016; Crines, Jeffery, and Heppell 2017).

2.3.2 What is *Loyalty*?

Of the three concepts developed by Hirschman, *loyalty* is probably the most vague (Van Haute 2015) and most criticised one (Dowding et al. 2000). Hirschman uses this concept in order to explain why in certain cases, like for instance within a family or a state, the *exit* option is not the most prevalent mechanism of redress. *Loyalty* is related to a willingness "to trade the certainty of exit for the uncertainties of improvement in the deteriorated product" (1970: p.77) and the presence of *loyalty* increases the likelihood of *voice*. At the same time, in other passages of the book, Hirschman seems to describe *loyalty* as a different response to quality decline that it is used by consumers who "simply refuse to exit and suffer in silence, confident that things will soon get better" (1970: p.38).

We are therefore faced with two possible uses of *loyalty*, either as an attitude or as a third possible reaction to quality decline. According to Van Haute (2015), in the literature we find both uses of the concept, although most of the time the use as a psychological variable seems prevalent, at least in political science. Nevertheless, in other fields, like labour sociology, management and more generally psychology, Hirschman's original model has been extended and *loyalty* is treated as a separate behavioural category, together with *neglect*, that is "just letting things fall apart" (Rusbult, Zembrodt, and Gunn 1982, p.1231), though this is a category that I do not take into account. For instance, according to Farrell 1983, when workers are dissatisfied with their job, loyalist behaviour may constitute an independent course of action between staying and leaving, or a transitory status leading to the other two responses if the situation does not improve. This definition of *loyalty* describes all these situations in which dissatisfaction does not automatically give way to attempts at redress. For sure this mechanism applies to consumers who - despite not being fully satisfied with a given product - do not want to buy a different one, nor do they formally complaining about the problem with the company. But the same process can also take place in the minds of legislators and party members, who stay loyal even though not fully convinced, because they are unwilling to bear the costs associated with both *exit* and *voice*[7].

Following the argument just presented, within my framework, I use *loyalty* as a separate behavioural category to describe the case in which legislators do not make use of either *exit* or *voice*[8]. I want to stress that in my scheme *loyalty* is a reaction

[7]We should not forget that in Hirschman, *voice* is seen as the most costly reaction to quality decline (1970: p.40), because it is personal (the consumer needs to put his/her name on the complaint) and more difficult to organise collectively.

[8]For those who would recommend the use of *loyalty* as a psychological variable, the category could also be renamed as "*non-exit*", although *voice* would also fall under this label. For this

to quality decline and therefore it does not apply to MPs who are satisfied with the current status of their party and are hence assumed of needing neither to *exit* nor to *voice*[9]. It is a path that is not usually analysed, because satisfied members are not even considered in Hirschman's scheme and its subsequent applications (Dowding et al. 2000). *Loyalty*, on the contrary, describes the situation of all those legislators who are not satisfied but - as described above - decide to silently stay in the party. In this case, most likely, *loyalty* is chosen because the other two options (*exit* and *voice*) are impossible to employ.

From a purely behavioural perspective, *satisfaction* and *loyalty* cannot be distinguished, as they both manifest as silent non-exits. All those MPs who never leave their party and who never use the types of tools that can be seen as proxies of *voice*[10] can be considered as loyal. However, from their behaviour we cannot tell whether they are satisfied MPs or silently disappointed legislators. In this case, the only way to assess MPs' satisfaction would be through survey research or interviews with elites. However, on the one hand *loyalty* is not the object of study in this work, and on the other hand, for the very specific nature of this thesis' research design (historical and comparative), it is not possible to integrate the analysis of switching with research on *loyalty* as well[11]. Therefore, at least in this work, the distinction between silently dissatisfied and satisfied MPs is bound to be unknown, but theoretically I still consider them as two different categories.

What factors determine whether an MP will opt for *loyalty*? I assume that this reaction is deeply affected by the identification and the attachment that a legislators has to his/her party. Among the aspects that can foster this group identification there are, according to Kato (1998), organisational factors (e.g. party features). However, I think that individual characteristics also play what is probably a more important role in defining whether an MP, and especially a dissatisfied MP, will keep his/her party label. Among the individual characteristics that the literature has identified to be correlated with switching there are seniority and ranking within the party organisation (Mershon 2014), as well as an individual's attachment to the

reason I prefer to stick to the name *loyalty*, as otherwise it would be necessary to call it "silent non-exit".

[9]In theory we could also expect satisfied MPs to *voice*, for the simple fact that there are also people for whom participation is a value per se. This form of participation can be called "expressive" and it is characterised by the fact that the reward of bearing the costs of a specific action is intrinsic to the activity itself.

[10]Kato (1998) operationalises *voice* as voting against the party line in the case of confidence votes.

[11]Elite surveys are relatively recent and comparative efforts are even rarer, for more details see Hoffmann-Lange (2006).

organisation and personal relationships with other fellows[12]. We can imagine that, for instance, a more experienced MP (or an MP that occupies a higher status within the party organisation), will probably incur fewer costs when voicing their concerns (and at the same time higher personal costs in exiting the organisation). Conversely, less-practised legislators are likely to stay silent in the case of dissatisfaction. But *loyalty* is also deeply affected, as I will show in the next sections, by the cost of *exit* and *voice*. If leaving the party is too harmful (or simply impossible), then dissatisfied legislators will either express their concerns or - if this option is also not feasible - stay put.

2.3.3 Political parties and the cost of *Voice*

Voice represents for Hirschman the attempt to modify a state of affairs, rather than escape from it. To put it differently, while *exit* is desertion, *voice* is articulation. For this reason, *voice* is more important within organisations than for companies. This argument explains why, according to Hirschman, *voice* is the typical reaction to quality decline in the political sphere. Kato (1998) states that members of political groups resemble quality-conscious consumers, who usually resort first to *voice* when they disagree with organisational activities. Following this idea, I assume that indeed the most frequently chosen option for legislators will be voicing their concerns. Given the investment that politicians have made to join and support their party, they will first of all try to improve the situation, verbalising their dissatisfaction. In this sense, I agree with Kato (1998) that, within political parties, *voice* can be seen as a predecessor to *exit*.

If *voice* is the main reaction to a quality decline within political organisations, why do certain legislators not make use of this option? I assume that legislators resort to *exit* only when *voice* is either too costly, impossible to exercise, or completely ineffective (that is a failed *voice*). This argument is already presented by Hirschman himself, when he affirms that "the decision whether to exit will often be taken in the light of the prospects for the effective use of voice" (p.37), that is on the ability to take up such an option and to be heard. Langston (2002) makes a similar point when she says that *exit* will be used in situations in which either the cost of switching is low or the price of voicing discontent is high. Similarly, according to Kato (1998), among the factors that have an impact on the decision between *exit* or *voice* there is the ease with which this latter option can be exercised by party members and, I add, its efficacy. My central argument is that the "ease", efficacy

[12]On the importance of group linkages and party switching, see the doctoral dissertation of Tunkis (2018).

and the costs related to the use of *voice* are mainly influenced by parties' features. This point is well explained by Eubank, Gangopadahay, and Weinberg (1996), when they say that in certain parties the expression of internal dissent in any form[13] is unacceptable and this leaves changing allegiance as the only option for dissatisfied members. In other words, *voice* is not equally accepted and/or tolerated not in all political parties and this makes them more vulnerable to switching.

Party characteristics that are linked to the space allowed for members to express dissent can be divided in three main groups[14]:

1. *Ideology* affects the cost of *voice* because it influences the parties' organisational structures and the level of internal democracy (Gauja 2013a), that is, the room granted to the verbalisation of concerns. As we can learn from the work by Eubank, Gangopadahay, and Weinberg (1996), old communist parties, for example, tolerated only minor expressions of dissent.

2. *Organisational features* and in particular the level of institutionalisation of a given party might also determine the openness granted to legislators. For instance, less institutionalised parties might not yet have developed mechanisms to handle internal conflicts, which in turn might expose them to a greater number of defections.

3. *Power position*, or the governing status of a party. Governing parties face more pressure to act cohesively in order to implement their programs, but this might discourage MPs to voice their doubts, as disunity could harm both the survival of the cabinet and its future electoral success (Greene and Haber 2015).

To summarise my argument, dissatisfied politicians usually channel their concerns through *voice*, however parties grant to their members different levels of opportunity for conveying discontent. In parties that do not tolerate dissent and

[13]One could theoretically distinguish between private and public uses of voice. The former refer to disagreement expressed "behind close doors", like party congresses or in smaller meetings of politicians. The latter, instead, encompass cases such as voting against the party line or dissent articulated in parliamentary speeches. Both forms of expression can be equally harmful (see, for instance, Ceron 2015; Greene and Haber 2015) and therefore both are relevant within this framework, even though most likely private expression of dissent might be more tolerated within parties. Private *voice* can still be not effective, though and lead to the decision to switch.

[14]The various factors and their impact over the probability of *exit* will be discussed at length in Chapter 4. In addition to party-level characteristics, I will also test the impact that party-system features (such as fragmentation, polarisation and volatility) on scope of switching. These variables, while not being directly related to the cost of *voice* might still affect the decision to leave the party. However, compared to institutions, whose role will be defined in the following subsection, party system features are more subject to changes over-time and therefore I will use them to tackle diachronic variance.

that are intransigent with their own rules (Ceron 2015), *voicing* is too costly and members can express their disappointment mostly/exclusively through a defection. Hence, parties - in establishing the internal level of *voice* - could be in a way directly responsible for the amount of *exit* they experience.

2.3.4 Political institutions and the cost of *Exit*

The relationship between the concepts of *exit* and *voice* has been the object of most of the critiques to Hirschman's work. Barry (1974) states that *exit* and *voice* are not two alternatives because they could be combined in four options: *silent-non-exit, silent-exit, loud-exit, loud-non-exit.* Hence, for Barry, party members have to first decide whether to stay or to leave and then they have to select the way to do it. Similarly, Dowding et al. (2000) agree that *exit* and *voice* should not be interpreted as two mutually exclusive alternatives, because a consumer can use these two tools simultaneously. Van Haute (2015) also imagines a typology in which *exit* and *non-exit* are combined with voice/silence and destructive/constructive attitudes towards the organisation.

On this point, I do not agree that Hirschman defines the two reactions as mutually exclusive. He clearly states that the *voice* option is either a complement to *exit* or a substitute for it (p.30). In addition, he acknowledges that consumers might stay with a given firm without expressing their concerns, that is a *silent-non-exit.* Hence, within the original scheme the possibility of combining *exit* and *voice* is already present. Moreover, three of the four categories proposed by Barry can be assimilated into the original ones. Specifically, a *silent-non-exit* is actually *loyalty.* By the same token, a *loud-non-exit* is *voice* and a *silent-exit* is simply an *exit.* The only problematic category is the one of *loud-exit*, which I think is still an instance of *exit.* To this respect, we should not confuse *reactions* with *modalities.* Let me clarify this point: as already mentioned, I see three possible reactions to decline: *loyalty*, *voice* and *exit.* I acknowledge the fact that staying and leaving can either be silent or loud, but I think that these are two different approaches to making use of the same options. No matter whether a politicians defects quietly or noisily, the action of interest (especially in the framework of this thesis) is still *exit. Voice* that comes from a former member represents a critique between parties, rather than a concern raised within a party. It is for this reason, that in my theoretical model, I do not combine *exit* and *voice* into one typology.

As already explained, in my scheme *exit* is conceived as a reaction to dissatisfaction when the *voice* option is too costly, impossible to exercise or simply ineffective. It is the absence, inability or inefficacy of voicing that triggers *exit.* Hence, articu-

lation and desertion are alternatives to each other, even though the former option - given the specific nature of party organizations - should precede the latter, similarly to the model by Kato (1998). However, the decision to leave a party is not only affected by the cost of voice, but also by the costs inherent to exit. Yoshinaka (2015) already puts forward this hypothesis when he says that "what determines whether *exit* will be chosen is, among other things, the cost of switching parties" (p.29). By looking at *exit* costs we might be able also to account for the different scope in the number of defections between countries. The cost of *voice* explains why certain parties are more vulnerable to defections, that is inter-party variance. However, *exit* is not used with the same frequency in all the countries and this variation might be ascribed to a higher or lower cost of breaking away.

In my framework, political institutions are the factor that mainly affect the costs of defection. In certain countries, switching is less difficult for a legislator. This means that potential switchers are both legally allowed to change party and do not incur in any sanction after a change. In contrast, there are countries in which switching is highly regulated (e.g. limited to specific periods of the legislative term) and sometimes defectors are even charged with legal consequences, sometimes to the extent that, in polities like Portugal, switchers are forced to give up their own seat. Similarly, according to Kato (1998), barriers to exit also influence MPs' decisions to exit or to voice. The scope of switching, therefore, should vary based on the costs imposed by different kinds of institutions.

There are three institutions that might affect the costs of switching[15], namely:

1. The *form of government* plays a role because the pressure towards unity is higher in regimes in which the executive can be discarded by a parliamentary vote (Bowler, D. M. Farrell, and Katz 1999). In such regimes, the importance of party unity increases alongside the cost of switching.

2. *Electoral systems* affect the cost of switching because they generate incentives for politicians to cultivate their personal reputation, rather than relying only on their party label for their (re)election (Carey and Shugart 1995). These different incentives, might, in turn, make it more or less easy for politicians to change affiliation. For instance, according to Ceron (2015), under closed-list proportional representation systems the likelihood of party splits is higher, because of the lower cost of *exit*.

[15] As for party-level characteristics, the theoretical and empirical relationship between each institution and the cost and occurrence of *exit* will be analysed in detail in Chapter 5.

3. The institution that most deeply affects the cost of switching is *parliamentary regulations* and in particular those rules that discipline how parliamentary party groups can be established and dissolved. Regulations play a central role because they define whether and, in some cases, how MPs can defect from their original party. These rules determine the modalities for switching and the stricter they are, the more costly the action.

In short, the decision to change affiliation is not only trigged by the absence of *voice*, but also by the costs related to the change itself. These costs are mainly influenced by political institutions and the way they combine with each other in the various settings.

The costs that institutions impose on potential switchers are also revealing of their motivations. I suppose that the higher the cost of defecting, the more "serious" the reason behind this action. Changing affiliation in a very costly institutional environment means that legislators are willing to bear these costs. I assume that this happens especially when MPs switch to pursue a common interest for which they are even ready to sacrifice personal gain. Therefore, I expect that when switching is costly, it will not only take place less frequently, but that it will also be driven by all those motivations that I categorised as "general concerns". This hypothesis will be explored in more depth in Chapter 5.

2.3.5 Individual and collective switching and their costs

As already mentioned in Chapter 1, one of the goals of this thesis is to take into account the modality of defections by distinguishing between solo switchers and collective changes. How does this distinction fit in to the overall theoretical framework presented so far? For simplicity, I assume that a legislator will first of all decide whether s/he wants to switch or not, based on the costs imposed by the political and institutional variables identified in the previous sub-sections. Subsequently the MP will choose the modality of their defection. This second decision will be based on two aspects: 1) the motivation of the MP and 2) the relative cost of each strategy. I have already mentioned in Section 2.3.1 how switchers' goals can be linked to the two forms of defection. According to Kemahlıoğlu and Sayarı (2017), solo switchers are usually driven by electoral calculations and generally, I would add, their personal benefit. On the contrary, the two authors argue that collective changes are most likely affected by policy-related factors or, based on the scheme developed above, by ideological concerns.

However, potential defectors cannot simply select the modality of the switch based on their own motivations, they will also have to weigh the costs of each option. First of all, when a politician switches alone, s/he faces different consequences compared to those who switch in a group. The estimates of costs and benefits are thus different for these two classes. Group switchers face the problem of coordination, which is a collective action problem (Olson 1971), but they also share the potential negative consequences of their decision. Individual switchers, in contrast, do not need to coordinate with anyone else, but they bear the costs of abandoning their groups entirely on their own. In other words, when switching in a group, legislators share both the material and psychological costs of defecting, that are therefore lower. This advantages of collective de-affiliation strategies are counterbalanced by the fact that the individual potential benefits linked to this decision are more difficult to assess. Indeed, the expected benefits will most likely have to be split among the faction and the effects of the switch are also harder to weight. Conversely, individual switchers face higher costs related to their action, but they can be sure that, in the case of success, their decision will be rewarded.

Moreover, the decision to opt for one de-affiliation strategy or the other might depend on the context and the related costs. We can indeed expect that some of the explanatory factors that will be analysed might increase the costs of switching alone, without affecting the costs of defecting collectively (and vice versa). For instance, strict parliamentary regulations usually aim to reduce the incidence of collective defections, but solo switches are still possible. In this case, therefore, the cost of defecting particularly applies only to the group de-affiliation strategy but not to the other. In Chapter 6 I will explain in detail how the various party characteristics and institutional features affect the relative costs of these two different strategies. What matters for the moment is the fact that I expect individual and collective switching to vary coherently with their relative costs. This means that either individual and collective switching should only be selected when the conditions make each option not particularly costly.

Clearly, this argument is a simplification of reality, as legislators make the decision to switch and how to do it at the same time, but to divide the decision process into two steps is useful to explain why I do not discuss here how combinations of factors affect the costs of individual and collective defections.

2.4 Chapter conclusions

In this chapter I put forward the overarching theory that will guide this empirical analysis of party switching in Western Europe. The model presented is inspired by the categories of *Exit, Voice* and *Loyalty* defined by Hirschman (1970, 1980). Following the author, I assume that when politicians perceive a decline in their party's performance they have three options: staying put (*loyalty*), expressing their discontent (*voice*) or leaving the party (*exit*). Legislators' personal interests and ideological concerns are seen as the two main reasons for discontent with the party status, or in Hirschman's terms, for feeling there has been a quality decline. I expect dissatisfied politicians to prefer *voice* over *exit* and that they will choose *exit* only under two conditions: 1) the cost of *voice* is too high, and 2) there are no barriers to *exit* and its associated costs are not excessive. To put it another way, *exit* will be used when *voice* is impossible and when desertion is not too difficult. Moreover, I argued that MPs will also select a specific modality of defections (that is individually or collectively) based on the costs associated with each strategy. Finally, *loyalty* will be selected in those cases in which the other two alternatives are ruled out. Both the cost of *voice* and *exit* are crucial elements of this theoretical scheme. I suggest that party features are responsible for the cost of *voice*, while political institutions affect the cost of *exit*.

The various components of this model will be tested first separately (Chapter 4 and 5) and then conjointly in the concluding chapter of the thesis where I also explore the difference between individual and collective switching. But before turning to the empirical assessment of the model, I will now move first to an exploratory analysis of the scope of switching in Western Europe since 1945. In other words, I will show whether there is any variation that needs to be explained by my model.

Chapter 3

Legislative Party Switching in Europe

Scope and historical development of the phenomenon

This chapter is devoted to the univariate analysis of the data, and is therefore mainly descriptive. The aim of the chapter is to chart the variation of the dependent variable: legislative party switching. The first section of the chapter outlines the procedure followed for the case selection and it explains why not the entire universe of Western European democracies could be surveyed. The second section analyses party switching in general, while the second part explores the relation between individual and collective switching, according to the definition provided in Chapter 1. Finally, in the third section, I outline how party switching varies when the units of analysis are not countries, but political parties and the ideological families into which they are grouped.

Party switching can be quantified by either looking at the number of legislators who switched (to whom I will refer from now as *switchers*) or at the number of movements they made (from now, *switches*). Most of the literature uses the percentage of members of parliament (MPs) who change party within a given time frame. Indeed, in most of the cases, the number of switchers and the number of switches are equal. However, there are also situations in which the number of switches is larger than the number of switchers. This means that there were MPs who changed party more than once within the same term. In order to grasp these differences, hence, I do not only quantify switching in terms of MPs involved, but also in terms of absolute number of movements.

3.1 Case selection

The aim of this dissertation was to collect data about switching for the whole universe of Western European countries. Why specifically this focus on Western Europe? The choice was determined by the fact it is in this geographical area that modern mass parties developed in the 20th century. Since one of the indirect goals of this work is to test what shape political parties are in, it was natural to focus solely on Western European democracies. Concerning the time frame, I decided to start the observations from the first democratic elections after the Second World War. While some of these Western European countries were already democratic before the end of the war, most of them went through dictatorship, which would have required me to split the sample and the analysis. Therefore, in order to keep the sample of cases as homogeneous as possible, I opted for covering the period after 1945. For countries such as Spain and Greece, which became democratic in the 1970s, observations only started after the transition to democracy.

Table 3.1 shows the final list of the 14 countries for which it was possible to collect data on legislative party switching. This sample of countries does not represent unfortunately the entire universe of Western European democracies. In fact, there were at least four countries (namely Iceland, Luxembourg, Portugal and Sweden) clearly belonging to this geographical area that could not be included because the data collection turned out to be infeasible.

In the case of Iceland the database of former legislators shows their party affiliation throughout their career, but in case a parliamentarian changed group there is no way to retrieve the date or even the legislative term when the switch took place. While probably it could have been possible to find the date by looking at the minutes of the parliamentary sessions, the fact that I have no knowledge of Icelandic, made it impossible to collect details on this country. Regarding Luxembourg, the problem was that there is neither a digital register of former MPs nor a digital archive of parliamentary minutes. After consulting with the Library service of the Luxembourgian Parliament and realising that the effort of collecting the data in person would have required several weeks of archival research, I decided to drop this case as well. For the Portuguese case, I tried several times to get in touch with the Archive of the Parliament, even with the help of a collaborator from the Social Democratic Party, but I have never received any answer. For Sweden, instead, according to the Parliamentary Library, the only way to collect reliable data would have been to read the parliamentary minutes in Swedish, a language that I cannot read. I contacted several Swedish academics who study elites and no one could help me in finding

Table 3.1: List of countries and years covered by the data collection

Country	*Years*
Austria	1945-2015
Belgium	1961-2016
Denmark	1945-2014
Finland	1945-2015
France	1946-2016
Germany	1949-2015
Greece	1974-2016
Ireland	1958-2015
Italy	1948-2015
Netherlands	1946-2012
Norway	1945-2015
Spain	1977-2016
Switzerland	1943-2015
United Kingdom	1945-2015

alternative sources for my data collection. For these reasons I was forced to exclude these four countries from my analysis.

Finally, a note on Belgium and Ireland whose observations do not start from 1945, but after. In Belgium parliamentary groups were established only in 1961, for this reason it was not possible to retrieved information about legislators' party affiliation before that date. In the case of Ireland, instead, it was not possible to find reliable sources to collect data before 1968, therefore I decided to exclude the previous legislative terms. More specifically, data on Irish switchers in the Lower House (Dáil Éireann) comes from three different sources. The Library & Research Service of the Irish Parliament (Oireachtas) was able to provide me only with a list of legislators who changed affiliation during the year 2010-2013, that is the 31st Dáil. Data from previous parliamentary terms was not available on-line, therefore, I had to rely on two secondary sources. For the years 1993-2010, I used the list of changes of alliances collected by Gallagher (2010) and the dissertation by Martin (1997), instead, provides the full series of defections for the period 1968 to 1993, but not earlier.

3.2 How much switching is there in Western Europe?

In the last 70 years, in the fourteen countries examined, less than 1.2% of MPs have changed party and on average there have been 67 switches per year. Taking together all the countries for the entire time period studied, the result is that party

Table 3.2: Average number of switches and switchers and percentage of switchers (by country, 1945-2015, ordered according to decreasing average percentage of switchers)

Country	*Switches (mean)*	*Switchers (mean)*	*% Switchers*	*Years (N)*
Italy	25.68	19.91	3.20	68
France	19.68	17.32	3.04	71
Greece	5.28	4.35	1.45	43
Spain	5.31	4.85	1.39	39
ALL countries	**5.47**	**4.58**	**1.13**	**72**
Norway	1.69	1.69	1.07	65
Ireland	1.80	1.63	1.01	59
Switzerland	1.51	1.51	0.75	71
Germany	4.51	3.67	0.68	67
Denmark	1.53	1.21	0.68	70
Netherlands	0.94	0.90	0.62	70
Finland	1.24	1.20	0.60	71
Austria	1.01	0.96	0.53	72
United Kingdom	3.86	3.28	0.51	71
Belgium	0.77	0.73	0.40	56

switching is a very limited phenomenon in Western Europe. Table 3.2 reports the annual average number of switches and switchers for each country and the annual percentage of switchers, together with the number of years covered. Countries cluster in three groups: 1) those with a low number of switches and switchers (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland), 2) those with a slightly higher average of switches per year, but still a limited number of switchers (Germany, Greece, Spain and Great Britain), 3) those with both a high average of switches and switchers (Italy and France).

Belgium is in absolute terms the country with the lowest percentage of switchers, followed by the United Kingdom and Austria: on average in these three countries the percentage of defectors is almost three times lower than in the aggregate. On the opposite side, Italy and France are the polities with the highest share of switchers, that is almost 3 times higher than the overall mean. Just from this simple piece of information, we can tell that there is indeed a great degree of variation between countries that needs to be explained.

Additionally, the presence of these three clusters suggests that countries have experienced different types of instability. The fact that countries in the second group display an annual average of switches that is higher than the percentage of switchers, suggests that switching might have affected certain parties more than others; while, countries like Italy and France might have experienced a kind of instability that involved the whole party system.

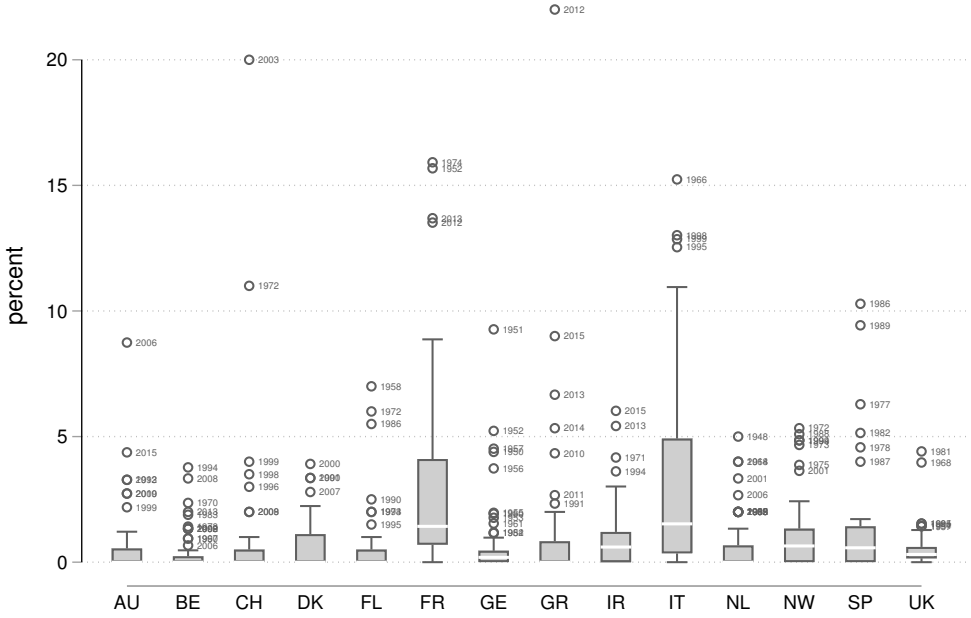


Figure 3.1: Boxplot of the % of switchers by country (1945-2016)

All the countries, however, show a standard deviation of both measures larger than the mean. This implies that, over the years, most of the countries have gone through more turbulent phases in which switching was above the overall average. Figure 3.1 - through the use of boxplot - shows this graphically. With no exceptions, all the countries in the sample have several outliers which, in certain cases, are sensibly lager than the country mean.

Interestingly enough, the two highest peaks are not represented by Italy and France, as one might expect, but by Greece (2012) and Switzerland (2003). In the case of Greece, we can see that in general the years of the debt crisis (which started in 2009) are particularly volatile. Specifically, in February 2012 about 43 MPs from the two main parties (New Demoracy (ND) and the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK)), were expelled[1] after voting against the second bailout agreement. Afterwards, some of the defectors from PASOK joined the party of the Democratic Left (DIMAR), while ex-ND legislators founded ANEL (Independent Greeks) (Dinas and Rori 2013). Not by chance, the subsequent political elections (May 2012) were the most volatile in Greek democratic history (Bosco and Verney 2016).

Switzerland is a very different case, as the country is generally immune to switching (its percentage of switchers is half the overall mean) and the peak reached in 2003 was due to the decision of two Swiss liberal parties, namely the Radical Demo-

[1]Recall that in my operational definition being expelled counts as switching.

cratic Party (FDP) and the smaller Liberal Party of Switzerland, to establish a common group in the Federal Assembly[2]. This joined parliamentary caucus foreran the formal fusion between the two parties in 2009.

Overall, Figure 3.1 suggests that there is a great variation in the dependent variable, especially over time, that needs to be explained. In other words, while these fourteen countries display relatively similar levels of switching, over time there is a greater variability. This variation implies that the historical dimension should not be ignored when we study switching. Moreover, the outliers tell us whether there has been a turbulent phase (either for one specific party or for the entire party system) in any of the countries in the sample. This is not only the case for Switzerland or Greece that I have just mentioned, but basically for all of the polities analysed. By looking at the years in which the percentage of switchers is greater than the country mean, we get a precise picture of when a country's party system has undergone a change, either anticipating transformations in the electoral arena or stemming from them. In a way this correspondence between electoral and parliamentary spheres tell us that switching can be a useful indicator to track and study party change.

[2]A merger and a split represent two different situations. A split takes place when a faction of a party exits, establishing a new splinter party that will compete with the rump party in the next elections (Ibenskas 2017). In other words, after a split there will be a new group, while the rump party will be smaller. Conversely, when two parties merge, the fusion produces a new group and we cannot identify a splinter and a rump party. According to Ibenskas (2016), a fusion is the amalgamation of two or more independent groups into a single party organisation. An alternative way to conceptualise the difference between splits and mergers is to look at their impact on the number of parties. While with a split the number of parties increases, after a fusion the number of parties is lower (Kreuzer and Pettai 2009). According to my operational definition, both mergers and splits are instances of collective switching. For the purpose of my empirical analysis I will not distinguish between the two. In the specific Swiss case of the merger between the FDP and the Liberal Party of Switzerland, all the members of these two groups were considered as switchers. Indeed, in the personal file of the MPs involved, they all had two affiliations listed for that legislative term. This means that officially they held two different labels in that term and that this has been registered in the archives. Recall that according to the operational definition that I use to identify switchers, if a change has been recorded in the parliamentary minutes, then it has been recorded in my data set as well. It could be argued that it is not judicious to consider the fusion between the two Swiss liberal parties as an instance of switching. In fact, it looks like the merger was the result of the mutual recognition that the differences between these two parties had become negligible, therefore party members simply accepted this choice and their switch does not represent a genuine act of defection. However, the members of these two parties by switching show that they accept the fusion and want to be part of it. Their switch encompasses a willingness, because they were not forced to join the new common group and they could have just kept their seat as independent. In fact, not all party fusions are supported by legislators. For instance when the Italian Democratic Party of the Left (PDS) merged with the former Italian Popular Party in 2008 to form the Democratic Party, a faction of the PDS not supporting the fusion, left the party and established the Democratic Left (Sinistra Democratica). Since legislators have always a choice to join or not a fusion, their decision to do so reveals a deliberate intention. Hence, their change of affiliation is the acknowledgement of this choice and it is for this reason that I think that the Swiss fusion still qualifies as an example of switching.

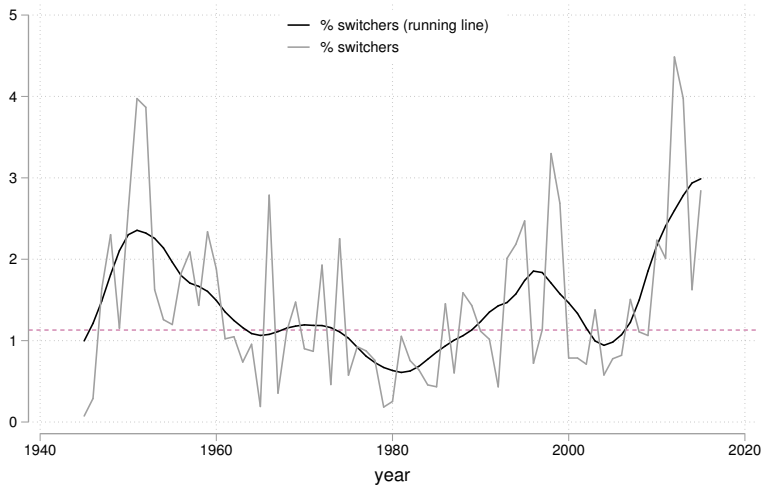


Figure 3.2: Historical development of the % of switchers, all countries (1945-2015)

The aggregate values presented in Table 3.2 are useful to get an idea of the general scope of the phenomenon in each country, but they are not very informative, because the mean levels out the variation that might have occurred over time. Let us therefore spell out the historical dimension of party switching to get a clearer picture of its development. The results for all the countries aggregated together are displayed in Figure 3.2 which shows the percentage of switchers for each year that can be compared with the overall mean (dotted red line). As it can be seen, there are two peaks in the distribution: the first one in 1951 when around 4% of MPs in the sample changed party, and the second one more recently in 2012, with almost 4.5% of switchers. The phase with the lowest amount of switching, instead, occurred between 1975 and 1985.

Analysing the development of party switching on a yearly basis produces several ups and downs, with the result that Figure 3.2 appears "noisy". To overcome this problem and to understand whether there is a pattern in the development of the phenomenon, I additionally plotted the running mean[3] of the percentage of switchers, which is represented by the black line in Figure 3.2. Also with the running average we can see the two peaks around 1950 and 2012 and the lowest point in the second half of the 1970s. Another very interesting result, is the large drop in the percentage of switchers that occurred at the beginning of 2000s. This decrease interrupts a trend that otherwise would have been increasing since 1985.

Since Italy appears as the most influential case in terms of switching, I calculated the same yearly averages, excluding this country from the sample, as displayed in

[3]I used the Stata command *lowess*, which calculates the weighted mean with a bandwidth equal to 20% of the data, giving more weight to the closest observations.

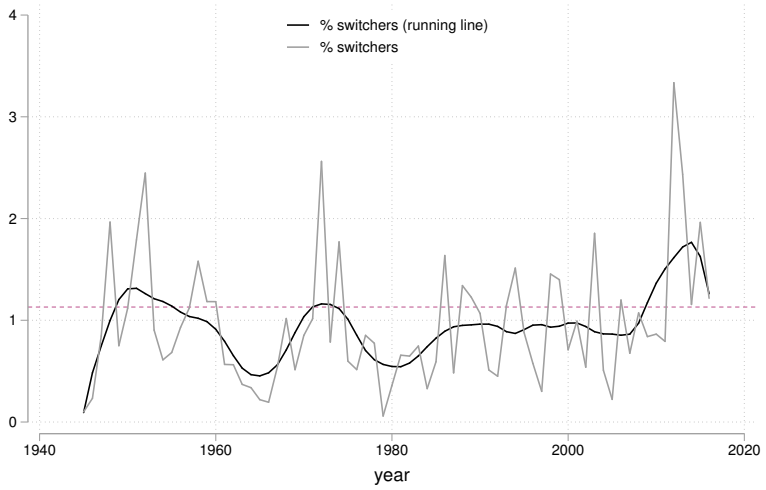


Figure 3.3: Historical development of the % of switchers, all countries except Italy (1945-2015)

Figure 3.3. The graph shows that the historical pattern looks quite different when Italy is not included: the percentage of switchers has been above average only in the Fifties, the Seventies and then from 2010. So, without Italy there is not any sharp decrease in the scope of the phenomenon in the early 2000s. On the contrary, this second graph tells us that Italy was at the forefront of the evolution of this legislative behaviour in the last 20 years. In contrast, in the other Western European countries, the increase in the amount of switching is more recent and started around 2007-2008. The fact that the growing switching rate only started less than 10 years ago, does not allow us to talk about a proper historical trend, as it is too soon to tell if the phenomenon will stay above average in the near future.

From Figure 3.2 it looks like the development of switching is consistent with a general decline in the representative functions of parties (Bartolini and Mair 2001), such as the trends observed in voters' alignment as well as party membership. In the electoral arena, post-war volatility was followed by stabilisation and a long phase of voter predictability which more or less ended around the 1980s/1990s (Bartolini and Mair 1990; Emanuele 2018). Similarly, party membership has also followed a decreasing trend since the 1980s (Katz, Mair, et al. 1992; Mair and Van Biezen 2001; Van Biezen, Mair, and Poguntke 2012; Whiteley 2011). By the same token, according to Figure 3.2, switching has been high after 1945, then it has substantively decreased, to raise again in the 1990s. However, when Italy is excluded, the development looks substantially different from the one of electoral volatility, as instability within the parliamentary arena emerges more than 15 years after the instability in electoral arena, and it is too soon to talk about it as a longterm phenomenon.

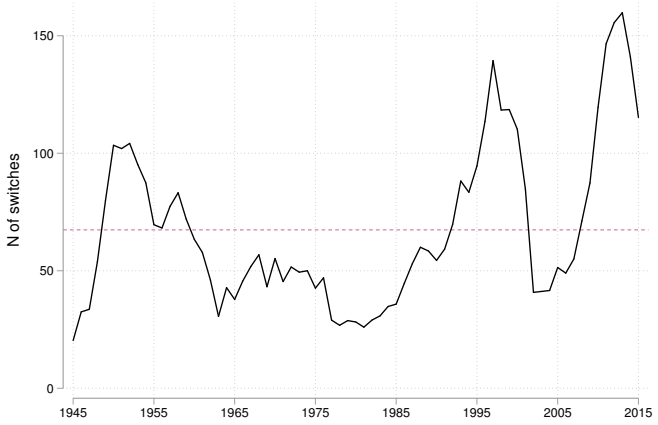


Figure 3.4: Smooth average of annual number of switches (all countries, 1945-2015)

The comparison between Figure 3.2 and Figure 3.3 suggests that, with the exception of Italy, in the rest of Western Europe parties have managed to keep their unity at the parliamentary level, despite increasing disaffection from voters and activists. This result is in line with what was suggested by Bartolini and Mair (2001), according to whom, while parties' representative functions are challenged, these actors are still fundamental to the organisation of parliament and government. Figure 3.3 implies that Bartolini and Mair's intuition is still valid, as overall parties seem to be able to foster discipline and loyalty within the parliamentary arena. In other words, according to my data, when Italy is excluded, the development of switching supports the hypothesis that parties' procedural and institutional functions are not yet in crisis.

For the elements that affect the absolute number of switches the picture looks very similar, as can be seen in Figure 3.4. The graph shows the smooth average[4] of the number of switches and the overall mean (dotted red line). Again, we see that the early 1950s were relatively unsettled (around 100 changes), but thereafter followed a long phase of stability. Since the mid 1980s, with the exception of the 10 years between 2000 and 2010, the number of changes has grown again, with a peak of 150 changes at the end of the period. The absolute number of changes is affected by the number of countries included in each phase. Indeed, some countries were surveyed for a shorter time frame[5], but since 1977 all the countries are included in the sample. Therefore, the increase in the number of changes cannot only be ascribed

[4]I use a simple smooth average, with a window of 5. This means that each value represents the unweighted mean of the previous and following two observations.

[5]Specifically, Belgium (from 1961) Germany (from 1949), Greece (from 1974), Ireland (from 1956) and Spain (from 1977).

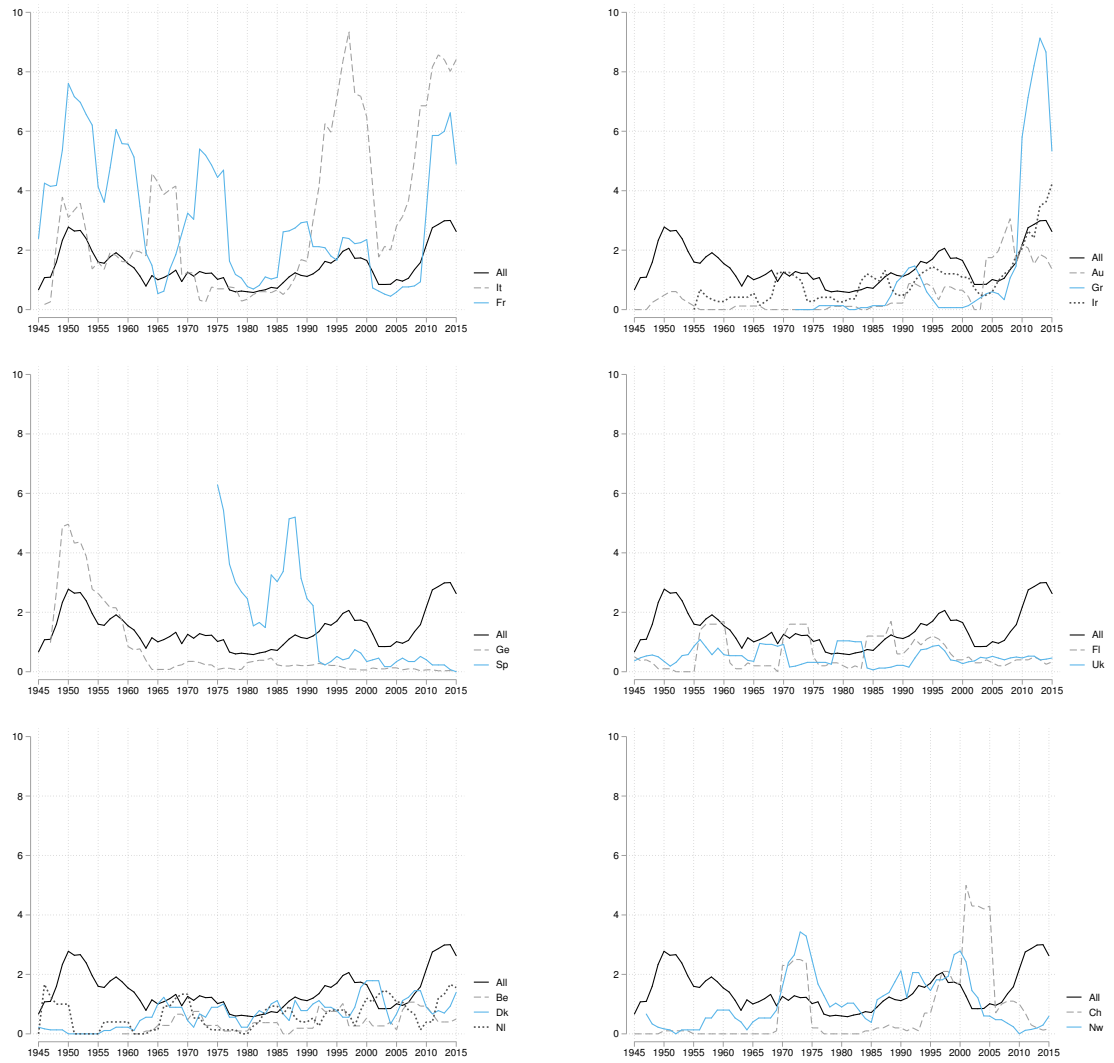


Figure 3.5: Historical development of party switching: smooth average % of switchers for each country (1945-2015)

to the enlarged set of countries, but rather to an effective increase of instability of parties within the legislative arena.

But what kind of pattern do the individual countries display over time? To answer this question, I calculated the smooth average percentage of switchers and I compared the results obtained with the overall development. Countries seem to follow five different patterns as shown by Figure 3.5.

The first trend is represented by France and Italy. These two polities have been following almost exactly the aggregate development and usually with higher percentages than the overall mean. However, the relative growth of the phenomenon varies between the two countries. Until 1975, France was more unstable than Italy, while since 1985 it has been the opposite. Parliamentary instability known by France after

the Second World War is another sign (together with extreme fragmentation and high cabinet instability) of the general phase of political volatility[6] that characterised the so-called Fourth Republic. More recently, instead, switching has mainly been connected with the transformations of the various right-wing/conservative French parties. In particular in 2012, after the Congress of the Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) and the election of Mr. Jean-François Copé as party leader, Mr. François Fillon (the losing candidate) and another 68 legislators (over 194 in total) left the party and established their own parliamentary group to protest against the election results. The dissident group re-joined the UMP at the beginning of 2013.

Italy's parliamentary volatility in the 1950s and 1960s was mainly due to party transformations on both sides of the political spectrum. On the left, two socialist parties (the Italian Socialist Party and the Italian Democratic Socialist Party) merged and split three times (in 1947, in 1963 and then 1968). On the right, instead, tensions arose within the Italian Monarchist National Party (PNM) over the decision on whether to look for an alliance with the Christian-democratic party or with the extreme-right party, the Italian Social Movement. One faction exited the party and established the so-called People's Monarchist Party (PMP) in 1954. The divorce did not last very long, as in 1959 the two parties merged again and founded the Italian Democratic Party of Monarchist Unity.

But it is in the years after 1994 that the phenomenon of switching literally explodes in Italy, when the average percentage of switchers was above 10% for three consecutive years. At first this upheaval was thought to be linked to the deep transformation of the Italian party system after the political scandal of Tangentopoli and the transition from the so-called First Italian Republic to the Second Republic. However, at least looking at my own data, it is clear that the phenomenon is still common in the Italian Parliament and the last legislative term (2013-2018) has been the one with the highest share of switchers in all Italian history (Magri 2017).

A second group of countries - represented by Greece, Austria and Ireland - is characterised by both a very low rate of switching until the mid 1990s and then by a sudden increase after 2005, to the extent that currently the switching rate is higher than the overall mean. In particular, Greece has experienced a dramatic increase in the percentage of switchers in the last ten years, as has been previously mentioned. Austria has been subject to a higher level of switching as well, but not as substantial as in the Greek instance. In the case of Austria, the growth is attributable in particular to disagreements within the Radical-Right party, the Freedom Party of

[6]The French Fourth Republic is one of the cases that according to Sartori (1976) corresponds to his category of *polarized pluralism*.

Austria (FPÖ), which at first, in 1993, witnessed the exit of a faction which founded the Liberal Forum (that in turn eventually merged in 2012 with NEOS (The New Austria and Liberal Forum)). Later, in 2005, another split involved a faction led by the former leader of the FPÖ, Jörg Haider, who established the Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ) (Mudde 2014). The increase in Ireland, instead, is less drastic, given than the percentage of switchers has usually been slightly higher compared to the other two polities. But in the Irish case there is not a specific party that has been particularly subject to defections. On the contrary, in most of the episodes, switching is due to rebel legislators voting against the party line and then being sanctioned with the withdrawal of the whip.

Germany and Spain display an opposite pattern compared to the second group. These two countries were subject to switching right after their return to democracy (in 1949 for Germany and in 1977 for Spain), but since then the scope of switching has been very limited. In these two cases, therefore, switching appears to be linked to the consolidation that follows a regime change. In Germany and Spain, switching was only a temporary phenomenon related to the low institutionalisation of the party system and it disappeared once the system had consolidated, as predicted by Kreuzer and Pettai (2009).

Norway and Switzerland display a fourth type of trend: they alternate phases in which the switching rate increases (and it is above the overall average) to phases that are relatively more stable. Similarly, the fifth group of countries have very irregular developments, but compared to Norway and Switzerland, they rarely surpass the overall mean. On the whole, for these last two lasts clusters of countries, switching seems to be not only a sporadic phenomenon, but also extremely limited in terms of the numbers of MPs involved.

To conclude this first section, in the aggregate the scope of legislative party switching seems to be limited in Western Europe. However, the data suggest that there is a substantial variation that needs to be explained. First, there is a spatial variation: the relevance of the phenomenon varies across countries. In particular, Italy and France display the highest level of switching, both in terms of switchers and switches per year. Indeed, Italy is one of the most studied polities in examining what affects party switching (see for instance Heller and Mershon 2005; or Di Virgilio, Giannetti, and Pinto 2012), but the literature on France is - to my present knowledge - missing.

A second relevant dimension of change is time. The scope of switching is not the same over time. Overall, it seems that the phase that followed the Second World War was relatively unstable. Between the mid 1960s and mid 1980s, however, the number

of switchers has decreased consistently, then has risen again in the most recent years, with an exception at the beginning of the 2000s, that however disappears when Italy is excluded (this means that the drop should instead be explained in Italy). The same kind of historical variation can also be found in the individual countries. Once more, France and Italy appear to have followed the overall trend, while at least five other countries display a growth after the 1990s. In some cases, like Greece, Austria and Ireland, this growth is quite substantial, that is, higher than the overall mean. Finally, there are two countries - Germany and Spain - that show a reverse development: an initial phase of greater instability in the parliamentary arena is followed by a decrease in the percentage of switchers, almost to its complete disappearance.

3.3 Lonely turncoat or mass transformation? On the scope of individual and collective switches

Under the label "party switching" fall different kinds of behaviour. A relevant distinction is the one between individual and collective changes. Individual switchers are those who change party independently from other MPs. In other words, we can assume that their decision to switch is not linked to party transformations, like for instance, fusions or splits which instead are usually at the origin of collective switching.

This distinction is not only crucial for the cost of switching, as I argue in Chapter 2, but also because individual and collective switching represent two different kinds of instability. Collective switching is a proxy of party or even party system transformation. The presence of collective switching - also in the polities where the overall phenomenon is limited - signals that a party (or more than one) underwent a processes of change or of strain.

Individual switching, instead is due to a "mismatch" between the single MP's position/belief/ambition and his/her party. A low number of individual switchers should not trouble a political system. Indeed, even in very stable democracies, we find that a small number of solo defections regularly take place. However, if the scope of individual switching becomes larger, it might be due to a transformation of the relationship between MPs and their parties. MPs might have a different interpretation of their role and picture themselves more as agents of their constituency (or of the people in general) rather than of their parties. In other words, MPs can see themselves either as delegates or trustees, a distinction that was proposed already

by philosophers such as John Stuart Mill or Edmund Burke[7]. A delegate puts the will of the constituency or of the party above his/her own judgement, while a trustee follows first of all his/her own judgement (Andeweg and Thomassen 2005). Already in the early 1960s, Wahlke et al. (1962) demonstrated that American legislators did indeed think about their role either in terms of delegate, trustee or a middle category, named "politico". This distinction is useful because it can serve as a good proxy for the different cultures of representation that might characterise countries and/or party families. In other words, the political culture of certain countries (or parties[8]) might affect the prevalent style of representation and this might help us to explain the variation in the scope of collective and individual switching.

To summarise, despite the fact that these individual and collective switching appear as equal at the aggregate level, their underlying logic is different and it is crucial to separate them. Moreover, these two behaviours seem to be the results of different kinds of transformations that might be interesting to explore in more depth. For these reasons, this section of the chapter is devoted to a preliminary assessment of the scope of individual and collective switching, at the aggregate level, over time and across countries. The aim is to unveil whether there are countries or specific phases that are more subject to one of these two kinds of instability and whether the prevalence of one of the two can help us to explain the evolution of a specific party system.

Table 3.3 shows the absolute number of individual changes in each country and in the aggregate. I also calculated the percentage of individual switches (and - as a consequence - the percentage of collective changes) over the total amount of movements. I plotted these percentages in order to see how countries are clustered, compared to the overall mean. The results are represented graphically by Figure 3.6, where the dotted lines correspond to the aggregated percentages of individual and collective switches.

Figure 3.6 shows that there are four clusters of countries:

[7]For a general discussion of their thoughts see the book by Stokes (2001). Burke was a champion of the trustee model of representation. Indeed, in his famous speech to the electors of Bristol in November 1774 he advocated that a legislator should use his own judgement even if this means going against the opinion of his constituents. As he said to them: "You choose a member indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not member of Bristol, but he is a member of parliament"(Burke 1887).

[8]The distinction between "trustees" and "delegates" could indeed be applied to parties themselves. As Katz and Mair (1995) argue, different models of parties embed alternative representative styles. In the early 19th century, when the dominant model was the elite party, their role was mainly as trustees, that is "vehicles by which the voters gave consent to be governed by those elected" (p.11). In the following phase, characterised by the emergence of mass parties, they became instead actors guaranteeing government's accountability to voters, that is, delegates.

Table 3.3: Individual switches by country (absolute number of individual switches, total number of switches, % of individual switches on the total number of switches)

Country	*Individual switches (absolute N)*	*Total switches (absolute N)*	*% indiv. over tot. N of switches*
Switzerland	23	107	21.5
Spain	68	207	32.9
Italy	737	1845	39.9
Greece	95	227	41.9
Germany	127	302	42.1
ALL countries	**2240**	**4853**	**46.2**
France	664	1397	47.5
Austria	38	73	52.1
Finland	49	88	55.7
U. Kingdom	157	274	57.3
Belgium	27	43	62.8
Netherlands	42	66	63.6
Ireland	78	106	73.6
Denmark	81	107	75.7
Norway	97	110	88.2

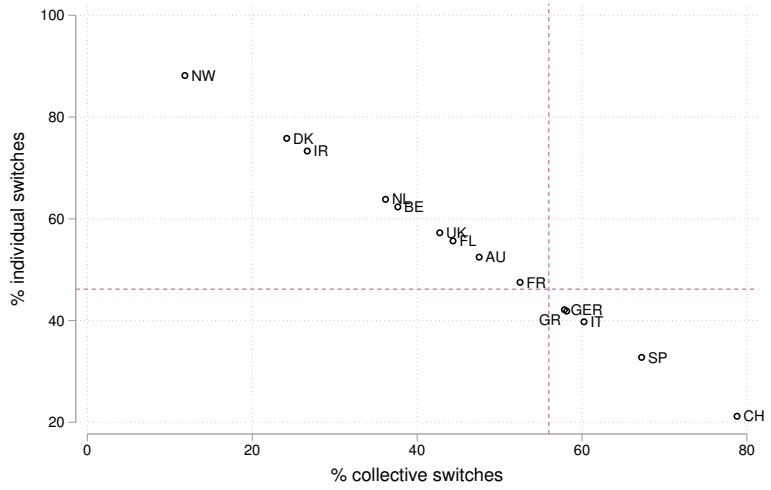


Figure 3.6: Clusters of countries based on the % of individual and collective switches

1. *Predominantly individual (percentage of individual switches larger than 65%):* Three countries, namely Denmark, Ireland and Norway, display a limited number of switches and most of them are individual. When switching is generally not very high, then it is usually the result of individual dissidents who decide to change party because of some kind of conflict with their original political group. To put it differently, in these countries parties seem to have experienced little transformation and very rarely have they merged or split (at least within the parliamentary arena). Therefore, the high percentage of individual switches suggests that political parties in these countries are relatively stable, at least in parliament.

2. *Moderately individual (percentage of individual switches lower than 65% and larger than 50%):* Austria, Finland, United Kingdom and Belgium similarly to the previous category mainly witness solo defections, more than collective changes, but it is less accentuated. Thus, compared to the previous group in these political systems, (some) parties might have known phases of transformation. However, these changes have not taken place regularly. Therefore, most of the time, switching has been driven by individual MPs.

3. *Moderately collective (percentage of individual switches below 50% and above 35%):* Three other countries, such as France, Germany, Greece and Italy, display a lower percentage of individual switches compared to the overall number of movements. This means that in these polities switching is mainly a collective phenomenon.

4. *Predominantly collective (percentage of individual changes smaller than 35%)*: Finally, there are two countries - namely Spain and Switzerland - that are clearly characterised by a prevalence of collective changes. Especially in Switzerland, where generally the phenomenon is very limited, when switching occurs it involves groups of MPs, while rarely do single politicians dare to change party. Hence, Switzerland shows the reverse pattern of the first cluster: its rare occurrence of switching is determined by party transformations, rather than individual conflicts between MPs and their parties.

With the exclusion of France and Austria, whose percentage of individual changes is close to 50%, in all the other countries one of the two de-affiliation strategy prevails over the other. Hence, Figure 3.6 suggests that in most of the countries the two types of defections are alternative to each other: it seems that, in general, legislators either change group individually or collectively, that is, following one model or the other.

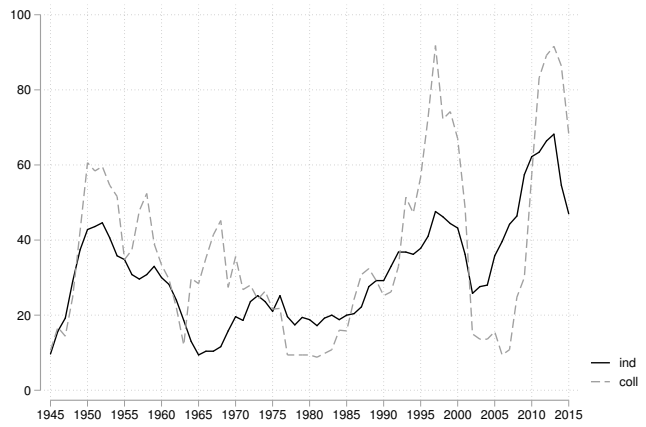


Figure 3.7: Individual and collective switches over time: smooth average number of switches (all countries, 1945-2015)

Still, the values presented in Table 3.3 and Figure 3.6 are useful to get a general idea about the extent of individual and collective switching in the various countries, but they do not tell us anything about the historical development of the two behaviours. Therefore, it is useful to spell out the temporal dimension. In order to do so, I plot the smooth average number of individual and collective switches for all the countries aggregated together. The results are presented in Figure 3.7.

First of all, the figure shows that there has been a substantial increase in the scope of individual switches, especially since 2001. Nowadays, we are witnessing not only a number of collective movements that were unknown in the past, but also an increasing number of MPs who decide to leave their party independently from other colleagues. Overall, it seems that not only are parties are experiencing more frequent transformations, but also that something is changing in the relationship between parties and their MPs. We cannot talk yet about an "atomisation" of parliaments and representation, but the increase suggests that a larger number of MPs now interpret their role more independently from the party they belong to. Alternatively, the increased presence of solo switchers can be interpreted as a sign of a greater personalisation of politics (Rahat and Kenig 2018; Cross, Katz, and Pruysers 2018).

A second aspect that emerges from the figure is that usually individual and collective switching vary together. The only exception is represented by a phase between 1965 and 1970, when individual switching first decreased and then increased again, while collective switching did the opposite. In order to verify whether there actually is a positive relationship between the number individual and collective switches, I calculated the correlation coefficient between the two measures. The results are

Table 3.4: Correlation coefficient between the number of individual and collective switches per country

Country	*Individual switches (absolute N)*	*Collective switches (absolute N)*	*Correlation coefficient*
ALL countries	**2240**	**2613**	**0.23**
Austria	38	35	0.22
Belgium	27	16	0.11
Denmark	81	26	0.20
Finland	49	39	-0.06
France	664	733	0.45
Germany	127	175	0.34
Greece	95	132	0.43
Ireland	78	28	0.37
Italy	737	1108	0.51
Netherlands	42	24	-0.02
Norway	97	13	0.19
Spain	68	139	0.32
Switzerland	23	84	0.01
U. Kingdom	157	117	0.10

presented in Table 3.4. In the aggregate, the average correlation coefficient equals 0.22, which means that there is indeed a positive but not very strong correlation between the two forms of switching. This results looks in contradiction with what emerged from Figure 3.6. In fact, if across countries solo and group switching appear as alternative to each other, over time the two phenomena vary together, at least in quantity.

In a second step, I analysed the evolution over time of this relationship, calculating the average correlation coefficient for five-year phases. Figure 3.8 displays the results graphically. The dashed horizontal line represents the average correlation coefficient for all the countries aggregated together, against which we can compare the various points over time. First of all, as it can be seen, the relationship is not present in all the phases. In particular, in the periods between 1966 and 1980, the coefficient is very close to 0. Moreover, the correlation coefficient in certain periods has also been negative, in particular between 2001 and 2010, a result that perhaps is due to the greater growth of individual changes vis-à-vis collective movements, as seen in Figure 3.7. In most of the phases, however, the relationship seems to be positive, although not always very strong. The maximum positive coefficient is found for the years between 1951-1955 and 1996-2000. To conclude, over time there have been phases in which individual and collective switches have influenced each other, while in other periods the two behaviours have varied independently from one another.

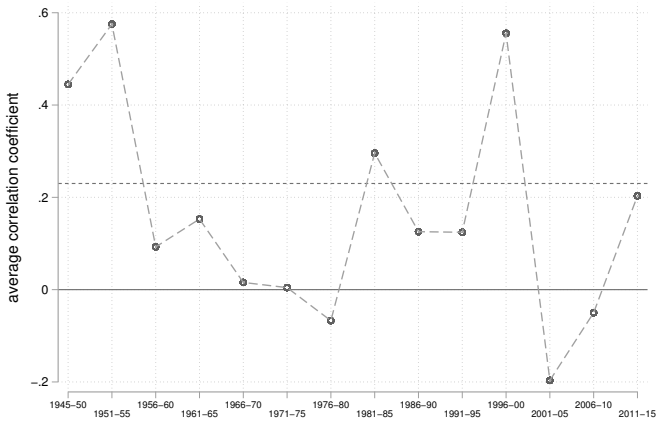


Figure 3.8: Average correlation coefficient between individual and collective switches calculated for five-year phases (all countries, 1945-2015)

Regarding single countries, the relationship between individual and collective switches is positive and moderate in Italy, France and Greece. In most of the other countries, however, the relationship is weak, like for instance in Denmark, United Kingdom, Switzerland and Belgium. Finally, the Netherlands and Finland display a negative association between the two forms of switching, although it is extremely weak. The absence of a clear correlation in these countries might be due to the fact that one of the two forms of switching prevails over the other and therefore we observe a very weak or no association between these two types of de-affiliation strategies.

The aggregation of all the countries together clearly does not tell us anything about the development of individual switching in each specific polity. Therefore, I calculated the smooth average number of individual and collective switches over time for the fourteen countries in the sample. For the countries belonging to the first two categories (i.e. predominantly or moderately individual), I selected only two cases - the Netherlands and Denmark - that I compare with two other countries from the third cluster (moderately collective), namely Austria and Finland. The four countries selected are suitable for a comparison because overall they share a limited level of switching, but at the same time display a different balance between individual and collective switches. The results are presented in Figure 3.9.

The purpose of this figure is to show that in countries where the percentage of individual switches is above 50%, parties have almost never experienced organisational transformation (dashed line usually close to 0 and below the black line). In contrast, in Austria and Finland have experienced in different phases some party

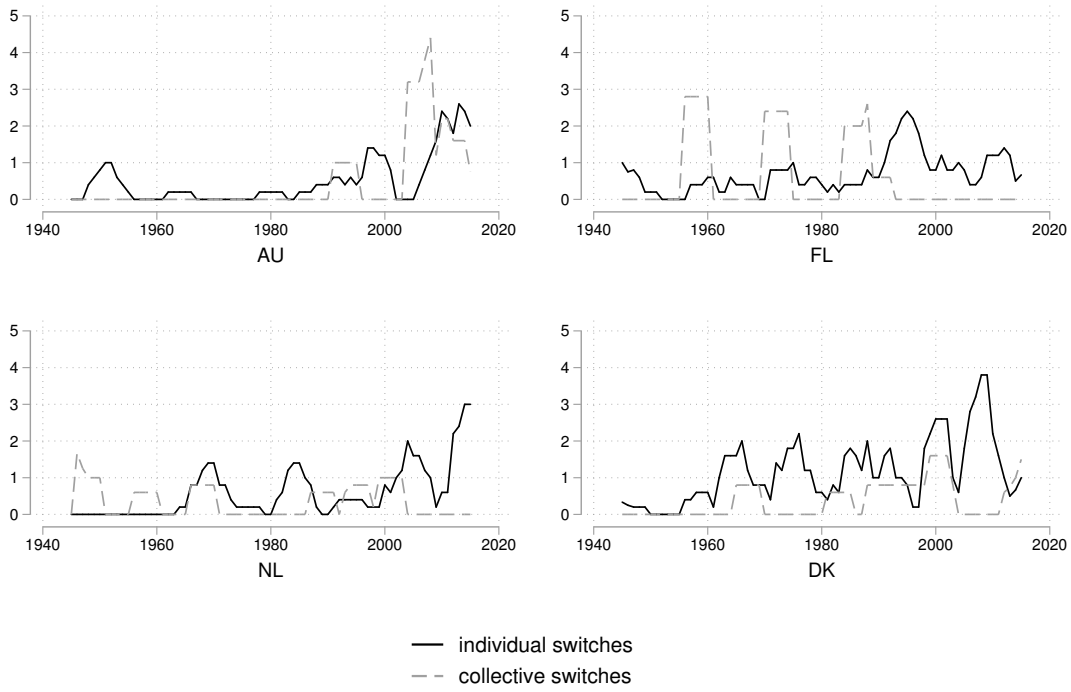


Figure 3.9: Individual and collective switching over time: smooth average number of switches (Austria, Finland, the Netherlands, and Denmark 1945-2015)

instability, which explains the greater number of collective switches compared to the Netherlands and Denmark.

Interestingly enough, in all of these four countries there has been an overall increase in the scope of individual switches, similarly to what has happened at the aggregate level. In the Netherlands, for instance, during the current legislative term, the phenomenon has reached an extent that was previously completely unknown in this country. After the legislative election in 2012, there were eleven parliamentary groups in the Chamber. At the end of the term in 2017, the groups numbered seventeen. The six new groups represented - in most of the cases - only one or two MPs[9]. The extent of the phenomenon is still limited compared to other polities like France and Italy. However, when stable political systems also display the same common pattern, it might be a sign of the fact that something is changing in the way MPs interpret their role vis-à-vis their party.

Turning to the third and fourth groups of countries, their historical development of individual switching can be observed in Figure 3.10. The figure shows that, indeed, over time, the countries from the third and fourth categories were more affected

[9]This fact has not passed unnoticed in the country, as an article from a Dutch newspaper shows: `https://www.vn.nl/de-zetelrovers-hoe-doen-ze-het-2/`.

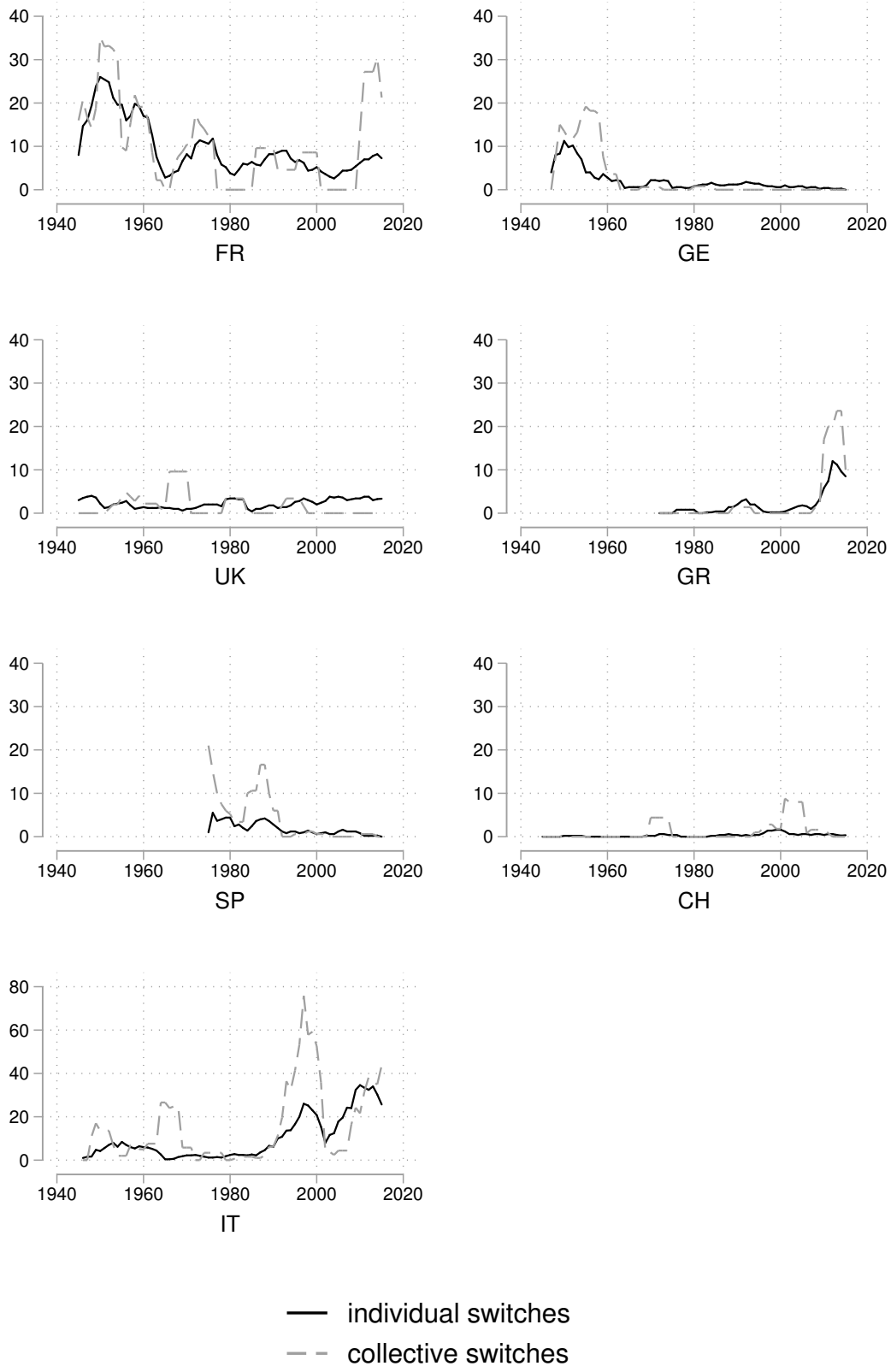


Figure 3.10: Individual and collective switching over time: smooth average number of switches (France, Germany, United Kingdom, Greece, Italy, Spain and Switzerland, 1945-2015)

by collective switches, although to very different extents. In both in Spain and Switzerland, single switches are extremely rare and the small number of movements are always due to party organisational transformation. Italy is a special case, because the scope of switching in this country is higher than everywhere else[10]. However, with regard to individual switching, the phenomenon is a recent one. Indeed, while collective switches also occurred directly after the Second World War, the scope of individual switches has become relevant since the 1990s. At the same time, party instability has also grown exponentially, surpassing by far the levels of the 1950s and 1960s. To put it differently, in the last twenty-five years Italy has experience both kinds of instability, while in the past collective switching was its only source of volatility.

France followed a different pattern of development. The figure shows that individual and collective switches have always been approximately equal. Overall, the number of MPs changing party independently from other colleagues has decreased. Conversely, collective switches - after a phase in which they have been absent - have increased since 2010.

Likewise, Greece has also witnessed a growing instability both at the individual level and at the party system level, although the latter appears larger. Germany and the United Kingdom - on the contrary - seem to be characterised by a greater degree of stability. In Great Britain the number of individual switches has been relatively low and stable over time, and the same is true for collective switches. Germany, instead, since the 1960s has witnessed (almost) no switching of any kind.

To conclude, countries show differences in respect to the scope of individual and collective switches. Usually when countries display a low level of switching, this is the result of single MPs abandoning their former parties. The only exception to this pattern is Switzerland, whose low level of switching is affected exclusively by collective switches.

Similarly, Italy and Spain have mainly experienced party organisational transformations, that is collective switching. However, in most of the countries neither of the two forms of switching prevails over the other one. With respect to the historical development of these two kinds of switching, overall they seem to grow together, and since the 1990s their scope has enlarged consistently. In particular, countries like Austria, the Netherlands, Ireland, Italy and Greece have more often witnessed MPs who change party individually rather than collectively. The opposite trend can instead be observed in France, where the extent of individual switches has reduced

[10]Indeed, in Figure 3.10, the y-axis for Italy ranges from 0 to 80 and not to 40 as is the case for the other countries.

since 1945, while recently there has been an increase in collective switches. These results suggest, in most of the countries examined, not only that parties are generally more unstable than what they used to be, but also that there are more MPs who interpret their role more independently from their parties or - to use Wahlke et al. (1962) - as trustees.

3.4 Party switching and party families: on the relationship between ideology and switching

An alternative line of inquiry on the scope and evolution of party switching is to consider a different kind of cluster than countries, namely party families. This is a concept widely used in the field of party politics and especially by those scholars who use a comparative approach. Indeed, the concept of party family allows researchers to compare "equivalent" parties from different countries. Mair and Mudde (1998) proposed two approaches for the use of the concept of party family[11]. The first approach is based on the "genetic origins" of parties, while the second one is based on their ideological profile. Both these approaches look at what parties are rather than what they do, and they should not be considered to be mutually exclusive. For the purpose of this chapter I decided to follow the ideological approach, building on previous literature concerning the link between ideology and party cohesion and discipline (see Close 2016). Following Close, party ideology might affect legislators' attitudes towards unity and loyalty for several reasons. For instance, parties belonging to a given family might have specific values that are also shared by politicians thanks to their political socialisation. Furthermore, ideology might have a direct impact on party organisational structures (Enyedi and Linek 2008), e.g. the level of intra-party democracy and - as a consequence - the level of independence and freedom granted to party members. In other words, ideology might affect the way legislators interpret their role as either more or less independent from official party lines.

Given this link between ideology and party cohesion/discipline and given that party switching can be seen as a break in party unity, I want to explore whether there is also a relationship between party ideology and party switching. In this

[11] According to the authors, actually there are four approaches in the use of the concept of party family. The first criterion refers to the origin of parties; the second strategy looks at transnational organisations established by parties themselves; the third looks at similarities between parties in terms of policies or ideology; and finally, the fourth approach is based on party names or labels. However, Mair and Mudde believe that the two most valuable approaches are those based either on the origin of the parties or on their ideology.

section I therefore examine whether party families display different levels of party switching.

I group parties into eight families mainly following the categories used by the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) (Volkens et al. 2016), to which I have made a few amendments. First of all, I have discarded the "Agrarian" category because it would have been quite small and therefore too specific. In fact, only six parties in my database belonged to this family, with the risk that outliers would be given greater importance. Moreover, agrarian parties are often assimilated to liberal parties, given that these parties share what Gallagher, Laver, and Mair (1995) call "family resemblance". I therefore followed Ruostetsaari (2007) and placed agrarian parties into the Liberal family. Additionally, I do not used two other categories from the CMP, namely "Special issue" and "Electoral alliance", given that they were mainly residual categories.

Concerning the allocation of parties into the eight families, I follow the allocation from the CMP, that I integrated with the one developed by Caramani (2015)[12]. As can be seen from Table 3.5, some families are larger than others. The smallest families are the Green and the Regionalist (11 and 16 parties each) while the Liberal family is the largest, with 42 parties. Moreover, while most of the families could be tracked for the entire period of time considered - that is they always had at least one party representing them - the Green and, to a lesser extent, the Radical Right families emerged later.

In order to calculate the average percentage of MPs who switched for each party family, I did not consider the switches made by independents or - when present - from the mixed group. This choice is due to the fact that both independents and MPs belonging to mixed groups cannot be precisely assigned to a family. For a similar reason, I also discarded the switches that involved parties who were not represented at the beginning of a given legislature, but were established later on. Hence, compared to the data on countries, the number as well as the percentage of switches is smaller overall. I also did not distinguish between movements that took place within the same family or across families. What these numbers measure is the total amount of switching experienced by ideologically similar parties, irrespective of their direction.

Taken all together, party families in Western Europe from 1945 to 2015, have seen 1.80% of their MPs changing affiliation. As for the aggregate value for countries, the percentage of switchers is therefore not very high. However, the eight families

[12]See Appendix B, for the complete list of parties and their distribution within families. I also would like to underline that for the purpose of this chapter there are no missing cases, that is, each party included in the data set was assigned to a family.

Table 3.5: Party switching by party family (average number of switchers per year, average % of switchers, and average number of seats in Parliament, 1945-2015)

Party Family	*N switchers (average)*	*% switchers (average)*	*N parties*	*N of seats (average)*	*Years*
Christian-Democratic	4.58	0.70	25	727.4	71
Social-Democratic	10.45	0.83	26	1367.7	71
Green	0.78	0.89	11	98.5	36
Communist/R.Left	2.85	1.01	25	263.9	71
Conservative	12.01	1.38	19	897.8	71
Liberal	7.09	1.49	42	454.5	71
ALL families	**5.27**	**1.82**	**191**	**-**	**-**
Regionalist	1.75	2.30	16	59.4	71
Radical Right	3.99	3.87	27	111.7	68

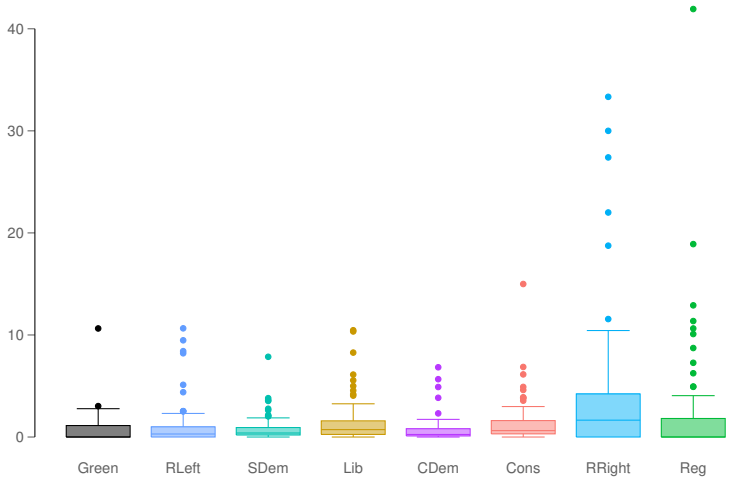


Figure 3.11: Boxplot of the % of switchers by party family (1945-2015)

display different levels of switching. There are two groups of families: 1) most of the families have a percentage of switchers below the aggregate value, and 2) while a second group of families displays a percentage that is above average. The two most unstable families appear to be the Radical Right and the Regionalist family. Conversely, Christian-Democratic parties and Social-Democratic parties are those with the smallest percentage of switchers.

As Figure 3.11 shows, almost all the families have several outliers which are considerably larger than their mean. This means defection levels also vary over time when the unit of analysis is party families. In particular, the families with the greatest outliers are the Radical Right and the Regionalist, which are also the most volatile sets. It is exactly the temporal dimension that now will be spelt out. The temporal dimension allows us to see whether party families display similar

patterns of development over time or whether - to the contrary - trends are very different. This is a crucial aspect to uncover and the comparison between families that emerged at different stages is particularly useful in this regard. For instance, if all the families display a greater level of instability at the same point in time, then this might suggest that the party systems the beginning of their life, then this might suggest that switching is a phenomenon related to the life-cycle of parties and to their relative level of institutionalisation. To put it differently, if such a trend is found, this might imply that the younger the party family, the more likely that it will experience switching. However, if developments are different for the various families, switching might be either due to specific events within each family or to their ideological values. In other words, the potential explanations of switching might be very different based on the historical evolution of the phenomenon among party families.

In order to analyse the evolution of switching over time for party families, I plotted the yearly percentage of switchers and calculated the so-called weighted running line, that is equivalent to a smooth average[13]. The results are presented in Figure 3.12.

Families seem to have followed three different types of development. The first one is represented by families like Communist, Green, Social-Democratic, and - to a lesser extent - Conservative and Liberal. These families normally display a very low percentage of switchers, but at different points in time, they all experienced at least one phase of instability, in which around 5% of their legislators switched. For parties belonging to these families, therefore, party switching is episodic. Liberal, Social-Democratic and Conservatives families also have in common the fact that recently they all have witnessed an increase in the percentage of switchers, that might be a signal of the increasing personalisation of parties and/or a change in parties' representational style.

Christian-Democratic parties are the most immune to switching: not only has the percentage of switchers has usually been lower than for the other families, but they also have not witnessed the recent increase like parties from the first group. Finally, a third group is represented by Regionalist and Radical Right families which are characterised by a greater percentage of switchers, rarely falling below 5%. For both families the years between 1945-1955 were particularly troubled. Later the Radical Right family experienced another phase of instability in the second half of the 1970s, while the Regionalist family reached its second peak in the 1990s. Moreover, both

[13]I used the Stata command *lowess*, which calculates the weighted mean with a bandwidth equal to the 20% of the data, giving more weight to the closest observations.

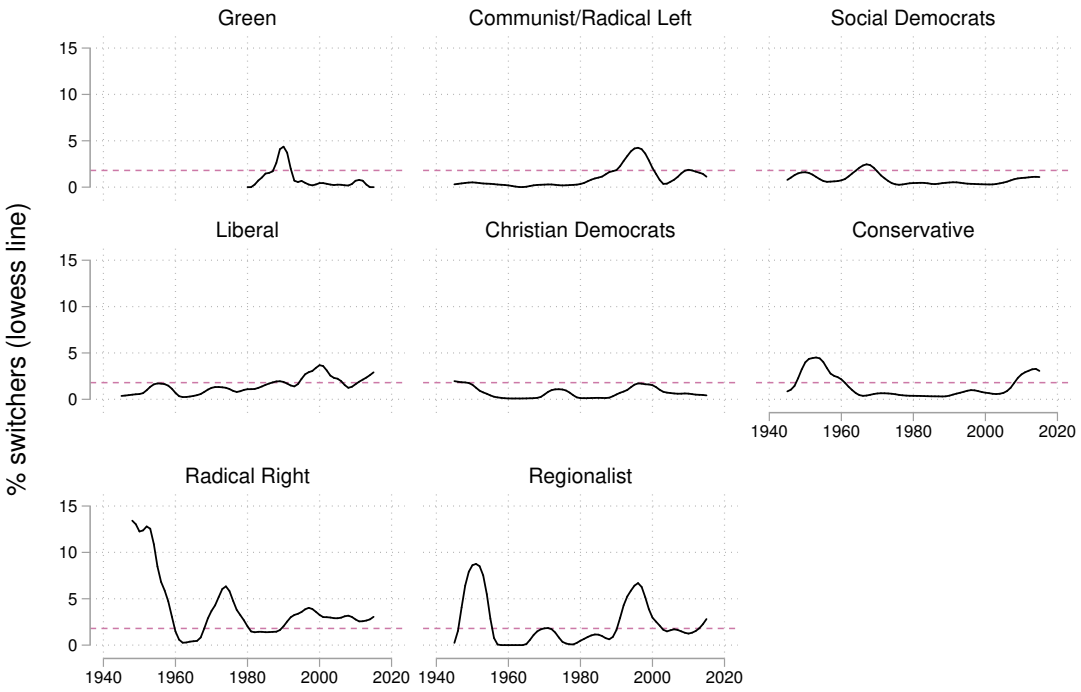


Figure 3.12: Historical development of party switching: running line of the % of switchers for each party family (1945-2015)

families have experienced a growth in the percentage of defectors in the last five years.

The fact that party families display quite different trends in the evolution of switching, suggests that ideology might play a role in explaining the variation of the dependent variable: families' values might affect the way legislators interpret their roles. What it is unclear from this first assessment of the relationship between switching and ideology, is whether MPs change party to escape excessive discipline or because they are granted a greater level of independence. The life-cycle hypothesis does not seem to find support from this first exploration of the data. However, this was not the best way to test this hypothesis, given that usually within the same family there are parties with different ages. At this stage we cannot tell, hence, whether the picks in switching are due to younger parties or older parties. Moreover, we should not forget that several families (especially the Social-Democrats or the Christian-Democrats) are made up of parties which were established before the First World War, that is, long before 1945. Therefore we cannot tell whether these families experienced more switching at the beginning of their life, given that they are being surveyed when they were already old. A more rigorous test of this

argument will be performed in Chapter 4 when age will be measured at the party level and not at the family level.

Still, a first insight on this issue might come from the assessment of the scope of individual and collective defections. As it has already been pointed out, individual and collective switching are two very different kinds of behaviour and they might also be affected by the ideological positions of parties and in the way they pursue unity. For instance, families that share the importance of discipline and loyalty to the party, then should experience switching only in the case of deep organisational transformations, like splitting or fusion, that is, collective forms of switching. In contrast, parties that reject excessive authority or that positively evaluate the independence of their members, should be more often subject to individual switching. To put it another way, there should be a correlation between parties' ideological values and the kind of switching that they experience. This last section is therefore devoted to a preliminary analysis of the variation across party families of these two forms of defection.

Table 3.6 gives a synthetic overview of how individual switching affects the eight party families considered, the results are expressed in terms of absolute number of individual switchers, compared to the total number of switchers. As a point of reference, we can consider the aggregate results for all the families. In this case, individual switchers represent 47% of the total. Most of the families display a similar percentage of individual switchers. However, there are three families that instead appear to be more affected by this kind of behaviour, namely Green, Conservative and Radical Right families. The result for the Green parties is in line with what had been found by Close (2016) on the relationship between party family and party loyalty. According to the author, legislators belonging to Green parties have less of a propensity to remain loyal to their groups in cases of disagreement. Close explains this finding with the fact that Green parties promote values such as self-fulfilment and self-affirmation, that might result in a greater independence for legislators vis-à-vis the party organisation and leadership.

Close finds instead that MPs belonging to Radical Right parties are the most loyal. Indeed, my result for the Radical Right family appears quite surprising, given that I would expect parties from the extreme right to put a greater emphasis on loyalty and discipline, similarly to what happens in the Communist/Radical Left family. This is therefore an issue to explore in more depth in order to shed light on the possible explanations for what - at first look - appears as a paradox. For instance, it might be necessary to control also for the fragmentation of each family and within in each country. Indeed, it might be that Radical Right parties

Table 3.6: Individual switching by party family (absolute number of individual switchers, total number of switchers, % of individual switchers on the total number of switchers, 1945-2015)

Family	*Individual switchers (absolute N)*	*Total switchers (absolute N)*	*% individual switchers*
Communist & Radical Left	78	202	38.6
Liberal	195	503	38.8
Social-democratic	324	742	43.7
Regionalist	56	124	45.2
All families	**1417**	**3048**	**46.5**
Green	15	28	53.6
Christian-democratic	159	325	48.9
Radical Right	138	271	50.9
Conservative	452	853	53.0

experience more switching because within a given polity there are more parties from the same family, whereas parties belonging to smaller families might appear more stable simply because MPs do not have other ideological similar options to choose from.

The Communist/Radical Left family, on the contrary, is the least subject to individual switching. This might be consistent with the strong ideological character of these parties. The emphasis on unity might be stronger in this family compared to other families, with the result that MPs switch party only in case of organisational transformations. The fact that we find this for Radical Left parties makes the result for the Radical Right even more puzzling, given that these two families share an emphasis on the importance of ideology and loyalty, which does not help us to explain why Radical Right parties display one of the highest percentages of switchers.

It is useful to look at the temporal evolution of individual and collective switching for party families, as well. In order to do so, I plot for each family the running averages of the number of individual and collective switchers. The results are presented in Figure 3.13 and 3.14. The figures show the results in absolute numbers, therefore larger families display also a greater amount of changes. For this reason, I separate the three largest families (Social-Democratic, Liberal and Conservative) from the others. Figure 3.13 also includes a graph showing the development of individual and collective switchers for all families taken together, in order to have a point of reference for the different groups.

Similarly to in the analysis of countries, there has been an overall increase in the number of both collective and individual switchers. Collective changes have also been predominant in the period from 1945 to 1975, as well as in the last five years

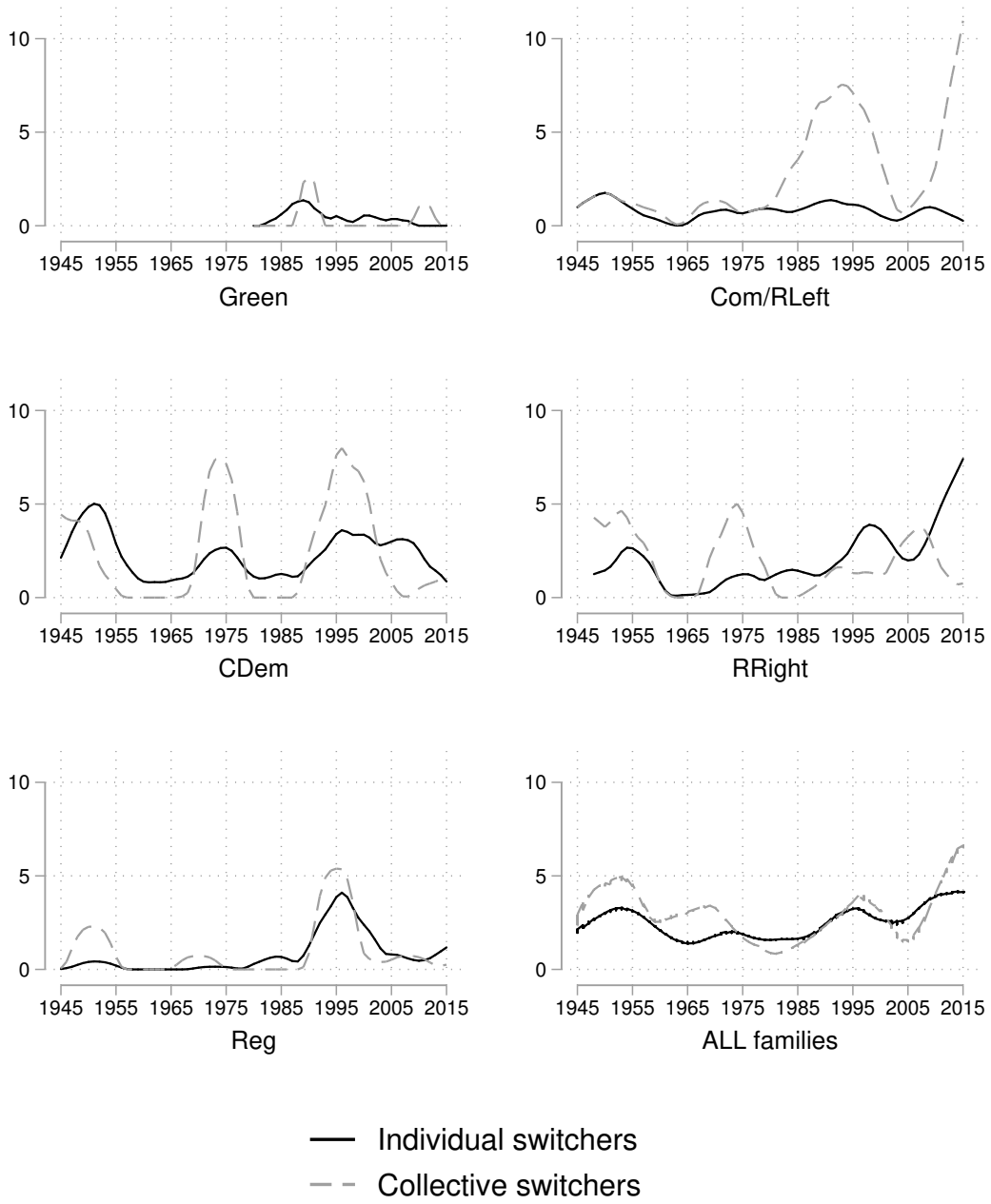


Figure 3.13: Individual and collective switching over time: Running line of average number of switchers (Green, Communist/Radical Left, Christian-Democratic, Radical Right, Agrarian, Regionalist families and all families together, 1945-2015))

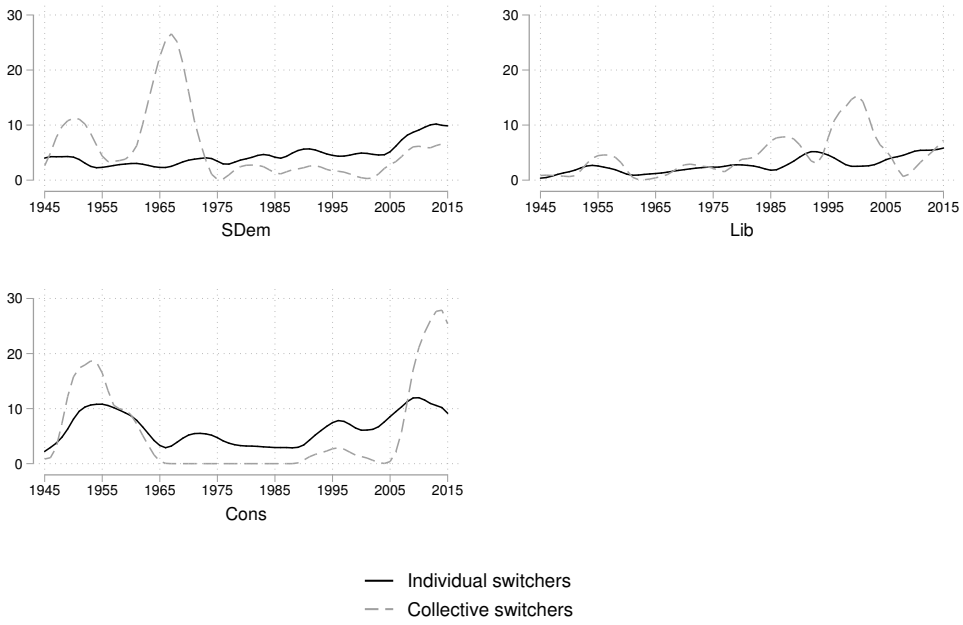


Figure 3.14: Individual and collective switching over time: running line of the average number of switchers (Social-Democratic, Liberal and Conservative families, 1945-2015)

(since 2010). The relationship between individual and collective changes therefore holds also when the units of analysis are parties and their families, rather than countries.

Looking at the results for the various families, we can see that for six of them (namely, Social-Democratic, Liberal, Conservative, Radical Left, Radical Right and Regionalist) there has been a growth in the number of individual switchers and in some cases this has become the prevalent form of behaviour. The magnitude of this increase, however, varies across families. For instance, the Social-Democratic family, after a phase of organisational transformation during the 1960s, has mostly witnessed individual forms of switching. Similarly, Radical Right parties are currently mainly affected by individual defectors, while, in the past, the two forms of behaviour were almost equivalent. Over time, therefore, the prevalence of individual switchers has even become greater for Radical Right parties. Parties from the Conservative and Radical Left families, instead, have mainly experienced a sharp increase in the number of collective defections. Finally, Christian-Democratic and Green parties have experienced a drop in the number of individual switchers.

To conclude, individual switching affects party families differently. For some, individual changes are quite rare and usually below the average of collective movements. This is for instance the case for communist parties. For other families,

instead, recently there has been an increase in the number of MPs who change group independently from their colleagues. This is particularly true for Radical Right parties, as well as Social-Democratic ones. On the contrary, groups from the Conservative and Radical Left families have in recent years experienced a consistent increase in the scope of collective switchers, which are a proxy for organisational transformations.

3.5 Chapter conclusions: dimensions of variation

This chapter was devoted to the description of the variance in the dependent variable of interest, measured both in terms of MPs who switched and absolute number of changes. The goal of the chapter was to see whether party switching varies across countries, time and ideologies. The units of analysis selected were countries and party families. In both cases, it is clear that there is a variation in the scope of switching that needs to be explained.

With regard to countries, what emerges is that there are two polities that have been particularly subject to party switching, namely France and Italy. When the historical dimension is spelt out, we see that immediately after 1945, France was the most unstable country, while from 1985, Italy has surpassed France.

When the temporal dimension is taken into account, it emerges that most of the countries, with two exceptions, have seen a growth in the percentage of MPs changing group. What it is clear from this first exploration of the data is that party switching can be explained only partially by the institutionalization of the party system, as usually stated by that literature which sees party switching as an idiosyncratic phenomenon (on this issue see Heller and Mershon 2009). Indeed, only two countries show a development that corresponds with the institutionalisation hypothesis, namely Germany and Spain. These two countries witnessed a high degree of parliamentary instability right after their return to democracy, that is when the party system was not yet consolidated, but after that the scope of switching has always been very limited. However, all the other countries display a growing trend in the amount of switching, that cannot be explained only by a lack of institutionalisation, but rather by factors that are most likely related to the relationship between legislators and their parties.

This last intuition finds further support from the analysis of individual and collective switching. At the aggregate level the number of MPs who change party independently from other colleagues has increased consistently in the last ten years. Legislators therefore seem to switch not only to follow the fate of their parties, but

also to pursue more individual paths. This seems to be particularly true for countries such as the Netherlands, Austria, Finland, Italy and Greece.

Variance in the dependent variable was found also when the party families are the unit of analysis. The Radical Right family and the Regionalist family seem to be the most subject to switching. Over time their level of instability has decreased, but it remains still above the overall average. In recent times, switching has also become more problematic also for most of the party families analysed, and especially for the Conservatives and the Liberals. Only one family, instead, has seen a drop in the number of switchers, namely the Christian-Democratic one, which in general appears to be the family most immune to turning coat.

Radical Right parties do not only seem to be the most subject to switching, but they also appear to be particularly exposed to individual forms of changing party, a tendency that has even increased over time. There is no other family among those surveyed that has seen a similar sharp increase in the number of individual switchers. This is probably one of the most interesting and puzzling findings to be explored in the next chapters.

Among the families that have also become more vulnerable to individual switching we find the Social Democrats and the Conservatives. In contrast, there are families that, at various points in time, have mainly experienced collective forms of transformation, like, in particular, the Communist family.

Given that party switching displays some degree of variability across countries, party families and over time, the next chapters are devoted to the analysis of the potential explanations of these differences. Specifically, the questions that need to be answered are the following: What are the factors that might explain between-country variance? What has also made switching a more common phenomenon also in other established Western European democracies? How can we explain the rise of individual switching? What are the sources of instability among party families? To what extent do ideological values and/or parties' organisational structures form the basis of party switching?

Chapter 4

The opportunity for turning coat

Party-level characteristics, cost of *Voice* and party switching

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the relationship between party switching and meso-level variables. In particular, the goal is to test the impact of party and party system features on the scope of switching. So far, the role of party-level variables has received surprisingly little attention in the literature given the potential impact that parties' features might have on MPs' decisions to change affiliation. Indeed, parties' characteristics might affect both the cost of and the opportunity for switching, the same way they influence their level of discipline (Laver 1999a). As Kam (2001, p. 115) states "an MP's party affiliation provides vastly more information about his/her behaviour than do his/her preferences". Similarly, as I will argue in the rest of the chapter, parties might witness different levels of switching, contingent on their organisational and/or ideological characteristics.

The influence of party-level variables on the scope of switching is acknowledged also by the segment of the literature that studies the study switching from a strategic perspective (Mershon 2014). Several authors have recognised (and tested) the impact of meso-level variables in shaping the decision to change affiliation. For instance Di Virgilio, Giannetti, and Pinto (2012) highlight the role of context on the choice to switch, in particular timing, party type and party structures. Similarly, Heller and Mershon (2008) examine the influence of party discipline on the propensity to switch. They find that "more disciplined parties saw more switching"(p. 921). This result suggests that the mechanisms through which discipline is enforced might directly affect the probability that a party will experience switching. However,

party features are usually not tested per se, but they are used as proxies to uncover switchers' goals. For example, O'Brien and Shomer (2013) test whether parties in opposition are more subject to switching in order to see whether MPs are driven by career advancement concerns. As party features are not at the centre of the explanation, we still know very little about whether and how party characteristics are related to different switching rates, both theoretically and empirically.

Building on previous theories of switching and party unity in general, I want to extend the research on the role of party-level variables and their impact on the scope of defections. The objective of the chapter is therefore to uncover what makes parties more or less subject to defections and to test my theoretical argument against real-world data. As outlined in Chapter 2, politicians must bear different costs when they decide to switch. These costs are largely influenced by the institutional setting in which legislators operate. While identifying these costs is useful to explain why certain countries display different rates of switching, they cannot account for the variance between parties operating in the same polity. There must be something else. The central claim of this chapter is that party features also affect the scope of defections, making certain parties more subject to this phenomenon than others.

In particular, according to my theoretical framework, party characteristics shape the *opportunity* for defecting, or the *cost of voice*. Specifically, I argue that legislators change party if they do not have other tools to express their dissatisfaction. Indeed, different parties do not grant to their members the same room to convey discontent. Certain parties tolerate very little dissent and are intransigent with rules (Ceron 2015) and this makes their level of internal democracy low. As a consequence, once such a party has determined the line to be followed, members can only stick to it and cannot express their disappointment, that is, they cannot *voice*. In this situation those who dissent can only exit, that is switch. Simply stated, the less room granted for voicing discontent, the more likely that a disagreement will be channelled into defection.

The chapter is structured as follows: in the first part, I outline how different party characteristics make parties more vulnerable to defections (highlighting when relevant the impact on the cost of *voice*) and test the role of each factor individually. In this way I can grasp how each variable affects the switching rate in the different countries. In the second part, instead, I perform a multivariate statistical analysis in order to understand whether the effect of the different variables changes when they are considered altogether. The purpose of the multivariate analysis is to sketch which configurations of party characteristics increase the likelihood and the scope of switching.

Since in Chapter 3 I mentioned that there are several indicators to measure switching, for the purpose of this chapter, I decided to use the *absolute number of switchers* that each party witnessed in a given year as the dependent variable[1]. This variable identifies not only the presence/absence of defectors, but it also exactly quantifies the extent of this phenomenon for a given party. A clarification is needed: in order to construct this variable, I only included first-time switchers. If an MP exited a group and then s/he also left the second party, then this second movement was not recorded. This means that my data set takes as a point of reference the consistency of each parliamentary group at the beginning of a legislature and records the variation from this initial picture. In other words, the theoretically maximum number of switchers is always equal to the number of seats granted to each group, that is, the maximum percentage of defectors a party can experience is 100%. By choosing to include only "first" switchers, the scope of the phenomenon might be sometimes under-estimated. More information on this kind of dependent variable can be found in Section 4.6.

4.2 Ideology

According to Yoshinaka (2015), ideology is one of the most important factors among the factors that affect the cost of switching. Ideology affects the probability of a party witnessing switching for two reasons. First, following Sartori (1976), ideology is highly correlated with cohesion. Similarly, Owens (2003) states that parties' values are a key factor in explaining their level of cohesion and discipline. The mechanism linking ideology and loyalty (one of the dimensions of party unity) has been analysed by Close (2016), who illustrates how ideology affects both MPs' perception of their roles and party organisations. Ideology shapes the representational style that legislators adopt: e.g., liberal parties embody values like individualism and – as a consequence – their MPs should behave in a more individualistic manner. Ideology also affects parties' organisational structures and the level of internal democracy, and that – in turn – might have an influence over legislators' behaviour (Gauja 2013a). To put it succinctly, ideology potentially affects MPs' attitudes and behaviour both directly and indirectly. As ideology affects unity, then it is most likely that it also influences switching, which represents an extreme forms of disunity.

[1]Clearly one switcher from a large party has less weight than a switcher from a small party. As I will explain in Section 4.6, I do take into account party size when performing my statistical analysis in order to also control for the differing impact of defections based on their number of seats.

Nevertheless, ideology is a multifaceted concept (Núñez López and Close 2017) and for this reason I discuss and analyse three different meanings of ideology: 1) parties' placement in the ideological space, that is, their position on the left-right continuum, 2) the extremity of their position, 3) and their stability over time. This way, I can account both for a static and a dynamic understanding of ideology.

4.2.1 Left-right placement

A first basic understanding of ideology relates to parties' values and beliefs, which as previously mentioned, influence legislators' representational style and – as a consequence – might affect their decision to switch. As explained in Chapter 3, according to Wahlke et al. (1962), as well as Converse and Pierce (1986), there are two main styles of representation: trustee and delegate. The former is more independent and freely interprets the will of his/her constituents, while the latter always acts in respect of the wishes of his/her voters. However, as underlined by Katz (1999), the presence of parties profoundly alters the representational chain and makes legislators delegates of the party as well, and not only of voters. For this reason, the author adds an additional style of representation that is called 'partisan'.

Although not much research has been conducted on how partisanship affects MPs' representational role, Gauja (2013b) shows how several studies have demonstrated that party affiliation indeed has an impact on the style chosen by legislators. In particular, there seems to be a relationship between parties' ideology and representational roles, "with left MPs more likely to perceive of themselves as party representatives and conservative MPs as trustees" (Gauja 2013b, p.164). For instance, Damgaard (1997) finds that indeed legislators from socialist parties advocate for the primacy of their party, while MPs from central, liberal and conservative parties tend to have a more individualistic attitude. These results are consistent with those by Gauja (2013b) and Andeweg (1997) in other European countries. To put it differently, we can expect that by increasing the prominence of the party organisation and ideology, members of leftist parties will prefer *voice* over *exit*. This in turn will increase the cost of *exit* for their legislators, who will be more attached and loyal to their group.

Given their ability to promote a greater attachment to the party organisation, parties from the left are also expected to be more united. For instance, Damgaard (1995) finds that leftist groups do indeed display a higher degree of voting unity. Likewise, I argue that a similar logic also applies to switching, that represents a different dimension of party unity. This argument can be restated in the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1 *Leftist parties are expected to have fewer switchers.*

In order to measure the ideological position of parties, I retrieved the right-left ideological index (variable *Rile*) from the Comparative Manifesto Project - CMP (Volkens et al. 2016), that ranges from -100 (extreme left) to 100 (extreme right). Despite some limitations (König, Marbach, and Osnabrügge 2013), I opted for the scores from the CMP because it is the only available option to cover my entire sample of countries from 1945.

Table 4.1: Correlation coefficient between number of switchers and parties' placement on left-right scale (1945-2015)

Country	*Corr. Coeff.*	*Left-right (mean)*	*N*
ALL countries	**0.03****	**-3.65**	**5410**
Austria	0.02	-0.01	234
Belgium	0.05	-4.88	488
Denmark	0.05	0.74	523
Finland	-0.04	-5-56	529
France	0.14**	-3.93	389
Germany	0.01	-4.37	292
Greece	-0.09	-5.90	177
Ireland	0.03	-6.27	300
Italy	-0.01	0.22	542
Netherlands	0.07	-2.27	435
Norway	0.01	-11.49	430
Spain	0.15**	-11.41	350
Switzerland	0.06	3.28	508
United Kingdom	-0.09	-4.51	213

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

To check whether there is indeed a relationship between parties' position and the number of defections, I calculated the correlation coefficients between these two variables. As can be seen from Table 4.1, overall there seems to be a positive correlation between parties' placement and switches, and as in aggregate and most of the countries, the correlation coefficients are positive (but usually not very strong). A similar result is found if we plot the number of defections against the *Rile* scores (Figure 4.1). The line representing the fitted values is upwards inclined, but only slightly. France and Spain appear to be the countries in which the relationship is the strongest. Interestingly enough, only four countries show an opposite correlation between the variables of interest, namely Finland, Greece, Italy and the United Kingdom. In these countries leftist parties (at least based on the classification provided by the CMP) seem to have been more unstable than their counterparts on the right side of the spectrum.

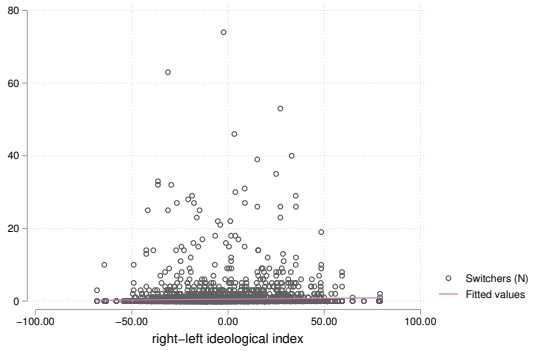


Figure 4.1: The relationship between number of switchers and parties' ideological position, all countries (1945-2015)

Overall this result is consistent with the one obtained in Chapter 3 using party families instead of the party's position on the left-right scale. Also in that case, Radical Right parties display a higher degree of dis-unity compared to more leftist groups.

4.2.2 Ideological extremism

Part of the research on party unity has argued that more than party positions per se, what matters for cohesion is the relative extremity of parties' ideological platforms. According to Mejia Acosta (2004) extreme parties share a similar level of unity because they have a clearer ideology. Likewise, Rahat (2007) argues that extreme parties are more cohesive because they are more faithful to their values and less sensitive to volatility in public opinion. Moreover, when a party is placed at the extreme of the ideological spectrum, its MPs can only switch towards the centre. In other words, they have fewer options compared to members of centrist parties, who instead face appeals from two sides (Morgenstern 2003).

However, with regard to switching, these expectations might not apply. In fact, extreme parties stress the importance of principles and values, thus, the internal ideological discussions might be more acute. Additionally, the willingness to remain faithful to ideology (Rahat 2007) might restrict the space for legislators with alternative views. Therefore, in the case of conflict or excessive debate around a specific issue, the only realistic option for dissidents is leaving the party. This argument is coherent with Hirschman's scheme: in ideologically extreme parties it might be more difficult for MPs to voice their discontent. Discipline might be so tight that – in the case of conflicts – there is no alternative but to switch. The little tolerance towards divergent or more moderate views increases the cost of *voice* and, as a consequence,

the likelihood of an *exit*. The expectation therefore is the opposite than what is posed by the literature so far: more extreme parties might be more disciplined, but this might also lead to a higher number of switchers.

Following these arguments, I expect that:

Hypothesis 2 *An extreme placement of the party in the political space favours defections.*

In order to determine how extreme each party is on the left-right continuum, I calculated the absolute value of the difference between each party's position (variable *Rile*) and the centre of the spectrum, which equals 0. The variable *Extreme* therefore ranges from 0 (centrist party) to 100 (extreme party). I expect that when the variable *Extreme* increases, the number of switchers decreases.

As a first test for this hypothesis, I calculated the correlation coefficients between the number of switchers and ideological extremism. The results are presented in Table 4.2. At the aggregate level, the correlation coefficient is statistically significant and it has a positive sign, which is in line with my expectations. When all the countries are considered together, it seems that more extreme parties are also more subject to switching. This finding is also confirmed when countries are considered separately. As it can be seen in Table 4.2, most of the correlation coefficients show a positive sign (although the majority are not statistically significant). Only France, Ireland, the Netherlands and Spain display a negative sign. Therefore, it seems that overall more centrist parties are less affected by switching.

Table 4.2: Correlation coefficient between number of switchers and ideological extremism in each country (1945-2015)

Country	*Corr. coeff.*	*N*
ALL	**0.03****	**5410**
Austria	0.03	234
Belgium	0.03	488
Denmark	0.12**	523
Finland	0.08	529
France	-0.04	389
Germany	0.05	292
Greece	0.06	177
Ireland	-0.06	300
Italy	0.12**	542
Netherlands	-0.01	435
Norway	0.10	430
Spain	-0.20***	350
Switzerland	0.05	508
United Kingdom	0.12	213

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

4.2.3 Ideological stability

The previous factors look at parties' ideology at one specific point in time. However, platforms are not stable over time and they can change significantly between two elections (Schumacher, De Vries, and Vis 2013). For instance, parties from the right might shift their policy preferences either towards the centre or to more extreme positions, and the same can happen to leftist groups. The literature has studied why parties would modify their platforms and it is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the many findings of this stream of research (for a summary, see Adams 2012). For the purpose of this work, what matters are the consequences of these shifts of position for the behaviour of MPs and for the decision to change party.

According to Ames (2009) when parties are unstable, legislators' voting behaviour cannot be predicted by their affiliation and they often defect with impunity. The research on party switching thus expects parties with blurred and unstable platforms to experience more defections (Desposato 2006). From a party perspective, a shift in the programmatic platform might also come at a cost. Indeed, the change will most likely disappoint a segment of the party members. Some members will feel the new course as a betrayal of the original parties' values and will consider the *exit* option in order to preserve them, and this is particularly true for parties with well-defined ideologies[2](Salucci 2008).

However, if we consider the impact that ideological stability has on the cost of *voice*, the expectations from the literature might be overturned. Indeed, a party whose ideological platform does not change over time might be interpreted as a sign of rigidity and an inability to deal with shifts in the preferences of the electorate as well as their legislators. It might be that parties that are able to adapt their programmatic platforms through time actually manage to maintain unity, given that they are more flexible. Moreover, their ideological fluidity might result from a higher degree of internal debate in which different proposals are discussed and eventually incorporated into the party platform. More discussion means that divergent views are not just tolerated but encouraged. In summary, ideological flexibility might correspond to a lower cost of *voice* and, hence, to fewer defections. This argument can be restated in the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3 *A more stable ideological platform favours defections.*

[2]This happened, for instance, to the Italian Communist Party, which in 1989 – after the dissolution of the Soviet Union – went through a major review of its platform and became a progressive left-wing party. A faction of the party did not approve the transformation and split from it, establishing the Communist Refoundation Party whose values were still inspired by those of Communism, as explained by Eubank, Gangopadahay, and Weinberg (1996).

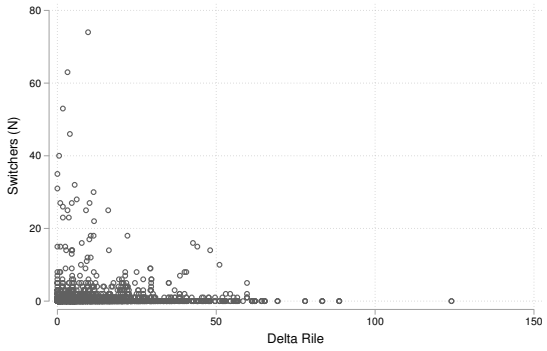


Figure 4.2: The relationship between number of switchers and ideological stability

Table 4.3: Correlation coefficient between number of switchers and ideological stability in each country (1945-2015)

Country	*Corr. Coeff.*	*N*
ALL	**-0.02**	**4848**
Austria	0.08	216
Belgium	0.08	448
Denmark	-0.01	485
Finland	0.07	484
France	-0.09	348
Germany	0.03	242
Greece	-0.11	144
Ireland	0.01	279
Italy	-0.05	457
Netherlands	0.02	390
Norway	0.01	396
Spain	0.04	309
Switzerland	-0.04	452
United Kingdom	-0.08	198

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

I operationalise ideological stability as shifts in parties' position on the left-right scale between two waves of the CMP (variable Δ *Rile*). As I am not interested in the direction of the change, but only in its magnitude, Δ *Rile* accounts for the number of points a party's ideological position has changed between two observations. Based on my hypothesis, larger values of Δ *Rile* should correspond to a smaller number of switchers, this means that the expected relationship between the two variables is negative.

The test of this hypothesis is accomplished through the use of a scatter plot in which the number of switchers is plotted against the different values of Δ *Rile*. As Figure 4.2 shows, the highest number of switchers is recorded for the lower levels of Δ *Rile* and this is in line with my expectation. In other words, the highest levels of

switching are found in more ideologically unstable parties. The correlation coefficient between the two variables is negative as well, albeit not statistically significant, at least when countries are taken all together (see Table 4.3). However, in most of the countries analysed, the correlation has a positive sign. This is the case for Austria, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway and Spain. This means that in these countries the opposite mechanism is at work, as parties with more unstable platforms also better manage to maintain the unity of their ranks.

4.3 Party age

Besides ideology there are other features that can affect the probability that a party will experience switching. Among these factors there is party institutionalisation, or consolidation (Panebianco 1988). This variable is very difficult to measure and one of the most common proxies is party age. Indeed, new political formations are usually less institutionalised and the process of consolidation is a crucial step for a party's development and survival (Bolleyer 2013): newly established political formations might not yet have developed a clear and coherent political platform. The lack of a consistent program might also affect party membership, which – especially at the beginning – might be made up of a very heterogeneous group of members, with a variety of political preferences. Moreover, partisan ties might be less internalised by members of newer parties, given their lack of experience in participation (Ceron 2015). In other words, younger parties are less institutionalised internally because they lack routinisation of rules and value infusion (Ibenskas 2016). Finally, younger parties also need to develop clear procedures to handle conflicts and discussions. This uncertainty about rules might increase the cost of *voice*. Therefore, when norms of party unity are not well established then it is more likely that parties will experience switching. This argument leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4 *Older political parties suffer less from party switching.*

Measuring party age is straightforward: for each party I retrieved the year in which it was established from the ParlGov database (Döring and Manow 2015). Then I calculated the difference between the founding year and the year of the observation. The variable obtained (*Age*) ranges from 0 to a maximum of 181, with an average of 45.6.

In order to verify whether the two variables of interest are related to each other, as a first step, I plotted them against each other, aggregating all the countries together (Figure 4.3). As the Figure shows, there seems to be a negative relationship between

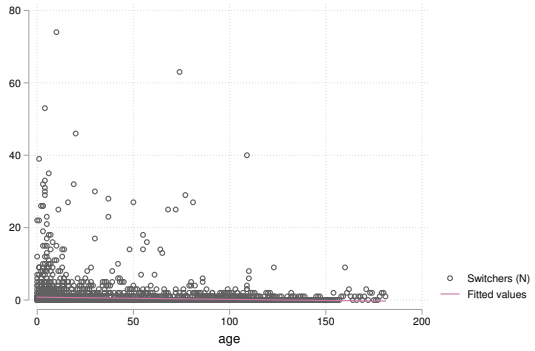


Figure 4.3: The relationship between the number of switchers and party age

Table 4.4: Mean number of switchers for different categories of party age, all countries (1945-2015)

Variable	*Switchers (mean)*	*S.d.*	*Freq.*
Age, categorical			
0-	1.11	4.3	1420
16-	0.31	2.0	1392
36-	0.30	1.8	1449
69-	0.34	2.4	1434

age and the number of switchers. Indeed, the high numbers of switchers are more frequent for younger parties.

Since Figure 4.3 is not very easy to read because of the many observation, in order to check whether the relationship between age and defections is actually negative, I transformed age from a continuous variable into a categorical one, with four categories of equal size (in terms of observations). I then calculated the average percentage of switchers for each category for all the countries aggregated together. Results are presented in Table 4.4 and they tell us that overall, indeed, younger parties seem to experience a greater number of switchers. Additionally, the table tells us that fundamentally the contrast is between young and old parties, as the number of switchers does not decrease for higher age categories, but rather it is stable. I performed an ANOVA test to check whether the differences between categories are significant and found that indeed they are (p-value = 0.000). A Tukey post-hoc test showed that the number of switchers is statistically significantly higher for the lowest category of age compared to all the other three categories (p-value always below 0.000). However, there is no statistically significant difference between the three highest categories of age.

Does this relationship hold when we look at individual countries? In order to answer to this question, I calculated the same average percentage of switchers for

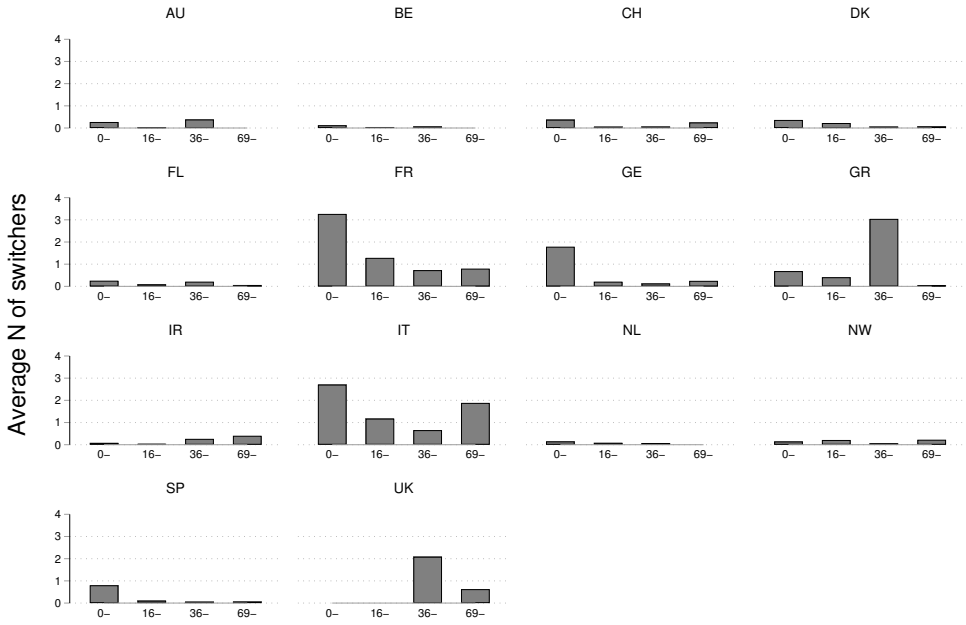


Figure 4.4: Average number of switchers for different categories of age in each country

each age category for the fourteen countries separately. As it can be seen from Figure 4.4 in most of the countries the mean number of switchers seems to decrease with party age[3]. This is particularly the case in France, Germany, Spain, Denmark, and the Netherlands. To a certain extent a negative relationship also exists in the UK: English parties, which are generally older than in the other countries (that is why there are no observations for the first two categories of the variable age) see fewer switchers the older they get. Italy is a special case. For parties between 0 and 68 years old it seems that the relationship is indeed negative. However, the average number of switchers is again higher for very old parties. This result might possibly be due to the phase of transition between the so-called First and Second Republic, in which the traditional parties that were founded after the Second World War collapsed. Alternatively, another explanation might be found in the high instability of the Italian Socialist parties that were established before the First World War but that split and merged several times in the 1960s and 1970s.

Surprisingly enough, there are also four countries in which the relationship instead goes in the opposite direction. This is particularly evident in Ireland and Greece, and to a lesser extent in Austria, and Switzerland. In these countries, more established parties are more subject to switching than newer groups. The Irish case might be explained by the phenomenon of transformation of the party system born

[3]For the same graph but with a rescaled vertical axis which allows to better observe the actual mean for each category, see the Figure C.1 in Appendix C.

after 1945 and crisis of Irish traditional parties. Indeed Ireland, in recent years, has witnessed an increase in the amount of switching (as shown in Chapter 3), as well as a growing electoral volatility (Chiaramonte and Emanuele 2017), both of which have contributed to reshaping (more or less profoundly) its party systems. A similar explanation applies to Greece, where the traditional parties that ruled the country after the transition to democracy have witnessed a profound transformation during the hardest phase of the economic crisis.

4.4 Governing status

Another feature that might have an impact on the scope of switching is the governing status of a party. The literature on parliamentary cohesion suggests that governing parties are likely to be more united (Carey 2002, 2007; Diermeier and Feddersen 1998a). As Reed and Scheiner (2003, p. 469) put it: "Ruling political parties should not fall apart. [...] The most effective glue for maintaining party cohesion is power, either the current control of government or the prospect of gaining control in the near future. "Being in government does not only increases party unity, but it should also reduce the probability of experiencing switching. Indeed, according to several authors (Desposato 2006; Di Virgilio, Giannetti, and Pinto 2012), governing parties should be more resistant to switching because they can ensure their members better pay-offs in terms of career advancement. In other words, the governing status – accommodating the career ambitions of MPs – should protect parties from disunity.

However, there are other scholars that do not agree with this argument. For instance, in the scheme developed by Laver and Kato (2001), in governing coalitions and/or governing parties[4] there are always incentives for factions to defect. In other words, governing parties are potentially more unstable than parties in opposition. This argument is also supported by some empirical research. For instance, Sieberer (2006) finds a negative association between governing status and voting unity, a results that the author explains with the supposition that being in government might increase the level of conflict within parties, because they have to make decision on divisive issues. In a similar study, Rahat (2007) also finds that cohesion is lower among governing coalitions. Rahat makes a similar argument to Sieberer, stating that opposition is easier than policy-making because the latter requires taking responsibility. Moreover, Rahat suggests that given that governing coalitions are larger, they can take the risk of having a lower party cohesion. For all these reasons, here I assume that governing parties will be more subject to switching than their

[4]Assuming that parties are themselves coalitions of factions.

Table 4.5: Mean number of switchers for parties in government and opposition, all countries (1945-2015)

Variable	*Switchers (mean)*	*S.d.*	*Freq.*
Governing Status			
0 (opposition)	0.38	2.2	3.451
1 (in government)	0.73	3.6	2.244

counterparts in opposition.. Regarding the impact of cabinet status on the cost of voice, we can imagine that it will be higher, because MPs belonging to the governing majority will have fewer tools to express their discontent. Given that the pressure to maintain party unity is higher among the parties which comprise the cabinet, legislators cannot, for instance, vote against the party line because they might face more serious repercussions for doing so. When no other channel is available, then *exit* becomes the most attractive, or the only, option in the case of dissatisfaction.

Hypothesis 5 *Being in government favours defections.*

I used the ParlGov database to compute parties' governing positions. Parties are assigned value 1 when they are part of the governmental majority for a year (or part of it), and 0 when they are in the opposition[5] (variable *Govt*). The expectation is that parties in government will display a higher number of switchers.

From a simple cross-tabulation of the two variables we can see that the hypothesis finds support in the data. As Table 4.5 shows, the average number of switchers for parties in opposition is 0.4, that is, slightly below the aggregate mean. For parties in government, instead, the mean number of switchers is 0.7, thus above the general average. I tested whether this difference is statistically significant with an independent t-test. I found that indeed opposition parties experience statistically significantly less switchers compared to parties in government (p-value=0.000). This means that, overall, parties in government are more subject to switching than those in opposition.

The positive association between governing status and switching is also confirmed for the majority of countries, as Figure 4.5 shows[6]. The association seems to be particularly strong in Greece, France, and Italy, but also the United Kingdom, Spain, Ireland and Switzerland. Yet, there are also countries in which the association is

[5]In a first moment, the variable had an additional category for parties which had been in government only for part of the year. However, the number of observations was extremely low (around 147) compared to the other two categories. Hence, I decided not to use this "middle" category and recoded it as 1.

[6]For the same graph but with a rescaled vertical axis which allows to better observe the actual mean for each category, see the Figure C.2 in Appendix C.

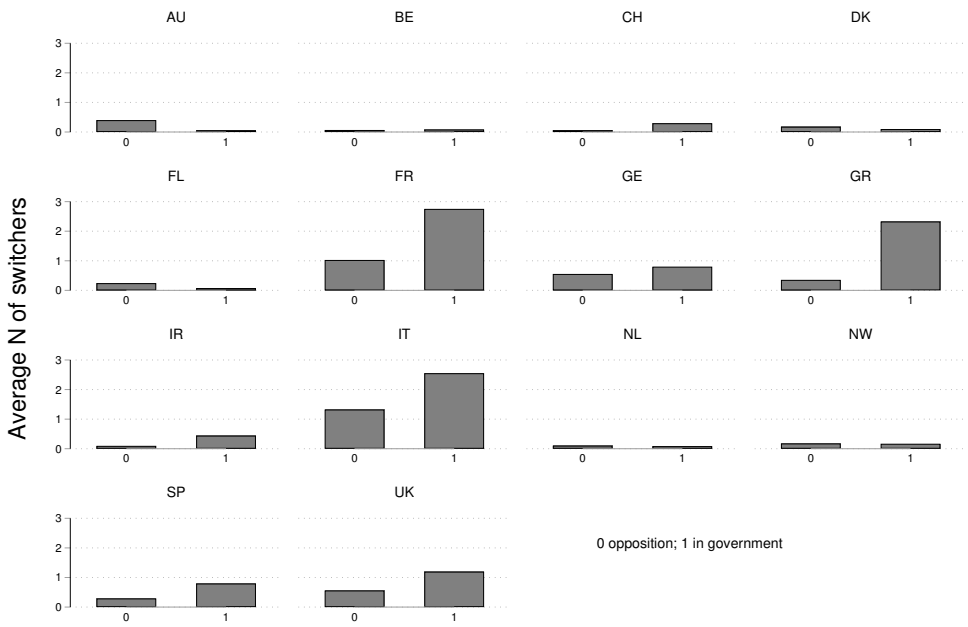


Figure 4.5: Average number of switchers for parties in opposition and in government in each country

negative: in Austria and Finland the relationship appears to run in the opposite direction, with opposition parties that are more unstable than their counterparts in government. To conclude, the bivariate analysis seems overall to confirm the argument developed by Laver and Kato (2001) and it is in line with results from previous research, like that conducted by Sieberer (2006) and Rahat (2007), who find that government participation negatively affects voting unity of parliamentary groups.

4.5 Party system features

Beside party-level features, I am interested in testing whether defections might be affected by macro-level factors that, unlike institutions, change over time. Among all the potential systemic properties, three seem to be particularly useful in order to classify party systems: level of fragmentation, ideological dispersion, institutionalisation, and size of governing majority. The first two features were used by Sartori (1976) in his typology of party systems and in a recent study, Dejaeghere and Dassonneville (2015) investigate the importance of these two indicators on electoral volatility. Similarly, I want to test the same argument with regard to legislative party switching.

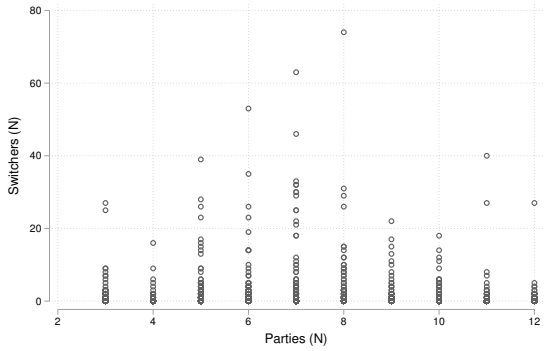


Figure 4.6: The relationship between number of switchers and number of parties, all countries

4.5.1 Party system fragmentation

Regarding the level of fragmentation, studies on electoral volatility have found that larger party systems are also more volatile (Bartolini and Mair 1990; Gherghina 2014; M. N. Pedersen 1979). The assumption is pretty straightforward: "the greater the number of available options the more likely voters ought to feel that there is at least one other party that is 'good enough' to support"(Blais and Gschwend 2010, p. 179). The same argument applies to MPs and party switching: with more groups, the opportunities to defect increase. This is also due to the fact that when the party system is larger it is easier for MPs to find parties that are ideologically close to the original one. A similar hypothesis is put forward by Hirschman (1980), when he says that in a two-party system ideological distance between parties is assumed to be larger and loyalty stronger so that dissatisfied legislators will ordinarily voice rather than *exit*, the opposite being true for multi-party systems. Said differently, according to Hirschman, the cost of *voice* is lower when the number of parties is lower. Based on this logic, the sixth hypothesis is the following:

Hypothesis 6 *Party system fragmentation favours party switching.*

Fragmentation is measured in terms of number of parliamentary parties in a given year (variable *N parties*)[7]. I expect that the higher the number of parliamentary groups, the larger the number of switchers.

Again a scatter plot can be helpful to understand whether and how the number of switchers is linked to the level of fragmentation. As Figure 4.6 shows, there seems

[7]I do not use the effective number of parties proposed by Laakso and Taagepera (1979) because this index measures the distribution (number and strength of parties) rather than the size of the party system. For a discussion of the properties of the Laasko and Taagepera index and alternative measures for party system fragmentation, see Golosov (2010).

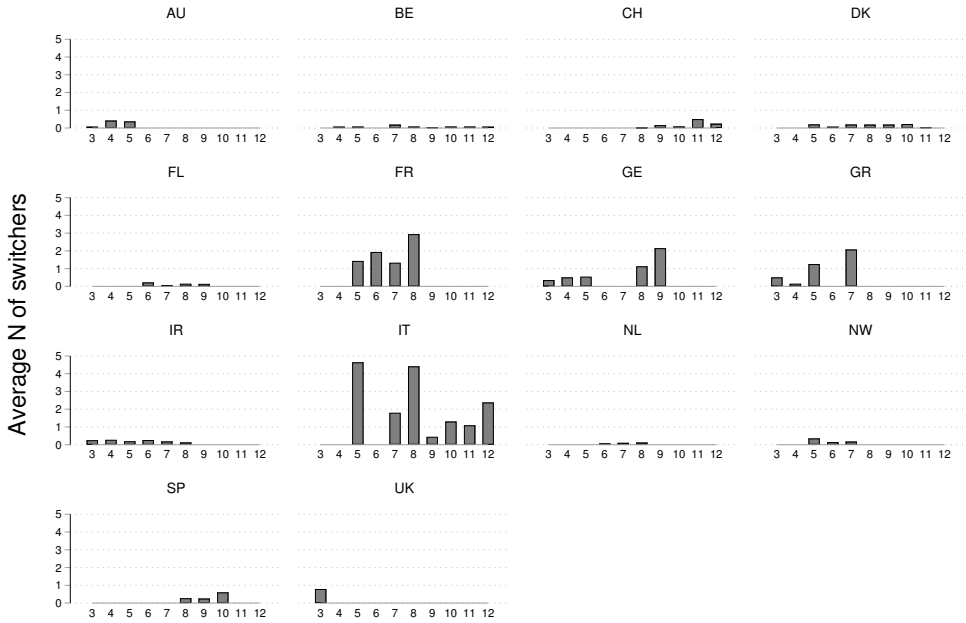


Figure 4.7: The relationship between number of switchers and number of parties in each country

to be an association between these two variables, but it is less linear than what expected. The number of parties ranges between 3 and 12. However, the highest values of switching are recorded when parties are between 6 and 8. In other words, the number of switchers increases with the number of parties up to a certain level and then it decreases. This result might be first of all due to the low number of observations for extremely fragmented party systems.

I calculated the same averages for each country, as Figure 4.7 shows. A positive association between the number of parties and the number of defectors is found in the following cases: Germany, Greece, Austria, but also France. Italy is again a special case as the relationship is not perfectly linear, probably also as an effect of the fact that for a large number of parties, the number of observations is limited. It might be possible that extremely fragmented party systems are not very common and this is the cause of the unclear result. The multivariate analysis will most likely help to sort out the issue. A final note on the United Kingdom: since it always had three parliamentary groups for the entire period of observation, then it is not surprising that the average number of defectors is higher than in any other case of three-party systems. In other words, since in Great Britain the number of parties is a constant, fragmentation does not explain any variance.

4.5.2 Polarisation

Polarisation has to do with the ideological distribution of and distance between parties. Again, the literature on electoral volatility is useful to disentangle the relationship between polarisation and party switching. As Dejaeghere and Dassonneville (2015) explain, based on Downs' model of spatial competition, high polarisation means that the ideological distance between parties is larger, which makes vote switching less probable. According to Dalton (2008), this happens because a highly polarised system presumably produces clearer party choices from voters. Indeed, Freire (2008) shows that higher ideological polarisation at the party system level is linked to more structured left-right orientations of citizens.

Applied to legislative behaviour, the logic is similar: polarisation, increasing the distance between groups, also creates clearer boundaries between them. When parties' ideological and policy preferences are well defined, it is harder for MPs to change alliances and to adopt new political labels. As stated by McKee and Yoshinaka (2015), increasing partisan polarisation makes it more difficult for switchers to credibly defend a conversion. For the arguments just presented, we can imagine that, in Hirschman's terms, the cost of *exit* will be higher in highly polarised contexts. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 7 *Low polarisation favours party switching.*

The concept of polarisation is widely used in the political science literature; however, there is little consensus over the method for measuring it, especially concerning estimates of parties' ideological position (for an overview on the issue, see Curini and Hino 2012). I calculated polarisation according to the index suggested by Dalton (2008):

$$polarisation = \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^{n} \left\{ \left[\frac{p_i - wmean}{100} \right]^2 \right\} * V_i}$$

where p is the position of a given party on the left-right scale, V is its share of seats and *wmean* is the weighted mean of the positions of all parties on the left-right scale. All the measures needed to calculate the polarisation index were retrieved from the CMP.

Figure 4.8 draws the development of polarisation and the switching rate over time. As it can be seen, if we exclude a phase in 1980s-1990s, the two phenomena vary together. From 1945 polarisation has decreased consistently, although in the last fifteen years it has slightly increased. The development of switching is more complex: between 1945 and 1980 the average number of switchers has become lower.

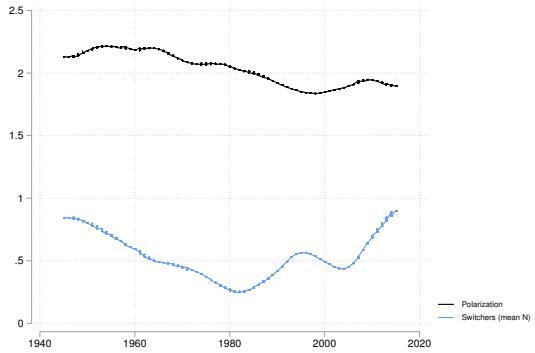


Figure 4.8: Polarisation and number of switchers over time, all countries (running line)

Since then there has been a sharp increase in the scope of switching (excluding the contraction at the beginning of the 2000s). The development of the two phenomena, therefore, almost fully overlap. This supposition is confirmed also by the correlation between the two variables: the coefficient equals 0.02, that is in line with expectations, albeit very small.

The poor correlation between polarisation and switching is also confirmed when we look at individual countries. Figure 4.9 plots the trend of the two phenomena in each of the fourteen countries. There are very few polities in which there seems to be a perfect overlap between the evolution of the two phenomena. For example, both Greece and Italy show a correlation coefficient between the two variables that is positive (0.17 and 0.14 respectively) and significant.

4.5.3 Party system institutionalisation

Party system institutionalisation is believed to be one of the factors that most affects the likelihood of defections. For instance, according to Kreuzer and Pettai (2009, p.268) "the level of institutionalisation is the most relevant [feature] for analysing party switching". Mainwaring (1998) states that MPs are more loyal in institutionalised party systems, while Alemán, Ponce, and Sagarzazu (2011) find that lower voting unity is a feature of poorly institutionalised polities. Similarly, McMenamin and Gwiazda (2011) use switching as an indicator of the lack of consolidation of parties. Indeed, defections jeopardise the stability and predictability of party competition, key elements of the institutionalisation process (Casal Bértoa 2014). Therefore, a party system that undergoes a high percentage of switchers can hardly be considered as to be institutionalised. Stemming from this, the majority of literature indicates that the scope of switching should decrease as party system institutionali-

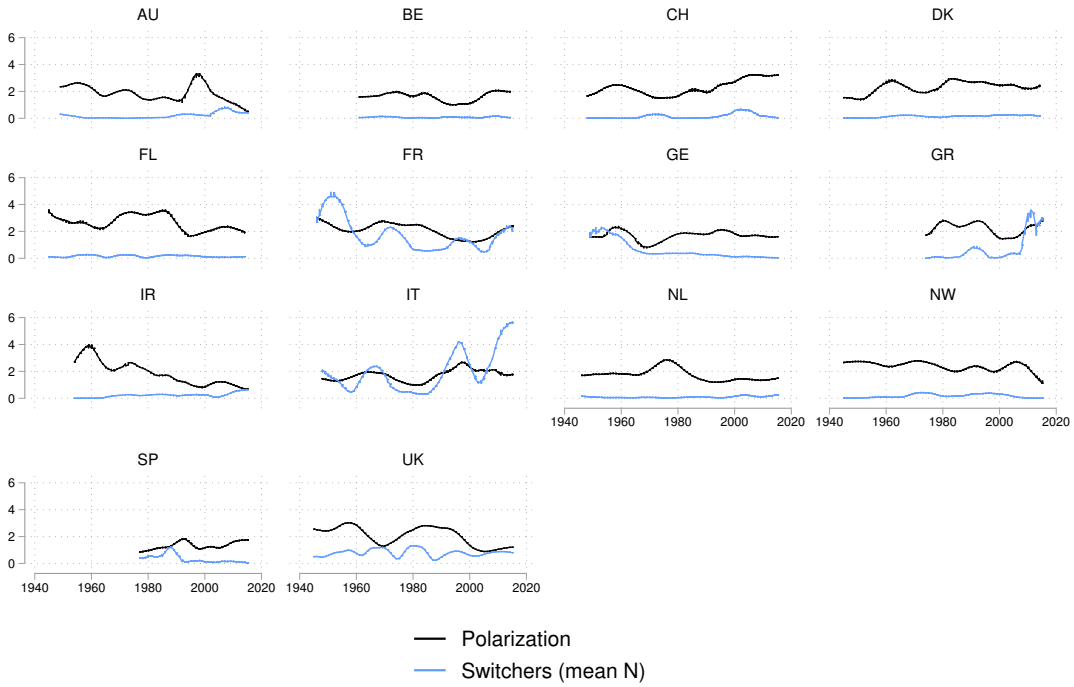


Figure 4.9: Polarisation and number of switchers over time in each country, 1945-2015 (running line)

sation increases. We could indeed argue that the cost of *exit* is lower when a context functions in a not predictable manner. This expectation can be formalised in the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 8 *The more institutionalised a party system is, the lower the scope of party switching.*

As with many of the factors analysed in this chapter, party system institutionalisation is also very difficult to measure. Alemán, Ponce, and Sagarzazu (2011) argue that unstable settings are characterised by weak party organisations and a high level of electoral volatility. It is probably for this reason that the most frequently used indicator of party system instability is the index of electoral volatility (Chiaramonte and Emanuele 2017). It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss whether electoral volatility is a good proxy for party system instability. As Chiaramonte and Emanuele (2017) have shown, high volatility alone does not automatically lead to party system de-institutionalisation, but it is the first and necessary condition of this process. For this reason, but also due to the matter of data availability, I operationalise party system institutionalisation in terms of electoral volatility.

Taking advantage of a new and comprehensive dataset of electoral instability in Western Europe since 1945 (Emanuele 2015), I retrieved information about the

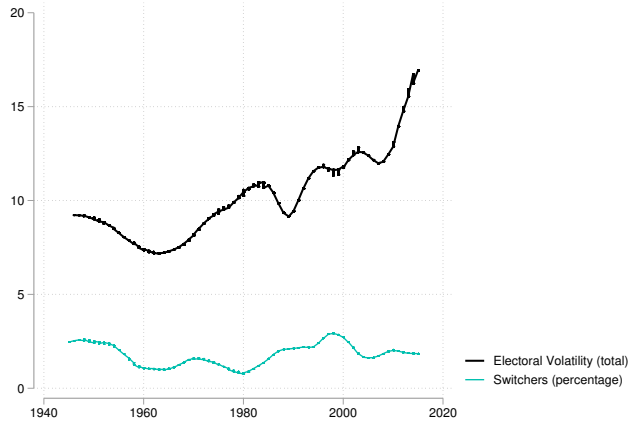


Figure 4.10: Electoral volatility and percentage switchers over time, all countries (running line)

various components of electoral volatility. For the purpose of this analysis I decide to take the index that measures total volatility, as the sum of what the author calls 'regeneration volatility' (caused by entry and exit of parties from a system), 'alternation volatility' (vote shifts by existing parties) and 'other volatility' (vote shifts between small parties, i.e. below 1% of the vote share).

At the aggregate level there is a positive (0.11) correlation between volatility and the number of switchers. The two instabilities (electoral and parliamentary) tend to grow together. The association emerges also if we look at how the two phenomena developed over time, although not in such a clear way as from the correlation coefficient. Figure 4.10 shows that volatility and switching followed a parallel trend until the 1970s, but they have since followed divergent trajectories. It is only in recent years that the two instabilities have started again to grow together.

When the association is observed at the level of individual countries, we can see that the relationship holds in most of the countries analysed (Figure 4.11). In almost all of the polities, when electoral volatility increases, so does the scope of party switching. A similar correlation is also found by Mershon and Shvetsova (2013). The United Kingdom appears to be the deviant case: while the volatility rate has changed in the last 70 years, the percentage of switchers has remained more or less the same. Not by chance, the correlation coefficient between the two indexes is not statistically significant for Great Britain. Among the countries that have a strong and significant correlation coefficient there are Austria (0.18), Germany (0.26), Ireland (0.11) and Italy (0.15). Overall, therefore, the bivariate analysis confirms the expectation of Hypothesis 8.

Figure 4.11: Electoral volatility and percentage switchers over time in each country, 1945-2015 (running line)

4.5.4 Majority size

The scope of the governing majority is also a feature that deeply affects the cost of switching. Ceron (2015) suggests that a narrow majority fosters party unity among governing parties and reduces the probability that they will witness a split, since it might jeopardise their governing position. I hypothesise that a similar mechanism applies to party switching and therefore I expect that when the parliamentary majority is narrow, party switching will be less likely, because its cost increases.

Hypothesis 9 *When the size of the governing majority decreases, the scope of party switching is smaller.*

The variable (*Majority size*) was constructed following the classification of each cabinet provided by the ParlGov database. The variable takes value 0 for minority governments, 1 when the cabinet is supported by a minimum winning coalition and 2 when the executive can rely on a surplus majority. The idea is that the number of seats on which the cabinet can count on is greater for surplus majorities than for the other two categories, and this makes cabinets safer. Minority governments, on the other hand, walk on very thin ice, as they have to fight every day to find a

Table 4.6: Mean number of switchers for different majority sizes, all countries (1945-2015)

Variable	*Mean N of switchers*	*S.d.*	*Freq.*
Majority size			
0 (minority)	0.38	1.7	1.396
1 (min. winning)	0.52	2.7	2.221
2 (surplus majority)	0.60	3.5	2.078

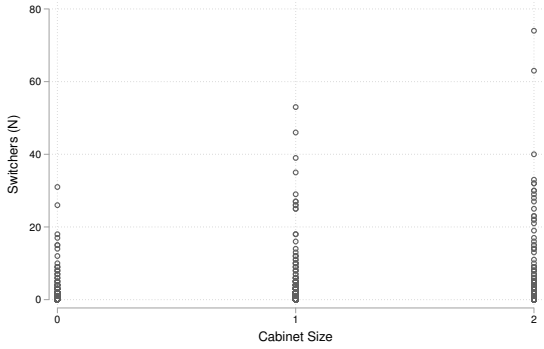


Figure 4.12: The relationship between number of switchers and majority size, all countries

majority to support them. In such a situation, therefore, cabinet survival is more at stake than when the majority does not have a shortage of parliamentary support.

As a first test, I tabulate the average number of switchers for each category of the independent variable. As Table 4.6 displays, the mean number of switchers is below the overall mean for minority governments, it equals the overall mean in case of a minimum winning coalition and it is above average for surplus majorities. An ANOVA test and a post-hoc test showed that only the comparison between surplus majority and minority cabinet is statistically significant (p-value = 0.052), while the other two comparisons did not reach significance. The same association is found if we plot the number of switchers against the different categories of majority size (Figure 4.12) as well. Therefore, at least from this first exploration of the data, the hypothesis finds support.

When we look at individual countries in Figure 4.13, the relationship seems to be found only in a few cases, namely Germany and Greece[8]. However, there are also two countries in which the opposite relationship is found. In Denmark, Finland, and Norway, minority governments represent a more favourable situation for switching. This result does not come as a surprise given the high frequency of

[8]For the same graph but with a rescaled vertical axis which allows to better observe the actual mean for each category, see the Figure C.3 in Appendix C.

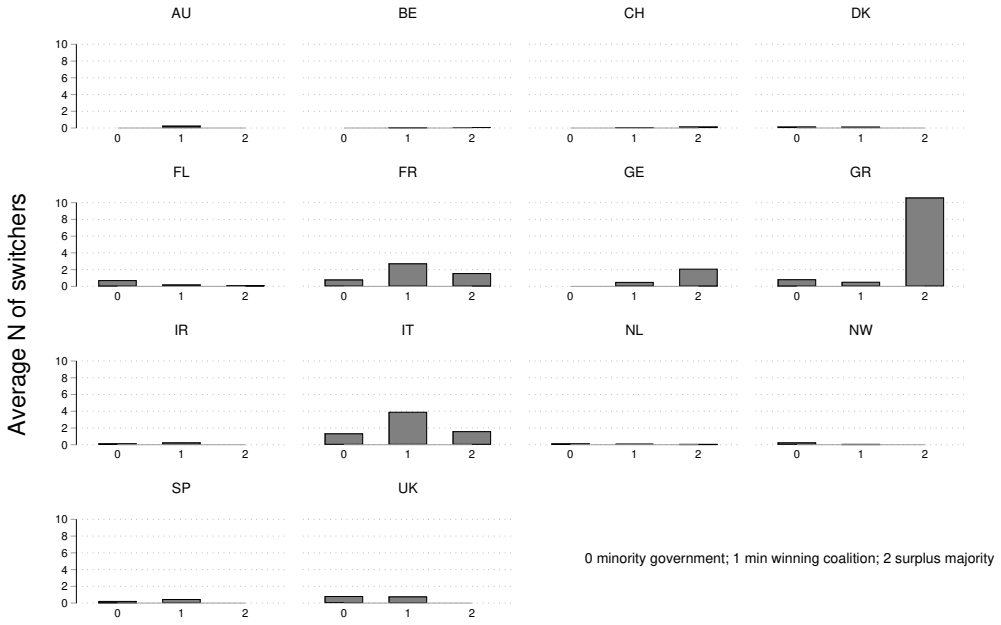


Figure 4.13: Average number of switchers for different majority sizes in each country

minority governments, which are the rule rather than the exception in these polities. In France and Italy, finally, cabinets are usually supported by minimum winning coalitions, therefore is it not surprising that switching is at its maximum under this situation.

4.6 Multivariate statistical analysis

This section is devoted to the multivariate statistical analysis of the data. The objective is to uncover whether there are specific configurations of variables that have an impact on the scope of switching. In other words, this kind of analysis allows us to understand whether the effect of the variables is the same once we test them together and not separately. Additionally, given the specific nature of the dependent variable, the multivariate analysis allows us to take into account the various sources of variance and to control for them more effectively than through simple bivariate analyses and/or correlations.

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the dependent variable (*Switchers*) counts the number of MPs who change group for a given party during a year. Count variables cannot be treated as continuous variables and a linear regression model should not be applied, because the results would be inconsistent. The most basic model to analyse count variables is the Poisson regression model, which as-

sumes that the conditional mean equals the conditional variance. However, when a variable is over-dispersed this assumption does not hold. In such a case, the use of a Poisson model is not recommended because it would return a biased estimation of the standard errors and – as a consequence – an over estimation of the significance of the covariates (Cameron and Trivedi 1986). To overcome this issue, a negative binomial regression model can be applied, because it allows the conditional variance of the dependent variable to exceed its conditional mean (for more details, see Long 1997). My dependent variable is indeed over-dispersed, hence I adopt a negative binomial regression model.

However, my dependent variable does not take into account the size of parties, with the consequence that larger groups always result in having a larger number of switchers. In order to also control for party size, I could have created another dependent variable equivalent to the share of switchers and treat it as a fractional dependent variable. Nevertheless, when numerator and denominator of the fraction of interest are both known, the statistical analysis offers another solution[9]. As an alternative I run a negative binomial regression (with the count variable as dependent variable) and specify the option "exposure" for the party size (in this case the variable *Seat*, equivalent to the number of seats of a given party). This exposure variable allows us to adjust the estimation for the amount of opportunity an event has. In other words, it treats the count variable as a ratio. The advantage of the exposure variable is that it can be included in the estimation as well. Additionally, in order to control for the hierarchical structure of the data, I use a random-effect model. The final dataset includes 4843 observations, from 170 parties which in turn are nested in 14 countries.

4.6.1 Results of multivariate statistical analysis

Table 4.7 presents the result of random-effect logistic models. In Model 1 I test the nine hypotheses presented in the previous sections, all together. As it can be seen, most of the theoretical arguments find support empirically. The first three hypotheses concern the role of ideology and its various meanings. According to representational theory, leftist parties should see fewer switchers, as their members should act more as partisans than as trustees. Nevertheless, the coefficient of the variable *Rile* is negative (hence opposite to expectation) and overall not statistically significant.

[9]Indeed, fractional models are only used when the denominator of the fraction is unknown.

Table 4.7: Results of negative binomial models of party switching (Random Effects)

VARIABLES	Model 1	Model 2
Rile (-100/100)	-0.003	
	(0.00)	
Family (r.c. *Social-dem*)		
Green		-0.949+
		(0.54)
Communist/Rleft		-0.009
		(0.35)
Liberals		0.182
		(0.32)
Christian-dem		-0.906*
		(0.39)
Conservative		0.552
		(0.37)
Rright		0.978*
		(0.41)
Regionalist		0.451
		(0.49)
Extreme	0.020***	0.019***
	(0.01)	(0.01)
Delta Rile	-0.010*	-0.010+
	(0.01)	(0.00)
Age	-0.009**	-0.010***
	(0.00)	(0.00)
Govt	0.241+	0.262+
	(0.14)	(0.14)
N parties	0.101*	0.094*
	(0.05)	(0.04)
Polarisation	-0.026	-0.027
	(0.09)	(0.09)
Volatility	0.044***	0.042***
	(0.01)	(0.01)
Majority Size (r.c. *Min. Winn.*)		
0- Minority	0.208	0.173
	(0.17)	(0.17)
2- Surplus Majority	-0.074	-0.047
	(0.16)	(0.16)
Seat	-0.005***	-0.005***
	(0.00)	(0.00)
Constant	-5.769***	-5.672***
	(0.43)	(0.48)
Country	0.358+	0.370+
	(0.21)	(0.21)
Party	1.337***	0.923***
	(0.27)	(0.21)
Alpha (Ln)	1.635***	1.640***
	(0.07)	(0.07)
Observations	4,843	4,843
Number of countries	14	14
Number of parties	170	170
Wald chi2 (11-17)	73.27	108.1
Prob > chi2	0	0

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.1

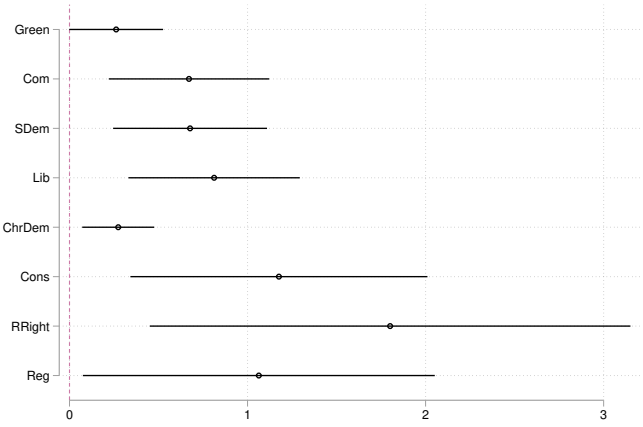


Figure 4.14: Predicted number of switchers for each party family

Given that this result might be affected by the way parties' positions are measured, I run a second Model, using instead of the position on the left-right scale, party families (similarly to what is done in Chapter 3). As it can be seen, in this case the results are consistent with the first hypothesis. Indeed, taking Social-Democrats as a reference category, Green, Communist and Christian-Democrats are expected to have a smaller number of defectors. Liberal, Conservative and Radical Right – instead – experience a greater number of switchers. In order to grasp more precisely the effect of party family on the number of switchers, I calculated the predicted number of defections for each of them, holding all the other variables at their mean. The results are displayed in Figure 4.14, which shows that indeed Radical Right and – to a smaller extent – Conservative parties are expected to have a larger number of MPs changing affiliation. For the Radical Right family the effect is considerable, given that they are expected to have around 2.5 defections (5 times higher than the overall mean). Among the more stable families, instead, we find the Green and the Christian-Democratic. We must also note that all the predicted coefficients are statistically significant.

The second hypothesis concerns the role of ideological extremism. Based on the theoretical argument presented earlier, more extreme parties should experience more defections. The multivariate analysis seems to confirm the hypothesis, as the coefficient of the variable *Extreme* is positive and statistically significant. The effect of this variable is also considerable: as can be seen in Figure 4.15a, while centrist parties are expected to have a number of defections in line with the overall average, very extreme parties witness almost two defections per year. Among party features, ideological extremism is the variable that exerts the largest effect over the number of defections.

Hypothesis 3, concerning the role of ideological stability, finds support empirically as well. The variable *Delta Rile* has a negative and significant coefficient, which means that parties with more unstable platforms are less subject to defections. The effect of this feature is substantial, as ideologically rigid parties have around 1.5 switchers per year, while this number falls below the general mean for parties with more fluid programs (Figure 4.15b).

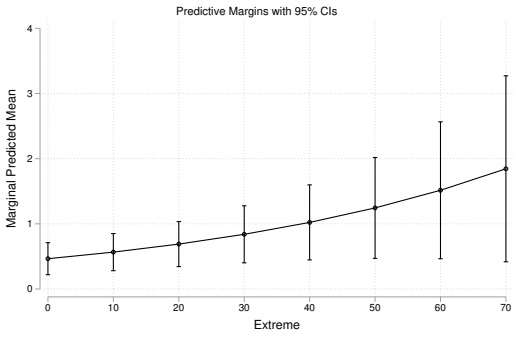
The relationship between parties' age and switching is discussed in Hypothesis 4. The expectation is that older parties experience less switchers. The coefficient of the variable *Age* is – in line with the hypothesis – negative and statistically significant. Older parties, as shown by Figure 4.15c, are virtually almost immune to switching, while new parties have at least one switcher per year.

Regarding the role of governing status, as in the bivariate analysis, it seems that parties in cabinet witness a higher number of defections. Indeed, the variable *Govt* shows a positive and significant coefficient. The effect is moderate, as parties in opposition are expected to have 0.6 switchers, against 0.8 of parties in government (Figure 4.15e).

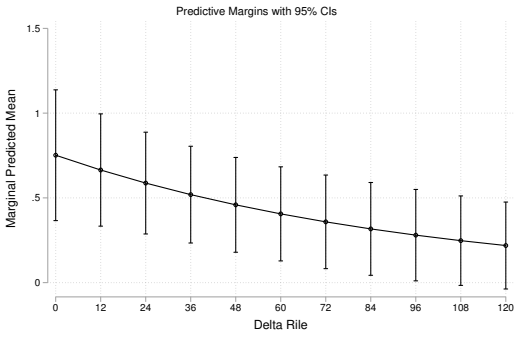
Moving to the hypotheses related to party system features, the effect of the number of parties on switching appears clearer than what comes out from the bivariate analysis. Indeed, the coefficient of the variable *N parties* is positive and statistically significant. This result implies that the more fragmented the party system, the higher the number of switchers. Very fragmented party systems are expected to have a number of switchers around one, while party systems with three parties display a number of defections equal to the overall mean (0.5).

The hypothesis about the impact of polarisation cannot be confirmed. The coefficient of the variable is not statistically significant, although it is in line with the theoretical argument according to which polarisation reduces defections. The effect of volatility is instead very clear, as the variable shows a positive and significant sign. The magnitude of the effect is also substantial: the marginal effect from Figure 4.15f shows that for high levels of electoral instability, there are more than two switchers per year. On the contrary, in systems characterized by electoral continuity, the number of defections are below the mean. Therefore Hypothesis 8 also finds support when a multivariate analysis is performed and it looks like *Volatility* is the variable that, among the systemic features, affects the greatest the scope of defections.

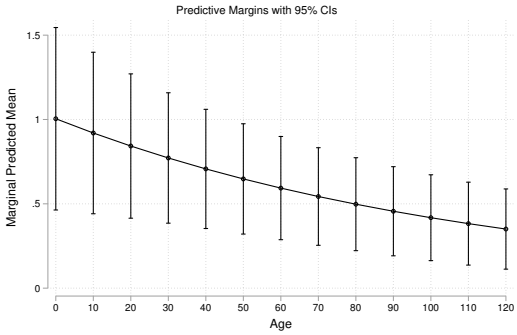
Regarding the impact of majority size, according to Hypothesis 9, surplus majorities should be the most subject to defections. The hypothesis was confirmed by the bivariate analysis, while the multivariate model shows an opposite result, which



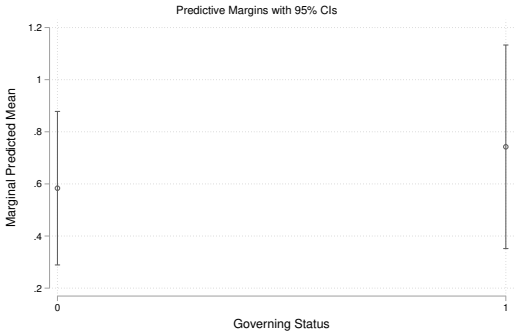
(a) Ideological extremism



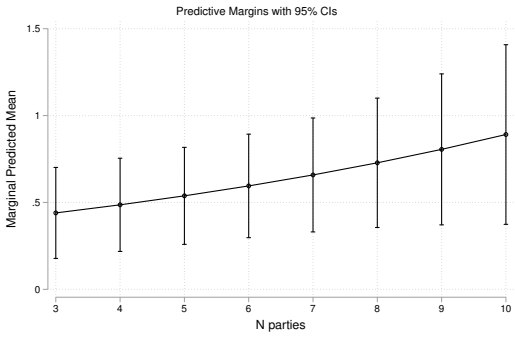
(b) Ideological stability



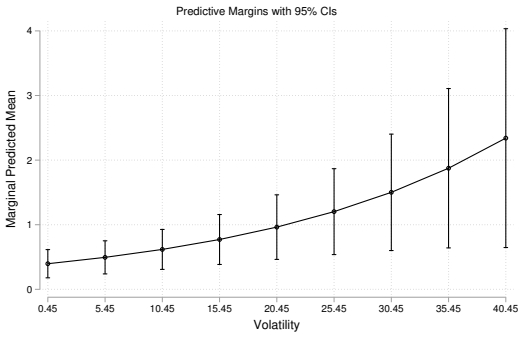
(c) Age



(d) Governing Status



(e) Number of parties



(f) Electoral Volatility

Figure 4.15: Marginal effects of some key explanatory variables

Table 4.8: Collinearity diagnostics, VIF test

Variable	*VIF*	*SQRT-VIF*	*Tolerance*	*R-Squared*
Age	1.11	1.05	0.90	0.10
Delta Rile	1.11	1.05	0.90	0.10
Extreme	1.31	1.14	0.77	0.24
Govt	1.15	1.07	0.90	0.13
Rile	1.04	1.02	0.96	0.04
N parties	1.29	1.13	0.78	0.22
Polarisation	1.30	1.14	0.77	0.23
Volatility	1.07	1.04	0.93	0.07
Majority size	1.12	1.06	0.89	0.11
Seat	1.30	1.14	0.77	0.23
Mean VIF	**1.18**			

however is not significant. Since none of the coefficients is significant, Hypothesis 9 cannot be disconfirmed.

Finally, a word about the control variable: party size has a negative and statistically significant coefficient. Therefore, larger parties are more resistant to switching. This result is in line with that part of the literature that posits a similar relationship between party size and defection (see, for instance, Heller and Mershon 2005; or Laver and Benoit 2003). Since the independent variables might be correlated with each other and have an impact on their significance level, I checked for multicollinearity with the Stata command *collin*. The results of the test are displayed in Table 4.8 which tell us there does not seem to be a linear relationship between any of the predictors used for the analysis. The variance inflation factors (VIF) are all below the recommended level of 10 points (Chen et al. 2003).

4.7 Chapter conclusions

The goal of this chapter was to uncover the relationship between switching and party features. In particular I wanted to understand under what conditions parties become less united. Potential switchers must confront specific constraints which are set by the context in which they operate. Among the factors that affect this context, there are not only institutions, but also political parties. As Close (2016) clearly states, MPs do not act in a vacuum, since they are part of specific organisations that shape their attitudes and – as this chapter suggests – their behaviour. In particular, I have argued that the decision to switch is affected not only by considerations regarding the consequences of this action (i.e. cost of switching), but especially by the room that legislators are granted to express dissatisfaction towards their own party, that

Table 4.9: Summary of hypotheses and findings

Hypothesis	*Independent Variable*	*Expected relationship*	*Observed relationship*
	Party Features:		
1	Left-right placement/Family	+	+
2	Ideological extremism	+	+
3	Ideological instability	-	-
4	Age	-	-
5	Governing Status	+	+
	Party System Features:		
6	Fragmentation	+	+
7	Polarisation	-	(-) not-sign.
8	Volatility	+	+
9	Majority Size	+	(-) not-sign.

is, the cost of *voice*. Politicians will defect only if their parties do not provide them with enough room to voice discontent.

The results of my analysis indeed confirm that this argument is correct (for a summary of the hypotheses tested and the related findings see Table 4.9). Switching seems to be fostered by an absence of *voice*. In particular, parties that are ideologically extreme and rigid experience more switchers. These two features can be seen as linked to lower voice. Ideologically extreme parties – as highlighted by Mejia Acosta (2004) – have well defined ideologies and this might make them simply less able to handle any internal discussion. Similarly, parties whose platforms do not change over time might not be able to encourage intra-party dialogue, without allowing different opinions to emerge. Age might have a comparable effect, as younger parties might not yet have developed mechanisms to handle conflicts (or their members might not yet have sorted themselves out into their ideal party), which in turn might expose them to a greater dis-unity. Governing parties face more pressure to act cohesively in order to implement their programmes, but this might discourage MPs to voice their doubts, as dis-unity might harm both the survival of the cabinet and its future electoral success (Greene and Haber 2015). Finally, the representational style promoted by parties through their ideology also has an impact on the level of *voice*. Parties belonging to families like the Social-Democrats and Communist might have been better at instilling in their members a sense of attachment to the group that Conservative and Radical-Right parties do not have. In case of conflict, therefore,

left-wing parties might have the tools to handle it, while legislators from right-wing groups might have no option but to switch.

Considering the impact of systemic features, they also affect the scope of switching. This is particularly the case for fragmentation and volatility that are both positively correlated with the number of defections. This result is not surprising, given that political systems that are highly fragmented and electorally volatile are usually also more unstable in parliament, as research from Kreuzer and Pettai (2009) and Mainwaring (1998) has shown. Overall, two variables seem to exert a considerable impact on the number of defections, namely ideological extremism and volatility. This finding is noteworthy because it tells us that switching is a product both of a lack of structuration at the systemic level and of how far from the centre of the political space parties are located.

Although most of the theoretical arguments presented so far seem to find support in the data, this chapter has some limitations. First and foremost, most of the variables of interest could only be measured by proxies that are not extremely precise. Ideally, we would need better and more accurate indicators for party ideology (and related factors), as well as, party institutionalisation and party system structuration. Moreover, there are other factors that are related in particular to party organisations, which might affect the cost of *voice* and the scope of switching. For instance, the internal level of democracy would be a very good measure of the actual space granted to legislators to express their demands and concerns. In summary, my results would be more credible if I could show that the party features that are linked with more switching are also predictors for lower levels of intra-party democracy. Additionally, it would be useful to know more about members' attachment and loyalty to party organisations as well as how decisions are made within the organisation itself (if for instance, leaders dominate all aspects of a party's internal life or if, instead, decisions are shared with the wider party membership). Proxies and indexes of these characteristics do exist[10], however, they could not be used because they only cover a subset of the countries and parties analysed here. Nonetheless, in future works, it might be interesting to restrict the analysis to fewer cases and observations in order to test whether these alternative and additional measures correlate with switching in the expected manner.

The analysis conducted in this chapter has one further limitation: indeed, it can be argued that the various party features explain switches that are motivated by different goals. For instance, legislators from extreme parties might decide to change

[10]See, for instance, the index of intra-party democracy developed by Poguntke et al. (2016) or the measure of leadership domination by Schumacher and Giger (2017) or the indicator of programmatic clarity by Bräuninger and Giger (2016).

affiliation because of ideological concerns, but they would never abandon their party to pursue their personal interest. A similar mechanism might apply to parties with very rigid platforms. Parties in government, instead, might undergo switches that are related to specific policies, but not defectors searching a career advancement. Therefore, if we take into account the motivations behind the decision to switch, then the party features analysed so far might not have the same explanatory power. The nine hypotheses of this chapter could all potentially be split in two if legislators' concerns were included. To put it differently, a theory of switching that does not incorporate individual motivation risks being not solid enough. I will try to incorporate legislators' motivations to switch in the following two chapters: in Chapter 5 I will evaluate how institutions by influencing the cost of *exit*, might also affect the goals MPs aim towards. Finally, in Chapter 6 I will link individual and collective de-affiliation strategies to different motivations.

Chapter 5

The cost of turning coat

How political institutions affect party switching

5.1 Introduction

In the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2, I argued that both political institutions and party features affect the scope of switching, but they do so in two different manners. Party and party system characteristics shape the *opportunity* to defect, as they influence the room for *voicing* granted to MPs. As we have seen, the *exit* option seems to be a reaction to the lack of channels for expressing discontent. The results of my analysis in Chapter 4 suggest that political parties, by setting their internal level of *voice*, might be making themselves more or less vulnerable to switching.

Political institutions, instead, influence the *cost* of defecting. In certain polities, institutions combine in a way that makes the *exit* option fairly inexpensive. This means that politicians do not encounter legal/political obstacles or consequences if they change affiliation. In other settings, inter-party movements are discouraged by institutions that make them more costly, and switchers may face more severe repercussions for their choice, to the extent that they might be forced to give up their seat in parliament.

One of the limitations of Chapter 4 was that it did not include any proxy for switchers' motivations, which, however, might interact with party characteristics. Indeed, certain factors might increase the probability of ideological defections, while others might increase the likelihood that a legislator pursues his/her personal interests through an affiliation change. For instance, MPs belonging to ideologically extreme parties, might be driven by ideological concerns, given that the level of internal debate is probably more intense. On the contrary, opportunistic switchers

might be found more easily in centrist parties, given the lower ideological profile of these groups.

In the conclusion to Chapter 4, I stated that I will use two strategies to incorporate switchers' motivations. The first strategy, implemented in this Chapter, relates institutions to motivations, or better, it infers the latter from the former. How would an analysis of institutions and the cost of switching help us to infer switchers' motivations? My argument is that the more costly the decision to change party, the most likely that this decision will be driven by ideological concerns, rather than by personal interest. The idea is that if MPs are embedded in a context that makes switching difficult and costly, they will change party only when they have very serious concerns regarding their own party/country. On the other hand, if defecting does not have any real consequences, politicians can decide to change party to pursue personal benefits.In summary, the more costly it is to switch, the more "serious" the reasons must be behind it.

This argument might be reinforced if, instead of looking at MPs' motivations, we consider legislators' expected rewards. In a context that makes defection extremely costly, switchers may envisage substantial compensations for their action (e.g. cabinet/administrative posts or safe candidacy in the following election). However, the availability of these significant rewards is scarce and additionally it is more difficult to find parties willing to distribute them. In these settings, most probably, switchers do not consider the costs of their choice, because they are pursuing targets for which they are willing to sacrifice their personal interests. MPs switch in spite of the cost of this action, because they aim for "higher reasons". In contrast, when defecting away is not costly, expected and granted rewards will be less substantial but more abundant. Therefore in these contexts, it is more likely that politicians will change party affiliation in order to serve their personal interests.

Expected rewards are linked to the effects produced by defections, that is, what switching would mean for individual MPs' career but also generally for the political system. This is an alternative perspective (compared to the one looking at costs) that, however, will not be taken into account in this chapter. In fact, as mentioned in the theoretical framework, an action's costs can be assessed more easily than its consequences, given that results are highly affected by contingency. This is an argument that can be traced back to Olson (1971), according to whom, collective action is problematic because individual costs prevail over effects, which are dependent on the capacity of others to collaborate and coordinate. To put it more succinctly, while an action's benefits are uncertain, costs are generally clear. It is for this reason that this "effect perspective" is discarded in favour of an analysis of costs. Moreover, as

Yoshinaka (2015) reminds us, the cost of switching is one of the intrinsic features of party switching. However, according to Yoshinaka, the literature has rarely studied the implications of these costs and it has rather focused only on the benefits of the action of changing affiliation.

Linking costs to motivations empirically is a challenging task, because the only piece of information available is the scope of defections. Based on the argument developed so far, when switching takes place in a costly environment, it is not only (most likely) determined by ideological reasons, but it should also occur less frequently. Conversely, when defecting is not very difficult, it will be more frequent and probably driven by MPs' personal interests. As Yoshinaka (2015, p.49) puts it: "if party switching is costly, we should observe systematic patterns in the incidence of party switching that reflect those costs".

With this argument in mind, the rest of the chapter is devoted to the exploration of the political institutions that contribute to the cost of switching. As a first step, I look at each institution individually. Secondly, I will also consider how institutions combine, given that politicians do not face only one institution, but rather a complex configuration, that determines the overall defecting costs within a given polity. I will conclude the chapter with a multivariate statistical analysis in which I will test both the combined impact of party variables and institutional covariates. The goal is to see how party and institutional variables perform when they are considered together.

5.2 Form of Government

5.2.1 How the form of government influences the cost of turning coat

The first political institution that affects the cost of switching is the form of government. Traditionally, political regimes are divided into parliamentary or presidential. As Sartori (1997) points out, this distinction is well established, yet it is not easily drawn because presidential systems are often not adequately defined and parliamentary systems differ widely between themselves. However, regarding party switching and its costs, the distinction between different regime types can be based on one single criterion: *whether or not the executive can be discharged by a parliamentary vote.*

In pure presidential regimes, the parliament and the executive are two independent institutions. Since they are both directly (or "like-directly") elected by voters, the duration of their offices is not interrelated (Cheibub 2007). In parliamentary

systems this does not happen. The executive only remains in office while it has the support of a parliamentary majority, and it cannot survive when the parliament dissolves or gets dissolved.

The confidence link between legislature and executive versus the independence of these two bodies is the key element that distinguishes the two regime types and which has relevant consequences for switching as well. In parliamentary systems, since the executive's office is strictly related to the support of a legislative majority, politicians face more pressure to "act as a group" (Bowler, D. M. Farrell, and Katz 1999) than in presidential settings. Party unity is therefore crucial in parliamentary regimes, while in presidential ones it is less problematic, to the extent that Sartori (1997) suggests that party disunity can even be an asset for presidential regimes. Not by chance, executives in parliamentary systems have a tool for fostering party unity - namely the confidence vote - that cabinets in presidential systems lack (Cheibub 2007).

The pressure for parties to be unified also has an impact on the cost of switching. Indeed, in parliamentary regimes defections can endanger the survival of the executive and determine the end of the legislative term[1]. Therefore, the cost of switching in such regimes is higher than in contexts in which there is no connection between parliament and cabinet[2].

It is also true that the link between executive and assembly is not equally close in all parliamentary regimes. There are some specific devices that reinforce the executive's position vis-à-vis the parliament in order to promote cabinet stability that in classic parliamentary systems is usually threatened (Tanchev 1993). Systems that make use of these procedures are known with the label "rationalised parliamentarism" (Mirkine-Guetzévitch 1928). In these settings it is more difficult for the assembly to overturn the executive. These devices can either be constitutional or electoral. Under the first category we find provisions like the *constructive vote of no confidence* according to which the parliament can withdraw its support from an executive and its prime minister only if there is already a majority promoting an alternative head of cabinet (Lijphart 2004). This mechanism is used in Germany, Spain and, since 1994, Belgium.

[1]This is particularly true when the scope of the governing majority is not very large.

[2]One could argue that for those who switch from the majority to the opposition, bringing down the government is a benefit more than a cost. However, this does not change the fact that overall there is a greater pressure to maintain unity under parliamentary systems, because parties in opposition might in the future get power and will need full loyalty from their members. Therefore, the expectation is that they will educate their legislator to keep unity, as an effect of the concrete threat of an early end of the legislative term.

In the UK the executive is also reinforced vis-à-vis the House of Commons, however this stems both from the English political tradition and its electoral system that contributes to generating clear and stable parliamentary majorities. Under rationalised parliamentarism the survival of the assembly is tightly related to the survival of the executive, while in classic parliamentary systems the assembly can overturn the cabinet without risking being dissolved. For this reason the link between assembly and executive is stronger in rationalised parliamentary regimes. As a consequence, the cost of defecting is at its maximum in these settings and lower in classic parliamentary systems.

Semi-presidential regimes combine characteristics of both parliamentary and presidential settings. In pure semi-presidential regimes there is a president directly elected by voters for a fixed-term in office. The president is independent from the parliament, but s/he cannot govern alone. The president shares the direction of the government with a prime minister, who - instead - is subjected to parliamentary confidence. According to Sartori (1997) semi-presidentialism is able to "swing", as it has a flexible dual authority structure that changes according to different majority combinations. When the majority is unified (that is, president and parliamentary majority belong to the same political party/coalition), the president prevails over the prime minister. Conversely, in case of a split majority, the prime minister prevails. This distinction is important because of its consequences for the cost of switching. Specifically, in case of a split majority, the cost of switching is at its minimum, because defections can only determine a change that is favourable to the president, who then does not have any reason (to threaten) to call early election. On the contrary, in case of a non-split majority, switchers can seriously endanger the stability of the president's support, who - in case of serious threat - can always decide to dissolve the assembly. For this reason defection costs are higher in the case of a unified majority.

While theoretically it can be argued that in different regimes the cost of defecting is not the same, the literature has questioned whether empirically forms of government are related to the greater or lesser extent of switching. For instance, Cheibub (2007) assumes that the pervasiveness of switching does not systematically vary across regimes. The author clearly states that "although there are well-known cases of presidential democracies in which party switching is pervasive, as in Brazil, it would be a mistake to assume that this well-known case is typical under presidentialism. As a matter of fact, recent research has shown that the migration of legislators from one party to another during the legislative term also occurs with non-trivial frequency in several parliamentary democracies" (p.76). Similarly, O'Brien

and Shomer (2013) found that there is no correlation between regime type and switching. Therefore empirically, the argument that the scope of defections varies based on the form of government has not yet found support. This is the issue that will be tackled in the next paragraph.

5.2.2 Variance across different forms of government

In order to check whether my argument holds, regimes were classified on a four-point scale, from the least to the most costly:

1. *Semi-presidential, split majority* (0);
2. *Semi-presidential, unified majority* (1);
3. *Classic parliamentarism* (2);
4. *Rationalised parliamentarism* (3).

Subsequently, the fourteen countries were assigned to the four different categories, based on the form of government in place in a given year. There is not a great variation in the types of government. Most of the cases are examples of parliamentary governments, and among them the extent of switching varies greatly. Moreover, there are only two cases of actual semi-presidential government, namely France and Finland[3].

Switzerland represents a special case. According to Steiner (1974), Switzerland is neither a presidential system nor a classic parliamentary democracy. The seven Federal councillors (i.e., the members of the cabinet) are elected by the Parliament for a fixed term of four years and they cannot be dismissed by a no-confidence vote. If proposals from the executive are rejected by the Parliament, the councillors do not have to resign. According to Lijphart (2012), in Switzerland there is a formal separation of power between legislature and cabinet and the relationship between these two bodies is more balanced than in the classic parliamentary systems. Indeed, Lijphart classifies Switzerland as an hybrid case. In order to avoid to create a category only for Switzerland in the four-point scale described above, I assigned the Swiss case to the second category, whose costs equal 1. I argue that switching in Switzerland is less costly compared to parliamentary systems, because it is unlikely

[3]Constitutionally, Austria and Ireland are also semi-presidential systems, since in both countries the president is directly elected by citizens. However, these two countries in practice function as parliamentary systems, as explained by Sartori (1997), Shugart and Carey (1992) and Duverger (1980), because based on contingent factors the president does not make use of his/her powers (Bartolini 1984b). Therefore, I assign Austria and Ireland to the category of classic parliamentary regimes.

Table 5.1: Average percentage of switchers by regime type, all countries (1945-2015)

Variable	*% Switchers (average)*	*S.d.*	*Freq.*
Regime type:			
a) All countries			
Semi-presidential, Split (0)	2.52	3.1	12
Semi-presidential, Non-split (1)	1.23	2.8	173
Classic Parliamentary (2)	1.21	2.4	511
Rationalised Parliamentary (3)	0.75	1.5	201
Total	1.13	2.3	897
b) Switzerland excluded			
Semi-presidential, Split (0)	2.52	3.1	12
Semi-presidential, Non-split (1)	1.56	2.8	102
Classic Parliamentary (2)	1.21	2.4	511
Rationalised Parliamentary (3)	0.75	1.5	201
Total	1.16	2.3	826

that defectors will be able to turn down the executive, similarly to what happens in semi-presidential regimes.

Despite the low variation among forms of government, the scope of switching varies considerably between different regimes. As Table 5.1 shows, my argument seems to find empirical support, as the percentage of switchers decreases across the four categories, that is, when defection costs increase. When Switzerland is included in the analysis, semi-presidential regimes under non-split majority and class parliamentary systems display a very similar percentage of switchers. But when the Swiss case is excluded, the difference between these two categories becomes larger[4].

Finland and France, the only instances of semi-presidentialism, represent two interesting cases, since they both changed from/to a parliamentary form of government at a certain point of their history. Finland was a semi-presidential regime from 1919 until 2000, when the new constitution substantially reduced the powers of the president in favour of those of the prime minister and parliament. Since 2000, therefore, Finland cannot be considered as an instance of semi-presidentialism any more (Nousiainen 2001; Paloheimo 2003). This discontinuity in the Finnish history can be employed to check whether the introduction of a new regime type had an effect on the patterns of switching. Figure 5.1 tries to answer this question.

[4]The ANOVA test shows that the differences between the categories are significant both when Switzerland is included (p-value=0.014) and when it is excluded (p-value=0.003). However, the post-hoc test reveals that the only statistically significant comparison is the one between classic parliamentarism and rationalised parliamentarism. When the Swiss observations are excluded also the comparison between rationalised parliamentarism and semi-presidential under split majority reaches statistical significance.

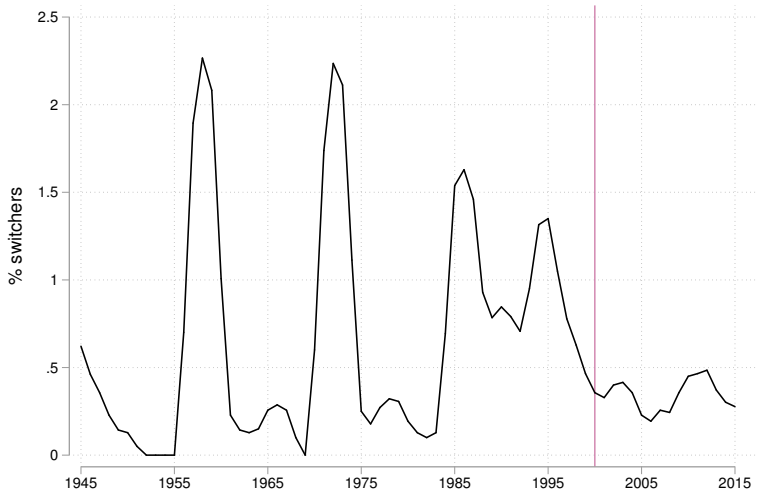


Figure 5.1: Average percentage of switchers in Finland over time (1945-2015), lowess line

The graph represents how the percentage of switchers evolved over time in Finland. The vertical red line, instead, signals the introduction of the new constitution. Generally the level of defection is rather low in the Finnish parliament, but after 2000 the percentage of MPs who change party has reduced compared to the period before, and it has usually remained below the overall average in Western Europe (1.4). Hence, the Finnish case seems to be in line with the hypothesis that switching is more costly in parliamentary systems and - as a consequence - it happens less frequently[5].

France moved from a parliamentary regime to a semi-presidential one between 1958 and 1962, when the direct election of the president was introduced. France has also known three phases of cohabitation, that is of divided government, with a president and a prime minister supported by two different majorities. The first cohabitation took place from 1986 to 1988 when a left-wing president (François Mitterand) shared his powers with a prime minister (Jacque Chirac) supported by a conservative majority. The second cohabitation (1993-1995) saw Mitterand acting again as president and Edouard Balladur as prime minister. Finally between 1997 and 2002, Chirac divided the government with the socialist Lionel Jospin. In order to check how defections change based on the regime type, I plotted the average percentage of switchers over time and highlighted on the graph the year of transition

[5]In order to check if statistically this difference is significant, I performed a t-test that, however, shows that the average percentage of switchers in the 15 years before and after the institutional reform are not significantly different.

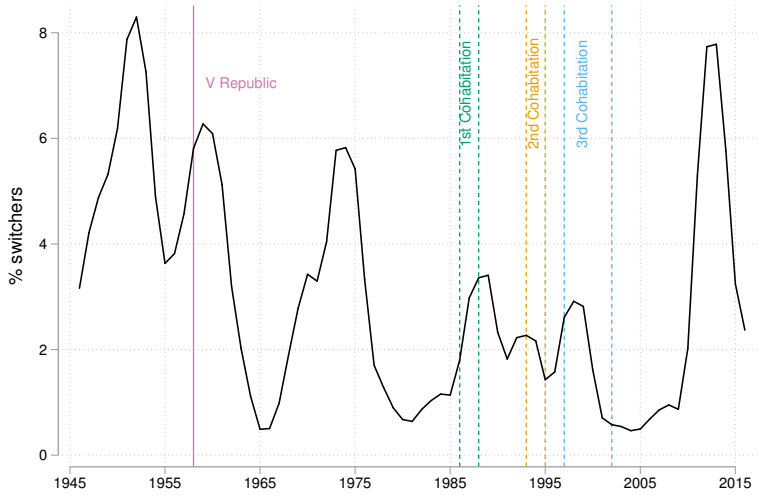


Figure 5.2: Average percentage of switchers in France over time (1945-2015), lowess line

to the Fifth Republic together with the three phases of divide government (Figure 5.2).

As can be seen, in France the introduction of the semi-presidential system brought a temporary reduction in the overall percentage of defectors. The scope of switching dropped in the 8-10 years after the constitutional reform, to then increase again at the beginning of the 1970s. France also allow us to test whether in phases of a split majority the number of switchers grows, as posited in the hypothesis. In the French case, though, the argument does not fully find confirmation. It is only during the first cohabitation that we witness a sharp growth in the percentage of defectors, while in the other two cases of a split majority, this percentage is below the mean. A comparison between the average number of switchers in the phases of cohabitation and in phases of a unified majority returns a similar result: the mean number of defectors is 15.25 in the former case and 15.17 in the latter case. There is barely any difference.

Generally, in the case of France it is difficult to tell whether the regime change alone changed the patterns of party switching. It is true that the transition to semi-presidentialism profoundly reshaped the French party system, increasing its institutionalisation (which, as posited in the previous chapter, is among the factors that increases the scope of switching). Nevertheless, according to Sartori (1997, p.12), the lower fragmentation resulted particularly from the new electoral formula introduced in 1958 (double ballot), rather than from the regime type itself. In other words, the introduction of a semi-presidential regime in 1958 overlaps with the reform

of the electoral system, i.e. another crucial factor (as the following section shows) that might have reshaped the party system and its functioning.

To conclude, this brief analysis has shown that the regime type explains part of the variance in switching rates between countries. The general pattern seems to be of a greater instability of semi-presidential regimes compared to parliamentary ones, especially in their rationalised form.

5.3 Electoral System

5.3.1 Electoral rules and the cost of switching

The impact of electoral systems on party switching has been the object of great attention in the literature, as the various formulas provide different incentives for party unity (Nikolenyi 2011). Although a clear theoretical argument linking electoral formulas to parliamentary behaviour is still missing (André, Depauw, and Shugart 2014), the central idea is that electoral systems might generate incentives for politicians to cultivate their personal reputations, rather than relying solely on their party label, (Carey and Shugart 1995), and this might then negatively affect party unity (Hix 2004). However, studies on switching have so far produced contradictory results regarding the influence of electoral formulas on defections. Some scholars have found that proportional systems increase the probability of MPs changing affiliation (Heller and Mershon 2005; McLaughlin 2012), while others have found the opposite (Thames 2007). At the same time, other researchers have shown that the effect of electoral rules is not direct, but mediated by factors such as partisan affiliation (Thames 2016) and parties' ability to deliver seats (Klein 2016).

One aspect of electoral systems is particularly crucial for the cost of switching, i.e. the centrality of candidates vis-à-vis their party. This is a complex concept that encompasses legislators' the degree of accountability towards voters, candidates' visibility, the level of personalisation of the electoral competition as well as candidates' ability to draw votes. In summary, it is the ability of voters to know/remember who their representatives are. My argument is that the more visible individual candidates are on the ballot, the higher the cost of switching party. When voters can identify single candidates and remember them at the following election, then they will also probably be able to recall whether the same politicians changed party during the previous term. This way voters could be able to sanction (or, in other cases, to support) their representative for her/his decision. If switchers can be recognised, then MPs are aware that they might compromise their career if voters do not follow

them after their defection. For this reason, I argue that visibility makes switching more costly for legislators.

Most of the literature has argued the opposite. Specifically, it has been stated that more personalisation brings also brings more individualised behaviour in parliament, as MPs must also consider the interests of their electoral constituency, which can be in conflict with those of the party (Hix 2004). The result is that more personalisation should result also in a higher propensity to switch, as MPs can count on their own electoral resources (Klein 2016). However, there are also scholars who share my argument and state that candidate-centred systems produce lower defection rates because defecting can threaten "an MP's investment in personal support" (Heller and Mershon 2005, p.538). Similarly, Ceron (2015) in his analysis of fraction breakaways, states that under closed-list PR, the likelihood of splits is higher, because of the lower cost of *exit*. The lower costs result from the fact that candidates' selection is controlled by party leaders and this procedure limits the room for dissent (*voice*), which in turn reduces the cost of breaking away.

I share a similar view and expect that the cost of switching will be lower in party-centred systems, as switchers can be more easily hidden from voters when they do not have to compete for preferences. Additionally, as underlined by Mershon and Shvetsova (2009), proportional electoral systems, favouring the emergence of a greater number of parties, tend also to provide defectors with a wider set of choices. According to the two authors majoritarian formulas should display a lower rate of switching because the number of parties is usually smaller and also because the act of defecting tends to be less beneficial, since switchers are less likely to redirect policy-making and/or to gain greater electoral support.

In order to classify electoral systems and assess how each formula affects the cost of switching, I look at two specific aspects: 1) electoral formula, in connection with ballot structure, and 2) district magnitude.

I do not take into account the role of electoral formulas[6] per se but only in connection with the ballot structure because there is no clear theoretical argument linking formulas to switching, while ballot structures (in particular the closed type) can operate very differently based on the formula that is used. The *ballot structure*is related to the control that voters have over the selection of individual candidates. Carey and Shugart (1995) distinguish three types of ballot: 1) *Closed list* where voters have no choice among candidates within a party list; 2)*Flexible list* where parties present lists of candidates but voters may change the order (in certain cases

[6]By formulas I mean the most basic distinction between electoral system, capturing how power is distributed across parties during an election (Renwick and Pilet 2016). I distinguish between proportional, majoritarian and mixed systems.

only when a specific quota is reached); 3) *Open list* where voters alone determine the candidates that will get elected (in certain cases it is also possible to support candidates from different parties, like in the so-called *panachage*). Ballot structure is important because it is related to the "openness" of an electoral system, that is the choice granted to voters (D. M. Farrell and Gallagher 1998; Renwick and Pilet 2016).

This is probably the most crucial aspect for the argument developed in this chapter because it really touches upon personalisation and the level of intra-party competition. The greater the openness of the electoral system, the greater the competition for votes not only across parties, but also among candidates from the same list. In such circumstances, therefore, candidates have to develop personal electoral resources if they want to get elected. In other words, when candidates (and not only parties) compete for preferences, the level of personalisation/visibility is higher. I assume that the level of openness increases when voters are given a greater choice among candidates, hence closed lists represent the minimum, while open lists and the single-transferable-vote system (STV, it is used in Ireland, for more details on how this system works, see Gallagher (2005)) represent the maximum. My expectation is that the more open a system is, the higher the cost of switching.

As mentioned, closed lists work quite differently when they are applied in proportional, majoritarian or mixed systems. The degree of personalisation of the competition varies based on the specificity of the formulas. When a closed list is employed in connection with a proportional formula, then personalisation will increase when the *district magnitude* (M), i.e. how many seats are assigned in each electoral district, becomes smaller. On the contrary, almost all the majoritarian systems used in Europe rely on a closed list as well, and each party has only one candidate. In other words, candidates and parties perfectly overlap and we can assume that the importance and visibility of single candidates is greater than under closed-list proportional systems. Finally, mixed electoral formulas, like the German one, use closed list both in SMD and for their proportional part and therefore, fall somewhere in between in terms of candidate visibility, because two logics are at play. It is to capture these three cases that I decide to take into account both formulas and ballot structure together.

Finally, in order to capture the degree of personalisation of the competition, and - as a consequence - candidates' visibility, I use an additional indicator, the district magnitude. Both proportional and majoritarian formulas can be applied to constituencies of different sizes. However, usually majoritarian systems are used in single-member districts (see, for instance, Gallagher and Mitchell 2005) and among

Table 5.2: Electoral rules in the fourteen countries considered

Country	*Electoral formula*	*M (average)*	*Ballot structure*
Austria	Proportional	10.2	1949-1969: Ordinal; 1970-2015: Flexible
Belgium	Proportional	8.7	Flexible list
Denmark	Proportional	7.8	Flexible list
Finland	Proportional	13.2	1945-1951: Flexible list; 1952-2015: Open list
France	1946-1957: Proportional; 1957-2015: Majoritarian (1985: Proportional)	1.6	1946-1957: Panachage; 1957-2015: Closed
Germany	Mixed	1	Closed
Greece	Proportional;	4.5	1974-1984: Flexible; 1985-1988: Closed; 1989-2015: Flexible
Ireland	Proportional	3.8	Ordinal (STV)
Italy	1948-1993: Proportional; 1993-2005: Mixed; 2005-2015: Proportional	16.3	1948-1993: Open; 1994-2015: Closed
Netherlands	Proportional	142.9	Flexible list
Norway	Proportional	10	Flexible list
Spain	Proportional	6.7	Closed
Switzerland	Proportional	7.8	Panachage
UK	Majoritarian	1	Closed

the countries analysed here this is also the case. Moreover, the proportionality of a formula gets considerably reduced as M decreases, to the point that when M equals 1 the proportional formula automatically works as a majoritarian one.

These variables are first analysed individually and thne in combination, given that they all contribute to determining the cost of switching. This is the focus of the next section, in which a first assessment of the variance across electoral systems and their characteristics is carried out.

5.3.2 Variance across different electoral systems

In order to verify if the arguments presented hold empirically, I retrieved details regarding the electoral systems used in my sample of countries from the dataset developed by Pilet et al. (2016). The database perfectly suits my research question because it describes in detail the electoral systems used in several European countries[7] since their first democratic election. Hence, at each electoral competition, I am able to trace back the rules that were in place. A summary of the electoral rules used by the countries surveyed can be found in Table 5.2.

[7]Except Norway, all the countries in my dataset are covered.

Table 5.3: Average percentage of switchers by types of ballot structure, all countries (1945-2015)

Variable	*% Switchers (average)*	*S.d.*	*Freq.*
Ballot structure			
Closed list PR (0)	2.40	3.3	56
Closed list MX and MJ (1)	1.45	2.8	209
All other lists (2)	0.91	2.0	632
Total	1.13	2.3	897

Electoral formulas are classified in three categories: proportional, mixed and majoritarian[8].

With regard to ballot structure, I distinguish between countries using a closed list versus those using more open forms of ballot (that is flexible list, open (preferential) list, panachage or STV). Based on these two dimensions (formula and ballot structure) I created an index that ranges from 0 to 2 based on increasing visibility and, therefore, switching costs:

1. Closed list under proportional formula (0);
2. Closed list under mixed and majoritarian formulas (1);
3. All other type of lists (2).

In order to test whether the argument presented above holds, I calculated the average percentage of switchers for each category of the variable. Results are presented in Table 5.3. At a first look, the expectations seem to be confirmed, as the percentage of switchers decreases with increasing visibility. The highest value is found for systems employing a proportional formula in combination with closed list, while the lowest percentage for systems using all the other type of ballot. This differences, according to the ANOVA test and the post-hoc test all the comparisons are statistically significant (p-value=0.001).

The second characteristic of the electoral system that I consider is the district magnitude. In order to see if there is a relationship between switching and the number of seats assigned in each constituency, I plot the percentage of switchers against

[8]The original classification by Pilet et al. (2016) includes a fourth category for reinforced proportional formulas, that assign a majority prize to the winning party/coalition. However, I discarded this category as these formulas have only been used in recent years in Italy and Greece and the risk is that we overestimate the importance of these systems. Moreover, there is no a clear theoretical argument linking this special kind of formula with the cost and scope of switching. Reinforced formulas were re-classified as proportional systems.

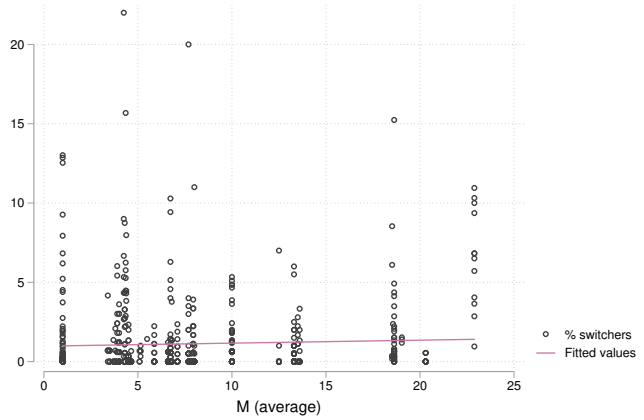


Figure 5.3: Average percentage of switchers by different district magnitude, selected countries (1945-2015)

the average district magnitude. I exclude all the countries that use a majoritarian system, because M always equals 1 and therefore it is not a relevant variable. I also excluded values of M above 100, because there is only one country whose M passes this threshold (i.e. the Netherlands) and I do not want the result to be affected by one specific case. The result can be displayed in Figure 5.3. There is a positive but weak correlation between the two measures (correlation coefficient is 0.04, not significant), that is in line with what I expected. Other things being equal, an increasing district magnitude reduces candidate's visibility and lowers the cost of switching, which indeed occurs more frequently.

As an alternative, I recoded the continuous variable as categorical. It takes value 0 (minimum cost) when M is above 20, 1 if M is between 10 and 20, 2 if M is between 1 and 10 and value 3 (maximum cost) when M equals 1[9]. I then calculated the average percentage of defectors for each category, as shown by Table 5.4. Results in this case are not fully consistent with the theory. The maximum value of switchers is recorded when district magnitude equals 1, that is when the costs are expected to be the highest[10]. This result might be highly affected by France, that - as seen in Chapter 3 - is an outlier when it comes to switching. Indeed, if I calculate the same averages excluding France, the results are substantively different and in line with my theoretical argument. Without France, the percentage of switchers decreases when

[9]Germany and Italy 1994-2005 take value 2 as they are examples of mixed electoral systems, with some seats assigned in single-member districts and some others in multi-member constituencies. Therefore, in these two cases the magnitude varies based on the type of district take into account. However, since voters face both type of competitions, I decided to code these two cases as an intermediate category.

[10]Moreover, the analysis of variance shows that these differences are not statistically significant.

Table 5.4: Average percentage of switchers by district magnitude

Variable	*% Switchers (average)*	*S.d.*	*Freq.*
District Magnitude (average)			
a) All countries			
M>20 (0)	1.14	2.4	108
10<M<20 (1)	1.01	1.77	204
1<M<10 (2)	1.10	2.5	455
M=1 (3)	1.44	2.6	130
Total	1.13	2.3	897
b) France excluded			
M>20 (0)	1.14	2.4	108
10<M<20 (1)	1.01	1.77	204
1<M<10 (2)	0.98	2.5	442
M=1 (3)	0.51	0.7	72
Total	0.97	2.1	826

the magnitude of the district becomes smaller, even thought these differences are not statistically significant, according to the ANOVA test.

Moreover, we should not forget that these two tests for the correlation between district magnitude and percentage of defectors are not ideal. In order to properly grasp this relationship, it would be better to have the number of switchers for each electoral constituency. But such a data collection is beyond the scope of this thesis and therefore the relationship could only be partially tested.

As already mentioned, these dimensions should also be evaluated in combination. Indeed, an electoral system combines the various characteristics which together determine a general cost of switching. Therefore, an overall assessment of the variance across the complete electoral system is also needed. This analysis not only helps us to understand if the argument developed generally holds empirically, but also to check whether one feature is more important than the other when they are considered together.

In order to see how the scope of switching varies across different electoral systems and their characteristics, I calculated a cumulative index based on the same two variables used for the bivariate analysis (district magnitude is used as categorical). This index varies between 0 and 5, where 0 represents the minimum cost and 5 the maximum; however the maximum recorded value is 4 and also note that there is no country whose score equals 1. For each value of the index I calculated the average percentage of switchers, as displayed by Table 5.5. Results are not fully consistent with my theoretical argument. While the percentage of switchers is at its maximum when costs are at their minimum, there is not a clear negative relationship between

Table 5.5: Average percentage of switchers by different values of the additive index on electoral systems, all countries (1945-2015)

Variable	*% Switchers (average)*	*S.d.*	*Freq.*
Electoral System index			
a) all countries			
(0)	6.50	3.2	12
(2)	0.72	1.6	140
(3)	1.14	2.2	283
(4)	1.12	2.5	462
Total	1.13	2.3	897
b) France and Italy excluded			
(2)	0.72	1.6	139
(3)	0.78	1.4	226
(4)	0.77	1.9	392
Total	0.76	1.7	757

the two variables. Not by chance, based on the ANOVA test only the differences between the lowest score and all the other categories are significant. However, as already discussed in the case of the district magnitude, these results might be affected by the presence of outliers. Indeed, Italy is the only country scoring 0 and this might drive the results. When I exclude Italy and France from the analysis, we can see that there is basically no difference between the various categories of electoral systems. This result might be due to the fact that, as already shown by other works (Thames 2016; Klein 2016), the electoral system per se is not a good predictor for switchers, but only in combination with other factors does it acquire a better explanatory power.

5.4 Parliamentary regulation

5.4.1 How parliamentary rules vary across countries

The institution that probably more deeply affects the cost and the scope of switching are parliamentary regulations and in particular those rules that discipline how parliamentary party groups can be established. Regulations play a central role because they define whether and how MPs can defect from their original party. To this respect, it is important to notice that none of the countries analysed has anti-defections laws, i.e. rules that "explicitly penalize elected legislators who leave their parliamentary party groups" (Nikolenyi 2017, p.3), like for instance Portugal, where MPs lose their mandate if they subsequently become members of a political party

that did not nominated them at the elections (Article 160, Portuguese Constitution). As Janda (2009) points out, anti-defection laws are more common in unestablished democracies because these countries are more concerned with the stabilisation of their party system, and probably it is for this reason that they are not used in Western Europe[11]. Therefore, albeit crucial, this is not a dimension of variation that will be taken into account. However, the absence of anti-defection laws does not imply that group regulations are all the same across Europe. In fact, the extent to which parliaments regulate the formation of groups and allow MPs to change party are extremely differentiated. Table 5.6 provides a summary of the various rules in place in each of the countries analysed.

In order to understand the impact that parliamentary regulations have on the decision to change affiliation, we need to answer one question: *where can defectors go?* First of all, switchers are not always allowed to join another party, sometimes they are forced to become independent. Secondly, when MPs can establish a new group, the barriers to do so can be more or less high, not only numerically but also politically. The general argument is that the more regulations make it difficult for MPs to move out of their former party, the more costly is to defect. In order to determine these "relocation" costs, we have to look at four specific features of parliamentary regulations:

1. Limitations to defections;
2. Independent MPs and their status;
3. Limitations to the formation of new groups;
4. Requirements legislators have to meet in order to be acknowledged as a parliamentary group.

Starting from the first dimension, when a MP thinks about switching or not, first of all s/he has to consider whether there are any limitation to this action. In the sample of countries, only in Spain are there specific (temporal) limits to changing affiliation. Spanish MPs are allowed to switch only within the first five days of each parliamentary sessions. After this window of time, MPs can only join the *mixed group*, but cannot jump from one party to another. This is a very considerable limitation (i.e. a cost) to defections, because they can exclusively take place within

[11]Western countries in general are also committed to the representative mandate. Liberal democratic theory, indeed, establishes the incompatibility between democracy and imperative mandate and posits that the mandate strictly belongs to legislators and not to their parties. For a summary see, among others, Urbinati (2011).

Table 5.6: Regulation of parliamentary party groups and defections in the fourteen countries considered

Country	*Requirements for establishing groups*	*N and % MPs required*	*Political requirement*	*Limitations to defections*	*Independents*
Austria	Numeric (permanent) & political	5 MPs, 2.7%	MPs have to belong to the same electoral list, otherwise it is necessary the approval of the chamber. Since 2013, new groups can also only be established not later than one month after the day of the first meeting of the National Council.	No	Yes
Belgium	Numeric (permanent)	5 MPs, 3.3%	N/A	No	Yes
Denmark	Numeric	1 MP, 0.55% in practice 4 MPs, 2.2%	N/A	No	Yes
Finland	Numeric	1 MP, 0.5%	N/A	No	Yes
France	Numeric & political	15 MPs, 2.6%	MPs have to sign a common political statement. However, MPs can also only be "attached" to a group, without fully belonging to it.	No	Yes
Germany	Numeric & political	5%	MPs shall belong to the same party or to parties which, on account of similar political aims, do not compete with each other in any state, otherwise it is necessary the approval of the chamber.	No	Yes
Greece	Numeric	10 or 5 MPs, 3.3 or 1.6%	N/A	No	Yes
Ireland	Numeric (permanent)	7 MPs, 4.4%	N/A	No	Yes
Italy	Numeric (permanent)	20 MPs, 3.2%	N/A	No	No, Mixed Group
Netherlands	Numeric	1 MP, 0.6%	N/A	No	Yes
Norway	Numeric & political	1 MP	MPs must represent a registered party which presented lists of candidates for election in at least one-third of the counties	No	Yes
Spain	Numeric & political	15 or 5 MPs, 4.2 or 1.4%	In no case may a separate parliamentary group be formed by members of the House belonging to the same party. Nor may a separate parliamentary group be formed by members who at the time of the elections belonged to political parties that did not oppose one another before the electorate.	Yes: within 5 days from the beginning of each session	No, Mixed Group
Switzerland	Numeric & political	5 MPs, 2.5%	Groups represent MPs of the same political party or same political orientation	No	Yes
UK	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes

All the information to create this table were retrieved from the website of the parliament of each country and from Heidar and Koole (2000b). For a complete list of sources, refer to the Appendix, Table D.1.

a limited time frame. Compared to all the other legislators in Western Europe, Spanish MPs, before considering *where* to move, must also to think about *when* they can do it.

The second relevant feature to evaluate in order to answer to the question *where can MPs switch to?*, has to do with the status of independent legislators. In certain countries, MPs are obliged to belong to a parliamentary group. In other words, legislators cannot be independent. In this event, those MPs who do not want to be part of any political party, get automatically assigned to the same common group, usually called the *mixed group*. This group may also bring together MPs belonging to small parties that are not allowed - often because they do not meet the numerical threshold - to establish their own group. The mixed group is qualitatively different from other parliamentary groups, since it has a residual and instrumental nature, rather than a political one. Legislators choose the solution of the mixed group because it allows both independents and members of small factions to be fully included into the legislative life. For this reason, members of the mixed group share almost the same advantages of the members from other groups.

My argument is that the presence of a mixed group reduces the costs of switching for three reasons. Firstly, it offers switchers the opportunity to "get rid" of their former political affiliation. Indeed, switchers can decide to spend a small amount of time within the mixed group, before joining other political parties. This way, the change of political affiliation is less sudden and, importantly, less evident both to voters and the media[12]. Secondly, in the mixed group switchers do not lose all the benefits they had in their former political group. For instance, speech time is always guaranteed to members of the mixed group, while independent MPs have to formally request permission to speak. Hence, switchers who are able to join the mixed group are in a more advantageous situation compared to those that can only become independent. Finally, defectors who join the mixed group can easily build an alternative network and develop new political projects. For all these reasons, the mixed group contributes to a lower cost of defecting.

The third aspect to be taken into account is whether MPs are allowed to establish a new parliamentary party group. None of the countries surveyed *expressively* forbids the constitution of new groups during a legislative term, but in some instances this can only happen under certain conditions. Austria, for example, in 2013 introduced a modification to its standing orders that limited the establishment of new groups to no later than one month after the first meeting of the new parliament. That

[12] As already mentioned, in Spain the temporal limitation imposed to changing party does not apply to switches that occur towards and within the mixed group.

is to say, this provision makes the space available for the creation of new parties extremely limited. Hence, in the future, party splits that occur between two elections in Austria, will not be mirrored in the National Council. We should also consider that when regulations require an overlap between parliamentary groups and the parties that contest elections, the constitution of new groups is *de facto* impossible. This is the case in Germany and Spain and Norway, where only parties that have participated in previous elections are allowed to establish a parliamentary group. In these countries, therefore, the parliamentary arena must mirror the electoral one and changes to the electoral configuration can hardly be made.

When legislators are allowed to form a new group, under what conditions can they do so? In other words, what are the requirements MPs must meet in order to be recognised as group? In most of the countries, legislators have to fulfil only a *numeric requirement*, i.e. groups have to represent a minimum number of MPs. The corollary of imposing only numeric criteria is that a group can also be formed by MPs belonging to different political parties. As a consequence, in countries that adopt only a numeric rule, parties and groups do not necessarily have to overlap. However, the nature of the numeric criteria varies considerably across polities. In certain cases the numeric threshold is so low that it is basically non-existent, e.g. in Finland, the Netherlands and Norway even an individual MP can establish his/her own group. In other cases, in contrast, the threshold is considerably higher. Germany has the highest numerical requirement (5% of MPs), followed by Ireland and Italy (above 3%) (Heidar and Koole 2000a). Certain countries also allow groups of smaller numbers, if they represent parties that have competed into elections. This is the case for instance in Greece, Italy and Spain. The aim is to fully integrate into the work of the parliamentary assembly political parties that either represent minorities or that could not gain enough electoral support, despite being well organised in the territory.

Additionally, thresholds can either be permanent or only temporary. In the latter case, the numeric criteria has to be met only at the moment in which the group comes into being. This implies that a group does not get formally dismissed if its membership later falls below the compulsory membership threshold, which is what happens when the threshold requirement is permanent. The permanent threshold is expressively required in Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Italy and Spain. Clearly, a permanent criteria is stricter than a temporary one.

Beside a numeric threshold, in certain countries, MPs, in order to be recognised as a group, must also meet a *political criterion*. In most of the cases, the goal is to make sure that groups represent homogeneous political orientations and they do not

only result from opportunistic evaluations of legislators. However, the strictness of this political requirement can vary substantially. In certain countries, the criterion is rather soft. In France, for example, it is sufficient that the members of the same group sign a common political statement. Similarly, in Switzerland legislators with a "similar political orientation" can be recognised as a group. In other systems groups must represent parties that competed at elections (Austria, Germany and Norway) and/or legislators from the same party cannot establish more than one group (Spain). In these countries, the internal organisation of the parliament must reflect the electoral competition that generated it. In other words, there is a perfect overlap between parliamentary groups and electoral lists. It goes without saying that the presence of a (strict) political criteria considerably reduces the presence of "opportunistic" groups and limits also the opportunity of potential defectors to establish new groups.

Higher numeric thresholds contribute to an increased cost of switching, especially when this requirement is permanent. Similarly, tight political requirements, like the correspondence between parliamentary groups and electoral lists, substantially limits the opportunities for potential switchers. In particular, the political criteria reduces the possibilities for collective defections, as defectors cannot gather into a new political group. Under this condition, therefore, individual switches are more likely to occur, compared with collective ones, given that the room left to the latter is limited.

The five aspects contribute together to determine the cost of switching. Indeed, there are countries in the sample that have an overall regulation that is permissive. This is particularly the case for the United Kingdom - that does not have any regulation at all - but also Finland and the Netherlands, where the numeric threshold essentially does not exist. The Danish case is similar, but according to Bille (2000), in practice this threshold is four MPs, that is equivalent to 2% of votes that a party needs to get in order to gain compensatory seats. The regulations in countries like Belgium, Greece, Ireland and Italy are slightly stricter, as the threshold is more substantial and in most of the cases it is permanent.

In a more intermediate position there are Norway, Switzerland and France. These three countries impose both a numeric and political criteria, but not in a strict manner as other polities. Norway does not have a minimum numeric threshold, but it has a quite tight political criteria according to which groups must represent parties that competed in elections. In Switzerland there is a similar political requirement, as a group can only be established by members of a party or by MPs who "share similar

political views"[13] (Article 61 of the Swiss Federal Act on the Federal Assembly). Similarly, France's political criteria is not very strict, as it only consists of signing a common statement. Moreover, in France, MPs can experiment with different forms of group affiliation. Legislators can not only be full members of a group, they can also be only "attached" to it. Associated MPs share some of the benefits of being part of a group, but they are not obliged to stick to the party line when they vote (Merlini 2004). This special form of affiliation has several advantages for rebellious MPs, because in cases of conflict with their party, they can pass from being a full member to an associated one. Not by chance, especially in recent years, many of the switches recorded are from/to a softer form of affiliation to/from a stronger one.

Finally, at the end of the continuum, there are countries with the strictest regulations, i.e. Spain, Austria and Germany. In these three systems, the political requirements are very tight, as usually it is necessary that groups mirror electoral parties. Moreover, Austria and Spain impose restrictions to the formation of new groups or to defections in general.

5.4.2 How switching varies across different parliamentary regulations

In order to assess the overall cost of switching of a given parliamentary regulation I calculated an additive index based on five different dummy variables, that attest the presence/absence of the features described above. Specifically, I created the following five variables:

1. *Limitation*: takes value 1 when there are formal limitations to defections, and 0 otherwise.

2. *Independent*: takes value 1 when MPs can only be independent, and 0 when instead there is a mixed group.

3. *New group*: takes value 1 when there are limitations to the establishment of a new group within a legislative term, and 0 otherwise.

4. *Numeric*: takes value 1 if in order to establish a group at least 2 MPs are necessary. When individual MPs can form their own group, the variable takes value 0.

5. *Political*: takes value 1 when MPs have to meet a political requirement in order to form a group, and 0 otherwise.

[13] The standing order however does not explain how these common views are assessed.

Table 5.7: Countries' score on the various components of the index *Regulation*

Country	*Lim.*	*Ind.*	*New group*	*Num.*	*Pol.*	*Reg.*
Austria	0	1	1	1	1	4
Belgium	0	1	0	1	0	2
Denmark	0	1	0	0	0	1
Finland	0	1	0	0	0	1
France	0	1	0	1	1	3
Germany	0	1	1	1	1	4
Greece	0	1	0	1	0	2
Ireland	0	1	0	1	0	2
Italy	0	0	0	1	0	1
Netherlands	0	1	0	0	0	1
Norway	0	1	0	0	1	2
Spain	1	0	1	1	1	4
Switzerland	0	1	0	1	1	3
UK	0	1	0	0	0	1

Theoretically the index *Regulation* varies from 0 to 5, but in practice there is no country that scores the minimum or the maximum. Table 5.7 displays the score of each country on the five dimensions considered and on the overall index. Germany and Spain are confirmed as having the strictest regulations, followed by Austria, France and Switzerland. All the other countries score less. In total, there are four categories of countries, corresponding to the four recorded scores. In order to check whether the argument that lower costs should correspond to lower switching rates, I calculated the average percentage of defectors for each of these four categories. Results are presented in Table 5.8.

The argument presented in the previous section finds partial support in the data. If we look at the average percentage of switchers per regulation score (Table 5.8), we can see that there is not a direct negative relationship between costs and defectors. Indeed, switching mainly affects countries falling in the third category (cost score equals 3). Countries with minimum costs, display a percentage of defectors in line with the overall mean. The second and the last categories, finally, have an average below the general mean. While in the case of the most costly regulation, this result is coherent with the theory, the same cannot be said when the regulation score is 2[14].

However, these contradictory results might be explained by one specific country. Once again, France appears to be the polity that alters the findings, as it has a

[14]I performed an ANOVA test to check whether the differences between categories are significant and found that indeed they are (p-value = 0.000). A Tukey post-hoc test showed that the percentage of defectors is statistically significantly higher for the third category compared to all the other three categories (p-value always below 0.004).

rather restrictive group regulation (score equals 3), but a very high level of party switching. If the percentage of switchers by different scores is calculated excluding France, then the argument developed finds support in the data. As the second part of Table 5.8 shows, there is an almost perfect negative and linear relationship between regulations' strictness and percentage of defectors, however, bear in mind that according to the ANOVA test these differences are not statistically significant.

Table 5.8: Average percentage of switchers by type of parliamentary regulation

Variable	*Countries*	*% Switchers (average)*	*S.d.*	*Freq.*
Regulation Score				
a) All countries				
1	DK, FL, IT, NL, UK	1.12	2.2	352
2	BE, GR, IR, NW	0.95	2.0	225
3	FR, CH	1.90	3.4	142
4	GE, SP, AU	0.77	1.7	178
Total		1.13	2.3	897
b) France excluded				
1		1.12	2.2	352
2		0.95	2.0	225
3		0.75	2.8	71
4		0.77	1.9	178
Total		0.97	2.1	826

Albeit partly in contradiction with the argument presented above, this initial finding supports the idea that the impact of institutions should not be considered alone, but rather together, given that legislators face an overall cost of switching that results from the way institutions combine. This is what the following paragraph discusses. It might indeed be that, for instance, a loose group regulation is associated with a highly personalised electoral system that cancels out the flexibility of parliamentary rules and increases the general cost of defecting (this is the case, for instance, in the United Kingdom).

5.5 Institutional contexts and the overall cost of *exit*

After having described institutions individually, it is necessary to analyse how they combine. Indeed, politicians do not face these institutions one by one, but rather in a complex context, which results from the way these institutions interact. In the previous paragraphs I illustrated how each institution contributes to reducing or increasing the cost of switching. Taken together, the three institutions can reinforce

their effects or cancel them out. In other words, they can add up or subtract their effects. Therefore, the cost of switching that MPs actually face is determined by the way these institutions combine. The cost of changing party affiliation will be the highest when each institution contributes to increasing it. For instance, if a rationalised parliamentary system combines with an electoral formula that ensures candidates? accountability with strict rules for parliamentary group formation, then switching will be particularly difficult and costly. On the contrary, when a presidential system adopts an electoral system under which candidates are not very visible, alongside flexible parliamentary rules, then the cost of defecting will be smaller.

However, among real polities it is rare to find such "extreme" institutional contexts. The majority of polities have some dimensions that enhance the cost of switching, while others reduce it, i.e. they cancel each other out. Moreover, it is likely that one of the three institutions it is more salient than the other two and it determines on its own the total cost of switching. On the other hand, the importance of one institution vis-à-vis the others can change over time. Therefore the cost of changing party affiliation is not immutable, but it varies according to the relative importance of the three institutions.

The argument to be tested is the same as the rest of this chapter: the higher the costs imposed by a given institutional design, the lower the scope of switching and - as a consequence - the more "serious" the motivation behind this action. The challenge is to find a good indicator to measure the overall cost of defecting imposed by the three institutions together. Moreover, I am interested in understanding whether there are particular institutional configurations that make switching more likely to occur. In other words, I not only need to calculate the costs, but also to be able to recognise from which combination of institutions these costs result. Being able to differentiate between institutional designs is important because, as already mentioned, it allows us to understand whether there is an institution that is more determinant than the others.

In order to test my argument I created a three dimensional table (Table 5.9) in which the three institutions considered interact with each other. The advantage of this kind of table is that it shows clearly the institutional configurations that actually exist among all the potential combinations. For each of the existing designs, I then calculated its average percentage of switchers. The dimensions used to construct the table were the following three:

1. *Regime type:* the variable varies between 0 and 3, as illustrated in section 5.2.2;

Table 5.9: Existing institutional configurations and related average percentage of switchers

	Form of Government															
	0				1				2				3			
Reg.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
El. Sys.																
0									6.50							
2							1.43		0.62	0.17		0.06				1.39
3					0.68				1.97	1.07				0.52		0.68
4			2.52				1.49		0.62	0.98	5.29	0.79	0.51	0.72		

2. *Electoral system:* an additive index based on the variables described in paragraph 5.3.2 that varies between 0 and 4, but note that no country scores 1.

3. *Regulation:* the same index used in section 5.4.2. As seen, the index theoretically ranges between 0 and 5, but in practice there are only cases between 1 and 4.

Considering these three indexes, in theory there are 64 possible institutional configurations. However, most of these designs do not exist in reality, partly because of the limited number of countries considered. To test my argument, therefore, I can only refer to the combinations that can be found among my sample of countries and check whether and how the average percentage of switchers varies among these different configurations. While Table 5.9 is useful to understand which are the existing institutional designs among the countries studied, it is not so easy to determine whether there is a negative relationship between the scope of switching and institutional costs. It is for this reason that I re-designed the table and listed the configurations based on increasing institutional costs, as it can be seen in Table 5.10.

The first aspect emerging from Table 5.10 is that when switching costs are at their (recorded) minimum (i.e. 3) the average percentage of switchers is at its maximum, that is 4.5 times higher than the overall mean (1.44). On the opposite side of the spectrum, when costs are at their maximum (10), the mean percentage of defectors is below the average, but it is not the minimum registered. The lowest percentage is found for countries with a cost of 5, that is the second lowest score. To put it another way, the relationship between cost and switchers is not linear, but it seems to be better described by a sine wave. The argument does not seem to hold even when scores are aggregated in brackets. As the last column of Table 5.10 shows, if costs are divided into three groups, the average percentage of switchers does not linearly decrease as the institutional designs become more restrictive.

A second element that can be drawn from Table 5.10 is that there are several deviant cases. There are some countries that despite having a rather permissive

Table 5.10: Average % of switchers for different institutional designs

Electoral System (0-4)	*Regime type (0-3)*	*Parliamentary Regulation (1-4)*	*Total Cost (3-10)*	*% switchers (average)*	*% switchers (average per cost score)*	*% switchers (average per cost category)*
0	2	1	3	6.5	6.5	
2	2	1	5	0.62	0.65	1.16
3	1	1	5	0.68		
2	1	3	6	1.43	1.88	
2	2	2	6	0.17		
3	2	1	6	1.97		
3	2	2	7	1.07	0.99	
4	0	3	7	2.52		
4	2	1	7	0.62		1.10
2	2	4	8	0.06	0.97	
3	3	2	8	0.52		
4	1	3	8	1.49		
4	2	2	8	0.98		
4	3	1	8	0.51		
2	3	4	9	1.39	2.06	
4	2	3	9	5.29		
4	3	2	9	0.72		1.19
3	3	4	10	0.68	0.73	
4	2	4	10	0.79		

institutional design, do not witness excessive switching. This is, for instance, the case of the Netherlands and Finland that have a cost score of 5, but an extremely limited percentage of defectors (on average 0.65). In these two countries, switching does not occur *in spite of* a context that allows it. This means that there are other political conditions that limit this phenomenon. However, given that defections are not very costly, switching could potentially increase in the future, when the political circumstances that assure parliamentary stability and cohesion might cease to exist. This is exactly what has happened in the Netherlands, where the percentage of switchers is now almost three times higher than in then 1950s[15]. The fraction of Dutch MPs changing party is still very low, but more and more frequently we have seen legislators that establish their own group like in the 2012-2017 term.

Opposite to the Dutch and Finnish cases, there is France where MPs switch very often *in spite of* a restrictive institutional context. France combines a very personalised electoral system (majority run-off in single member districts) with parliamentary regulations that partially limit the possibility for MPs to switch. It is also true that France recognises different forms of group affiliation. Legislators can choose between being full members of a group or being "attached" to it. Most of the defections recorded indeed represent a change between these two forms of connection. Contrary to the Netherlands, in France switching happens because of specific political circumstances, i.e. a fragmented party system and weak political parties.

In the aftermath of De Gaulle's rise to power, the French party system knew a phase of rationalisation and simplification (Cole 2010). Among the several factors that contributed to this stabilisation, there are De Gaulle's ability of aggregating the French centre-right in the Gaullist party and the emergence of a united Socialist Party able to balance the strength of the Communists (Bartolini 1984a). However, since the 1980s, the French party system has become more unbalanced: new political parties have emerged, together with an increasing fractionalization of traditional parties and a lower electoral predictability (Cole 2010). In a word, parties have become weaker and in this context, it is not surprising that switching occurs more frequently and in spite of its high costs.

There are also cases that are coherent with the theory presented, though. Italy is the perfect example of this. The three institutions in Italy are combined in a way that makes switching extremely low in cost, even more so in recent years, when the electoral system passed from an open/preferential ballot to a closed list. However, as we have seen in Chapter 3, the phenomenon has become relevant only after 1994

[15]The percentage of defectors in the Netherlands used to be around 0.5, while in the last five years it has been above 1.3.

when the party system collapsed. In other words, until 1994, Italy was similar to the Netherlands and Finland, where - despite a permissive context - defections are rare. Also in the Italian case, therefore, what has mostly influenced the activation of the phenomenon has been a change in the political circumstances. However, the scope of defections has been so large also thanks to fact that Italian MPs do not face any serious consequences when they decide to change party. There has been a reinforcing effect between political and institutional conditions and this interaction might explain the persistence of the phenomenon in the last 20 years.

In a similar vein, but with completely opposite results, there is an interaction between institutions and defections in countries with high switching costs. The paradigmatic example is Spain: despite turbulent elections in recent years, characterised by great volatility and the emergence of new political parties (Simón 2016), at the parliamentary level, Spain is very stable. Before the general elections in 2015, that marked the end of the Spanish two-party system (Orriols and Cordero 2016), there were no significant movements between parties and no new groups were established. This might have happened either because Spanish MPs are particularly faithful, but also because of the strict parliamentary regulations in place that strongly discouraged inter-party changes. The Spanish example, therefore, tells us that institutions are important to foster and ensure parliamentary stability and to limit defections when the party system becomes less predictable.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the analysis of the interaction between switching and institutions is that the latter matter little. It seems that the political (and contingent) factors are more important and that switching is the output of party instability, rather than stemming from the institutional context. This result might also be produced by the fact that institutional designs are not fully coherent. As seen, there is no country that scores the maximum/minimum on all of the three dimensions. Most of the cases fall into the grey zone in which some institutions make switching costly, while others produce the opposite effect. In other words, in most of the cases, disincentives to switch are not homogeneous and it is difficult to identify which institution play a determinant role. At the same time, the brief analysis of specific cases suggests that if institutions per se do not trigger switching, they might have a role in enhancing or limiting the development of the phenomenon in the event of party system instability.

5.6 Parties, institutions and the overall scope of switching

The previous chapter and sections have analysed separately the impact that party features and institutions have on the scope of switching. From Chapter 4 we know that there are certain party features that increase the probability that a party will witness defections from its legislators. In particular, the following traits are associated with higher switching: 1) being a "young" party, 2) being an ideologically extreme party, 3) having a stable electoral platform, 4) being in government and 5) belonging to the Radical Right party family. Additionally, the results of the analysis carried out in Chapter 4 suggest that fragmentation and electoral volatility (used as a proxy of institutionalisation) are linked to higher switching.

This chapter produced less clear results, though. A perfect linear relationship between the cost of defecting (imposed by institutions) and its scope does not seem to exist. This means that switching does not necessarily occur only where it is less costly. However, the analysis has also indicated that restrictive institutions are a necessary condition to forestall this behaviour from spreading during phases of political instability.

So far, inter-party variance and inter-country variance have been analysed separately, therefore we still do not know what effects they produce when they are considered in combination. For instance, what happens to parties characterised by one or more of the factors that lead to switching when they are embedded in a very costly environment? Do party factors carry the same explanatory power when the institutional context is more or less restrictive? These are questions that can only be answered with an analysis that combines the study of party variables with institutional ones. Such an analysis should uncover which are the ideal conditions under which defections are more likely to occur. The simultaneous study of the two sets of factors is one of the goals of this concluding section. In order to do so, I run an statistical model in which both institutional and party-level covariates are included. The analysis is limited to those variables that in the previous chapter produced significant results. This means that I exclude the two variables of polarisation and type of cabinet from Chapter 4. The rest of the covariates of interest are all included, and their operationalisation is the same as presented in the respective sections. Table 5.11 summarises the measurement of the variables that are tested, the level at which they are observed (either at the party or at the country level) and the expected effect on the number of switchers, as posited in the hypotheses from Chapter 4 and 5. To assure comparability of results, I decided to use the same

Table 5.11: Operationalisation of independent variables, level of measurement and expected effect over the number of switchers

Variable	*Level*	*Operationalization*	*Expected effect*
Age	Party	Number of years between year of the observation and year the party was founded	-
Family	Party	8 categories used in Chapter 3, following classification from CMP	+
Govt	Party	Takes value 0 when the party was in opposition in a given year, and 1 otherwise	+
Delta Rile	Party	Number of points a party's ideological position on the left-right scale (from CMP) changed between two elections	-
Extreme	Party	Ranges between 0 (centrist party) to 100 (extreme party)	+
Volatility	Country	Total Volatility as calcualted by Emanuele (2015)	+
N parties	Country	Number of parliamentary party in a given year	+
Form of govt	Country	Takes value 0 for split semi-presidential; 1 unified semi-presidential; 2 classic parliamentary; 3 rationalized parliamentary	-
Electoral System	Country	Ranges between 0 (low cost) to 4 (maximum cost)	-
Regulation	Country	Ranges between 1 (low cost) to 4 (maximum cost)	-

dependent variable employed in Chapter 4, that is the number of switchers that a party experienced in a year. Given that this is a count variable, I run a negative binomial regression again with a multilevel specification in order to account for the nested structure of the data.

The results of the negative binomial model are displayed in Table 5.12. The most important finding of the regression is that party-level variables seem to play a more important role compared to institutional variables. Let me illustrate this point in more detail. All the variables measured at the party level show significant coefficients, while only few of the variables measured at the systemic level reach statistical significance. This result is partially in line with what was found by

Table 5.12: Results of negative binomial model of party switching (random effects)

VARIABLES	Model 1 *N of switchers*
Govt (0-1)	0.192
	(0.14)
Age	-0.010***
	(0.00)
Seats	-0.005*
	(0.00)
Delta Rile	-0.010*
	(0.01)
Extreme	0.017**
	(0.00)
Family (r.c. *Social-dem*)	
Green	-1.035+
	(0.54)
Radical Left	0.141
	(0.35)
Liberal	0.207
	(0.32)
Christian-dem	-0.916*
	(0.38)
Conservative	0.508
	(0.37)
Radical Right	1.016*
	(0.40)
Regionalist	0.555
	(0.48)
Volatiltiy	0.040***
	(0.01)
N parties	0.075
	(0.05)
Form of government (r.c. *Split semi-pres.*)	
Unified semi-pres.	0.101
	(0.50)
Classic parl.	0.508
	(0.56)
Rationalised parl.	0.561
	(0.67)
Electoral System (0-4)	
2.	-2.038**
	(0.62)
3.	-0.887+
	(0.48)
4.	-1.364*
	(0.55)
Regulation (1-4)	
2.	-0.088
	(0.44)
3.	0.528
	(0.60)
4.	0.043
	(0.54)
Constant	-4.780***
	(0.87)
Country	0.238
	(0.17)
Party	0.889***
	(0.21)
Observations	4,828
Number of countries	14
Number of parties	170
Wald chi2 (23)	122.6
Prob > chi2	0

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.1

O'Brien and Shomer (2013) whose analysis shows how party characteristics are better predictors of switching than institutions. The two authors find that motivational explanations are correlated with defections, while institutional designs exhibit only limited direct influence on switching.

Starting with party-level variables almost all the findings of Chapter 4 are confirmed, except for the variable *Govt*, that does not reach significance, but displays a sign in line with what expected (that is positive). *Age*, *Seats* and ideological fluidity (*Delta Rile*) confirm to be negatively correlated with switching. In other words, parties that are older, or with a greater number of legislators or whose ideological platform changes over time, experience a lower number of defections. On the contrary, the more extreme is the ideological position of a given party on the left-right scale, the higher the number of switchers: the coefficient of the variable *Extreme* is positive and significant. Findings are also confirmed for party families: compared to the Social-Democratic family, Radical Right parties are the most unstable ones, followed by Regionalist, Conservative and Liberal parties. Green and Christian-Democratic families experience, instead, a considerably lower number of defectors compared to Social-Democratic parties. The predicted numbers of switchers for each family are also displayed in Figure 5.4 (note that in the graph all the coefficients are significant, while in the regression some families display non-significant terms). These results are in line also with the picture that already emerged in Chapters 3 and 4.

Moving to country-level variables, volatility seems to be positively correlated with switching, as in Chapter 4. The more volatile the elections before a given legislative term, the higher the number of switchers. The number of parties, instead, when considered together with other variables, does not reach statistical significance, but at least, the sign of the variable is positive, in line with expectations.

Turning to institutional variables, results are generally opposite to the theoretical expectations and some of the findings from previous sections of this Chapter. The form of government does not show statistically significant coefficients, however, the predicted number of events are significant, as can be seen in Figure 5.5a, although confidence intervals are quite large[16]. In the previous chapter, I put forward the argument that semi-presidential regimes should be more subject to defections given that the government's survival is not dependent on the parliamentary majority. The bivariate analysis suggested that indeed parliamentary systems have a lower percentage of switchers. The regression, on the contrary, shows that on average,

[16]This might be due to the fact that certain categories have only few observations.

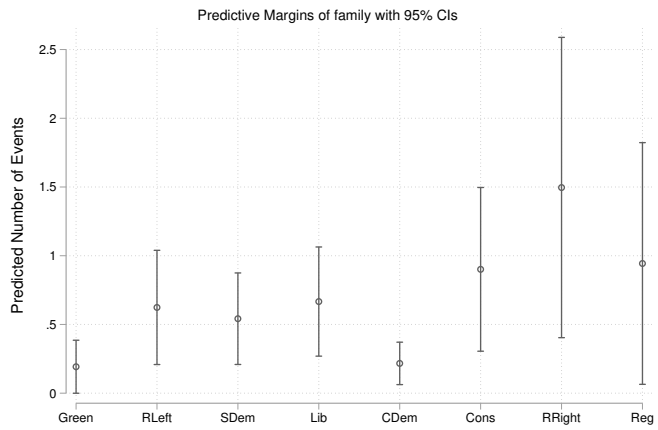


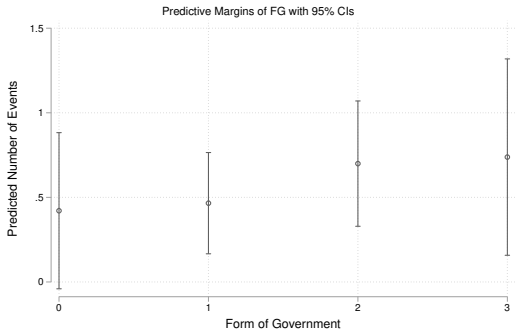
Figure 5.4: Predicted number of switchers for each party family

countries classified as classic and rationalised parliamentary systems have the highest predicted number of defectors.

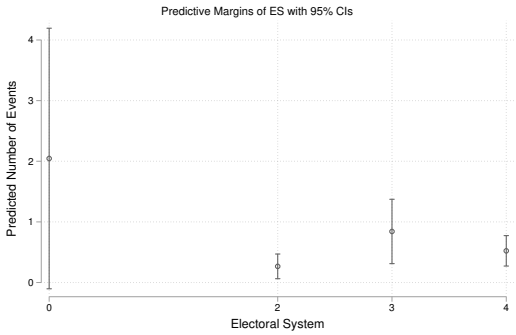
An electoral system that imposes higher costs on potential switchers is expected to have a fewer defectors. From Table 5.12, overall, this hypothesis seems to be confirmed, as compared to the category with lowest costs, all the other values of the index have a negative sign. However, as can also be seen in Figure 5.5b, the relationship is negative but not perfectly linear, as the lowest number of switchers is found for systems with a cost of 2 and not for those with maximum costs. This result is in line with what emerged in Section 5.3, where data already seemed not to be fully consistent with the theory.

Similarly, there is not a perfect negative relationship between the number of defections and restrictiveness of parliamentary regulation. As both Table 5.12 and Figure 5.5c show, the second most restrictive type of regulation (score equals 3) shows the highest coefficient, while the lowest number of defections is expected to be found when the index equals 2 or 4 (its maximum). Results were not different in Section 5.4, as only when France was excluded from the analysis, did the mean percentage of switchers decreased together with restrictiveness.

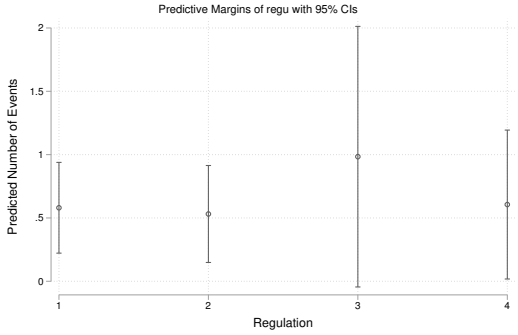
Given that the results for the three institutional variables are not very satisfactory, as an alternative I run an additional model in which I use the cumulative index measuring the total institutional costs that I presented in Table 5.10 (fourth column). The index (*Total Cost*) simply is the sum of the three institutional variables, as explained in Table 5.11. Theoretically the variable ranges between 0 and 11, but in practice observations take values from 3 to 10. The expectation is that the number of switchers should decrease for higher values of *Total Cost*. In order to test this hypothesis I run again a negative binomial regression with multilevel specification,



(a) Form of government



(b) Electoral System



(c) Parliamentary regulation

Figure 5.5: Predicted number of switchers for different institutional variables (95% CI)

substituting the three institutional variables with the index *Total Cost*. Results are presented in Table 5.13 (Model 2) and they tell us that the variable of interest does not reach statistical significance, even though the sign of the coefficient is - in line with the expectation - negative.

From the analysis carried out in Chapter 4, two variables seem to have a substantive impact on the number of defections, namely ideological extremism and volatility. These two variables kept their explanatory power also when institutional covariates where added. However, we could imagine that these features become even more important under specific institutional conditions. I explore this argument running two additional regressions in which I interact first the variable *Extreme* with the variable *Total Cost* (Model 3) and then the index *Volatility* with *Total Cost* (Model 4). Table 5.13 displays the results of these two models. None of the interaction terms is significant, still it is worth to spend a few words on discussing their direction.

When ideological extremism is considered together with institutional cost, the interaction coefficient is negative. This means that extreme parties tend to experience less switching when they are embedded in very restrictive institutional context. Said differently, ideological extremism induces defections only when the political system does not impose high cost on switchers. This relationship becomes clear when we look at the marginal effects, as shown in Figure 5.6a. The interaction is significant for the scores between 5 and 8 and we can see that the probability of experiencing defections become almost null when extreme parties operate in a context in which switching is more costly.

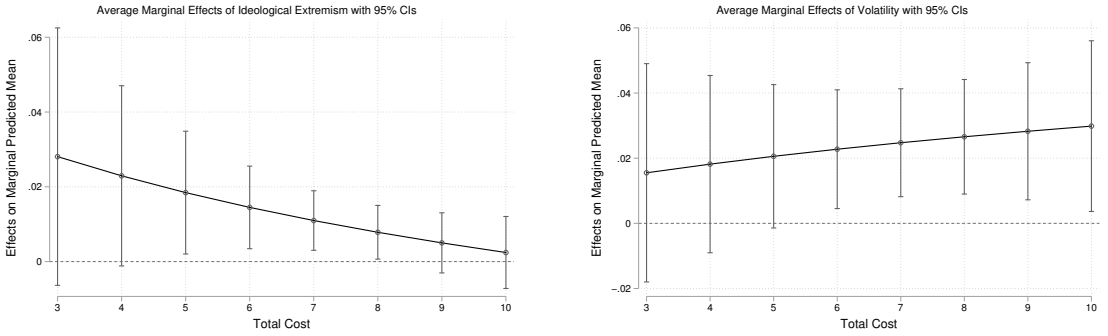
Concerning the interaction between volatility and institutional costs, the coefficient is positive, which implies that volatility increases the scope of defections *in spite of* a highly restrictive environment. As it can be seen in Figure 5.6b, the interaction term becomes significant when the cost score is above 6 and the probability of a defection increases for higher levels of volatility. This means that when a political system is de-institutionalised, then politicians will be more likely to switch, even if they face high costs. This result is noteworthy for two reasons. Firstly, it tells us that de-institutionalisation is probably the most important factor driving defections. Secondly, the positive interaction suggests there is very little that can be done in terms of policy to put a halt to defections when the party system is not structured. To put it differently, switching is a manifestation of political instability that can hardly be stopped unless the party system itself manages to re-structure.

To summarise, I can conclude that the relationship between the cost of switching imposed by institutions and the scope of defections is not as expected. This finding emerges from simple bivariate analysis (as in previous sections of this Chapter) but

Table 5.13: Results of additional negative binomial models of party switching (random effects)

VARIABLES	Model 2 *Total Cost*	Model 3 *Total Cost*Extreme*	Model 4 *Total Cost*Volatility*
Age	-0.010***	-0.010***	-0.010***
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Family (r.c. Social-Dem)			
Green	-0.952+	-0.922+	-0.931+
	(0.53)	(0.54)	(0.53)
Radical Left	0.023	0.019	0.025
	(0.35)	(0.35)	(0.35)
Liberal	0.192	0.186	0.188
	(0.32)	(0.32)	(0.32)
Chrisian-Dem	-0.916*	-0.905*	-0.920*
	(0.38)	(0.38)	(0.38)
Conservative	0.533	0.535	0.549
	(0.36)	(0.37)	(0.36)
Radical Right	1.022*	1.055**	1.022*
	(0.40)	(0.41)	(0.40)
Regionalis	0.467	0.480	0.487
	(0.48)	(0.49)	(0.48)
Delta Rile	-0.010+	-0.010*	-0.010+
	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.01)
Seats	-0.005***	-0.005***	-0.005***
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Govt (0-1)	0.234+	0.239+	0.226+
	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.14)
N parties	0.085+	0.076+	0.080+
	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Extreme	0.018***	0.050*	0.018***
	(0.00)	(0.02)	(0.00)
Total Cost	-0.039	0.037	-0.111
	(0.08)	(0.10)	(0.11)
Volatility	0.042***	0.042***	0.007
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.04)
Total Cost*Extreme		-0.005	
		(0.00)	
Total Cost*Volatility			0.005
			(0.00)
Constant	-5.308***	-5.816***	-4.749***
	(0.78)	(0.84)	(0.96)
Country	0.350+	0.351+	0.346+
	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.20)
Party	0.902***	0.912***	0.899***
	(0.21)	(0.21)	(0.21)
Alpha (Ln)	1.640***	1.636***	1.639***
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Observations	4,828	4,828	4,828
Number of countries	14	14	14
Number of parties	170	170	170
Wald chi2 (16)	108.8	110.8	109.7
Prob > chi2	0	0	0

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.1



(a) Extreme * Total Cost (interaction) (b) Volatility * Total Cost (interaction)

Figure 5.6: Marginal effects of two interaction terms with 95% CI (Model 3 and 4)

also when other covariates are considered. On the other hand, variables related to party features keep their explanatory power also when country-level variables are considered. At the same time, the exploratory analysis presented in Table 5.13, suggests that party features and institutional costs might interact with each other and the expectations might be more complicated that the hypotheses that I formulated and tested.

Still, there might be two main explanations for the fact that institutional variables did not return the expected results. First, the variance of institutional variables vis-à-vis party-level covariates might be sensibly lower, as institutional reforms are very infrequent, as well as the fact that most of the countries surveyed display similar designs. This argument might be helpful to explain the fact that some coefficients are not significant, and that standard errors are large, but it does not take us very far in understanding why the theory presented does not seem to work.

A second explanation might be related to something that I have already pointed out several times in the previous chapters. Results might be unsatisfactory because I have looked at the overall scope of switching without distinguishing between individual and collective types of defections. As mentioned in Chapters 1 and 2, the logic and calculations related to these two kinds of behaviour are fundamentally different, therefore, a variable might be a good predictor for one type of defections more than the other. For this reason it might be necessary to separate the analysis for solo and aggregate changes. It is exactly this that I will do in the next Chapter.

Chapter 6

The best conditions for turning coat

Institutions, parties and their impact on *individual* and *collective* switching

6.1 Introduction

Since the beginning of this work, I have underlined how important it is to consider individual and collective de-affiliations strategies separately given that they might be explained by different factors. However, in the previous chapters I collapsed together these two forms of switching and it might be that the variables that in the previous analysis appeared to be significantly associated with defecting in general might actually be more relevant for one form of switching than for the other. For instance, parliamentary regulations that forbid legislators from establishing new groups during a legislative term reduce the opportunities for collective changes, but do not put a halt to individual shifts. The objective of this chapter is, therefore, to explore how the variables analysed earlier perform when the two de-affiliation strategies are examined separately. The aim of this exercise is also to find an explanation to certain previous findings that seemed to be rather in contradiction with the expectations elaborated from the theory.

This chapter, completely devoted to the analysis of solo and collective switching, is structured as follows: I will first clarify the different expectations I have for the two types of defections and then I will test them statistically with two different statistical strategies, namely a multinomial model and a negative binomial model. The results of the chapter shed light on what are the ideal conditions under which the two different switching strategies take place.

6.2 Revising the hypotheses

The literature on party switching has not sufficiently explored the different dynamics of individual and collective defections (Kemahlıoğlu and Sayarı 2017). Scholars such as Heller and Mershon (2005, 2008), Desposato (2006), or O'Brien and Shomer (2013) have studied switching without distinguishing at all between these two re-affiliation strategies. In their analysis, therefore, whether a legislator changes alone or in group is irrelevant. What matters is whether MPs keep their party label or not, but the *quality* of the change is not examined. Other researchers, instead, have focused their attention only on the collective type of behaviour, like - for instance - Ceron (2015) who studies the determinants of factional breakaway or Ibenskas (2016) who explores the conditions favouring party mergers. To my knowledge, with the exception of the case study on Turkey from Kemahlıoğlu and Sayarı (2017) and the comparative work from Mershon and Shvetsova (2013)[1], no one else has tried to analyse defections taking into account the fundamental difference between splits/fusion and "party hopping", to use the words of Ágh (1999).

Up to this point I have not split my analysis of switching, because the goal was first and foremost to uncover the determinants of the overall phenomenon. However, some of the results of the previous chapters were not fully satisfactory and sometimes they contradict the theoretical framework. It is for this reason that I devote an entire section to distinguishing the effect that my explanatory variables have on the scope of these two strategies. I do not test the effect of additional variables, but only update, when necessary, the expectations put forward in Chapters 4 and 5. In other words, I do not develop a new set of hypotheses, but I revise those that I have already tested, when it is theoretically sound to believe that a factor has a different impact over aggregate and solo defections. In order to amend my hypothesis I rely on previous works that have explored the causes of splits and mergers.

In particular, according to Kemahlıoğlu and Sayarı (2017), the fundamental difference between the two strategies is that collective movements are most likely affected by policy-related factors, while solo defections are influenced by electoral calculations. This argument can be extended even further. In Chapter 2 I already mentioned that different motivations might be the sources of different types of defections. Specifically, I argued that individual switchers might be mainly driven by opportunism, and not only by electoral concerns, like assumed by Kemahlıoğlu and Sayarı (2017). At the same time, I assumed that collective changes might be mainly influenced by ideological motivations, similarly to what is suggested by Kemahlıoğlu

[1] Mershon and Shvetsova, however, only devote few pages of their book to the distinction between the two strategies, and they use it as a robustness check of their previous results.

and Sayarı (2017). Moreover, I expect that when the cost of defecting are very high, then most likely legislators will change party collectively, because by doing so, they share the burden of their choice. These arguments will guide the revision of my hypotheses.

6.2.1 Party features

Party age is the only variable that I do not expect to have a different effect over the scope of individual and collective switching. Indeed, Ceron (2015) makes very clear that older parties have a smaller chance of suffering a fractional breakaway, because their loyalty ties are more developed. Similarly, according to Ibenskas (2016), mergers are more frequent between younger parties because voter partisanship, a factor that might raise the cost of a fusion, increases with age. The same arguments can also be applied to solo switchers, as older parties can rely on greater value infusion and routinisation. Therefore, single MPs might have a deeply-rooted sense of unity which makes them more likely to stick to their party even in the event of conflict. Overall, we can say that a lower party institutionalisation reduces the cost of both types of *exit*.

In Chapter 4 I discussed and found evidences that leftist parties are less subject to switching in general because, according to Damgaard (1997) and Gauja (2013b), they usually promote a partisan representational style, while groups from the centre-right are more likely to emphasise a trustee style. In other words, legislators from leftist parties should be more attached to their group and advocate for its primacy. However, Eubank, Gangopadahay, and Weinberg (1996) underline that party members have two objects of loyalty: the party and its ideology. If legislators are devoted to principles more than to the organisation, they might be willing to *exit* their party when (they feel that) these beliefs are under revision/threat. Loyalty to ideology, therefore, might encourage switching rather than decreasing it, even within leftist parties. For the specific representational style promoted but also for the risk of conflict over what is the "real" ideology, I assume that when a left-wing party witnesses switching it will be ideologically driven, because in any other case legislators would put the will of their party first. Assuming that ideological concerns are at the origin of collective defections, then we can expect that leftist parties will suffer from collective changes, rather than individual movements. Conversely, conservative as well as liberal parties should be more subject to solo changes, in line with the trustee representational style of their MPs. The same argument can also be interpreted in terms of cost of *exit*: we can expect that leftist parties, by promoting a greater attachment to the organisation and ideology, increase the cost of defecting. In order

to overcome these higher costs, therefore, legislators from left-leaning parties will most likely change party collectively, rather than individually.

A similar argument applies to ideologically extreme parties. The desire to remain faithful to the true and original ideology of the party might lead to heated debates between different factions and, in case of unresolved conflicts, to a split. For example, many scholars have stressed the fissiparous nature of radical left parties (March and Mudde 2005) which is due to rifts over leadership, doctrine, and tactics according to Harmel and Robertson (1985). For this reason, I argue that parties located at the extreme sides of the political space will suffer more collective splits rather than individual *exits*.

Like the previous two characteristics, ideological stability is also mainly linked to collective switching strategies. My expectation in Chapter 4 was that parties with stable platforms experience more defections because these parties show little tolerance for divergent opinions and open discussion, which may result in a more rigid ideological position. This rigidity might induce critical factions to leave the party altogether. In other words, an excessively stable ideological position induces group exit rather than individual defections.

The last party feature to be discussed is governing status, that is, whether the party is in government or opposition. I hypothesised that governing parties should be more volatile because, as argued by Sieberer (2006) and Rahat (2007), making decision on divisive issues might generate conflicts that translate into less voting unity and more defections. As Bale and Dunphy (2011) explain, ruling parties must accept a lot of compromises, internal tensions and in the most unfortunate cases, even breakups. Additionally, according to the scheme developed by Kemahlıoğlu and Sayarı (2017), conflicts over policies are the source of collective switching. For these reasons, I expect that parties in government will mostly witness collective types of defections. In contrast, while opposition parties might not experience frictions over policies, they have to face the dissatisfaction of office-seeking MPs. In fact, parties in government have more posts to distribute among legislators and they can better server their ambition for career progression (O'Brien and Shomer 2013). In short, MPs' personal interests are normally fulfilled when they belong to the governing majority rather than in opposition. Since I have argued that individual switching is most likely driven by opportunism, then I expect that parties in opposition will witness more individual switching than their counterparts in government.

6.2.2 Party system features

Among party system characteristics that need to be analysed there are fragmentation and institutionalisation (measured as volatility). A greater number of parties should be an incentive for individual switching rather than for collective movements. In a fragmented political space the opportunities to establish a new party are fewer, given that issues and - when existing - cleavages are already addressed by the other parties (Harmel and Robertson 1985). In other words, if the political system is already crowded, there are less chances for a splinter party to be successful and the cost of *exit* is higher. Fragmentation, therefore, should reduce the scope of collective defections, simply because there is ideologically and electorally less space to be occupied[2]. For potential solo switchers, on the contrary, the presence of several parties might represent an additional incentive to change group, as it will be easier to find one that is ideologically similar. This rationale is very similar to the argument that I presented in Chapter 4 about the relationship between fragmentation and switching in general.

Concerning institutionalisation, I do not have different expectations for collective and individual switching. This argument has already been put forward in the literature. Following Chiaramonte and Emanuele (2018), we know that a system is poorly institutionalised when patterns of party competition are unstable and unpredictable over time. Because of these characteristics, according to Kreuzer and Pettai (2009), institutionalisation is the one best predictor for switching of all kinds. The two authors argue that in under-institutionalised polities, switching does not only occur more frequently, but also all different types of defections will be used[3]. The lack of institutionalisation lowers the cost of *exit* of both kinds.

6.2.3 Political institutions

According to O'Brien and Shomer (2013), legislators in parliamentary systems act in a more party-centred manner compared to MPs in presidential and semi-presidential contexts. This argument finds support in the work of - for example - Bowler, D. M. Farrell, and Katz (1999), Carey (2007) and Diermeier and Feddersen (1998b). According to this argument, countries with a parliamentary form of government, then,

[2]Clearly, this argument applies mainly to party splits. Fragmentation might not prevent other forms of collective switching strategies, such as mergers or a group change between two already-existing parties. But in the interests of simplicity and because the goal is to compare the influence of fragmentation over individual versus collective switching, I generalise the argument to all forms of group changes.

[3]In their framework, Kreuzer and Pettai distinguish between coordinated switching that generates "party fissions" and un-coordinate defections that are labelled as "party hopping" (p. 268).

should not only have more united parties but also less switching (Mershon and Shvetsova 2013). But can we expect that various forms of government are differently affected by individual and aggregate de-affiliation strategies? My argument is that indeed, collective forms of switching will prevail when the the link between government stability/survival and the parliamentary majority is tighter.

There are two reasons to support my hypothesis. The first concerns MPs' behaviour: if it is true, as the literature suggests, that legislators in parliamentary systems behave in a more party-centred way, then for the same argument presented for party families, we should assume that MPs will switch only for ideological reasons, which means, collectively. This argument gains further support if we think about the cost of defecting in a parliamentary context, which is - as I suggest in Chapter 5 - higher when the link between the assembly and cabinet survival is tighter. Acting together is the only way of lowering the substantive cost of *exit* and sharing the burden of the consequences of such a decision. Moreover, the threat to the stability of government is greater when more legislators change affiliation at the same time. On the contrary, in presidential systems, defections do not really jeopardise cabinet stability, therefore I expect that both forms of switching will take place equally. This argument finds support in the work by Mershon and Shvetsova (2013), who find that presidentialism increases the probability of both solo and mass moves.

When it comes to the impact of the electoral system over the probability of individual versus collective switching, the hypothesis I put forward in Chapter 5 needs to be profoundly revised. I argued that candidate visibility is a factor that reduces the probability of defections in general, because voters are better able to sanction switchers for their behaviour. For this reason, I suggested that in electoral systems characterised by majoritarian formulas, open lists and small districts, switching should be less likely to occur. However, in the literature there are also scholars who claim that more visibility does not reduce switching, but on the contrary, induces it. Candidate-centred systems give candidates personal electoral resources and they can expect to still be supported by their voters even under a new party label (O'Brien and Shomer 2013; Klein 2016). In other words, under more personalised rules, potential switchers can expect not to be sanctioned, but rather rewarded for their choice to change affiliation. Therefore, electoral systems fostering candidate visibility are the ideal institutional arrangement for individual switchers, as we can imagine that the cost of defecting will be lower. Collective defectors, instead, face lower costs under close-list proportional systems. As argued by Ceron (2015), factions are more likely to leave their party under these kind of electoral rules because the party leadership

Table 6.1: Expected effect of variables of interest over the scope of individual and collective defections

Variable	*Individual*	*Collective*
Party-level:		
Age	✓	✓
Family		
Left-leaning		✓
Right-leaning	✓	
Ideological Extremism		✓
Ideological stability		✓
Governing status		
Majority		✓
Opposition	✓	
Party-system level:		
Fragmentation	✓	
Volatility	✓	✓
Institutions:		
Form of government		
Semi-presidential	✓	
Parliamentary		✓
Electoral System		
High candidate visibility	✓	
Low candidate visibility		✓
Regulation		
High restrictive	✓	
Little restrictive		✓

controls selection procedures and can sanction dissenting factions. For this reason, the likelihood of a breakaway is higher.

Finally, I have analysed several dimensions of parliamentary regulations. Most of the features taken into account clearly speak against collective changes. For instance, the ban on establishing new groups within a legislative term severely reduces the opportunities for a factional breakaway or a fusion between two parties. Similarly, numeric and political requirements make the founding of a group more difficult and therefore, raise the bar for rebel legislators who want to create a new political subject. Indeed, when new groups are difficult/impossible to establish, the only possible form of collective switching is the move of a faction of legislators between two already-existing parties. This effect is further strengthened when MPs can acquire the status of an independent. Hence, overall, the expectation is that under very restrictive parliamentary regulations, legislators will mainly adopt solo switching strategies, because the cost of a collective *exit* is too high.

Table 6.1 summarises the different expectations that I put forwards in the previous paragraphs for all the variables taken into account. For each covariate I indicate whether I expect that one de-affiliation strategy will be prevalent for greater values or certain categories of that variable. When I do not foresee different effects for individual or collective switching, variables display a check mark under both columns.

6.3 Statistical analysis and results

The expectations formulated in the previous sections look at the prevalence of one switching strategy over the other. The hypotheses of this section, therefore, are not about the scope of switching (like in the previous chapters), but rather on whether parties predominantly experience collective changes rather than individual, or the opposite. The object of study is therefore different and - as a consequence - its operationalistion also needs to be modified accordingly. As explained in Chapter 1, I classified each defection based on whether it occurred in coordination with fellow MPs or singularly. Coordinated defections occur when at least three (five in larger assemblies, like in Germany, France and Italy) switchers leave the same party and take the same new label within the space of a week. In other words, when switchers share the groups of departure and arrival, then they were classified as collective breakaways.

After having classified each inter-party movement, I then calculated the overall number of individual and collective defections per party in a given year, together - of course - with the overall number of changes. Still, to only look at the number of the two types of defections does not tell us whether one form is more prevalent than the other. Actually, comparing only absolute numbers can be quite misleading, as collective switches are by definition numerous. In order to measure the prevalent form of switching for each party, I calculated the share of solo changes over the total number of defections. In a second step, I created another variable that takes value 0 when no legislators changed affiliation, 1 if the share of individual switches is above 50% of the total number of defections, and 2 when the share of individual defections is below 50% (that is, collective changes are prevalent). The variable obtained (*SwitchCat*) is nominal, that is it has unordered categories and its distribution is displayed in figure E.1. Most of the observations see no switches at all, around 12.5% of cases are subject predominantly solo defections and only 2.5% mostly collective. Even if the variable is skewed, it has the advantage of measuring quite precisely the predominant de-affiliation strategy adopted by defectors from a given party.

Given the nature of this new dependent variable, I run a multinomial logistic regression as recommended by Long and Freese (2006) and I include all the variables employed in Section 5.6. While a multilevel specification would be recommended given the nested nature of the data, Stata does not allow to directly estimate multinomial logistic models with random effects. Therefore, I had to run a simple multinomial regression with clustered standard errors at the party level. Multinomial models fits simultaneously separate binary logistic regressions for each pair of outcome categories but one, that will be used as reference category. Since I am interested in the comparison between individual versus collective switching, I decide to use the second category (prevalence of solo changes, coded as 1) as the base outcome[4]. Moreover, the reference category for the variable party *Family* is no longer Social-Democratic, but Conservative, as my expectations imply a direct comparison between, on the one side Communist and Social-Democratic parties, and on the other, Conservative and Radical Right parties.

The output of the multinomial logistic regression is presented in Table 6.2. The column of interest is the second one, as it reports the coefficients for the category of predominantly collective switches compared to predominantly individual. Overall, what emerges from the analysis is that most of the predictions are confirmed, while other hypotheses have to be rejected. Starting with party age, I did not expect a different impact of this variable between the two forms of switching. According to the results of the model, older parties are indeed less subject to any form of defection, but in particular age seems to reduce collective switching. However, in more substantive terms, the analysis of marginal effects (Table 6.3) displays that there is almost no difference between the two categories: A standard deviation increase in age (about 36 years), reduces the probability of a party experiencing collective switching by 1.1 percentage points and by 0.8 percentage points for single defectors (albeit the coefficient for the base outcome category is not significant).

According to my hypothesis, ideologically extreme parties should mainly suffer from collective breakaways. The analysis supports this argument: in the regression results, the coefficient of the variable is positive and significant. However, the effect is rather small: one standard deviation increase (around 13 points on a scale from 0 to 100) in the extent of extremism increases the probability of group defection by 0.6 percentage points, while the effect is null for individual switches. On the other hand, expectations cannot be confirmed for ideological instability: the coefficient fails to reach statistical significance, and it shows a negative sign, that is instability reduces

[4]Perhaps, from a purely statistical point of view, it would be better to use 0 as the reference category, given that it has the highest number of observations and maximises statistical efficiency. However, I selected a different base outcome because of the theoretical reasons explained above.

Table 6.2: Results of multinomial logistic regression of different categories of party switching (base outcome category: individual defections)

VARIABLES	no switches 0 *All countries*	collective 2 *All countries*	no switches 0 *No IT*	collective 2 *No IT*
Age	0.003+	-0.022***	0.002	-0.023***
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Extreme	-0.001	0.022*	-0.000	0.021*
	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.01)
Delta Rile	0.002	-0.005	0.008	**0.011**
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Govt (0-1)	0.038	0.437+	-0.092	0.298
	(0.13)	(0.26)	(0.13)	(0.32)
Family (r.c. *Cons*)				
Green	1.331**	-0.966	1.221*	-0.822
	(0.45)	(1.20)	(0.51)	(1.24)
Communist/Rleft	1.016***	0.672	0.739**	0.537
	(0.23)	(0.49)	(0.27)	(0.59)
Social-Dem	0.434*	0.319	0.444*	**-0.040**
	(0.21)	(0.39)	(0.22)	(0.42)
Liberals	0.472*	-0.093	0.435*	**0.044**
	(0.22)	(0.50)	(0.21)	(0.53)
Christian-Dem	1.351***	-0.560	1.389***	-1.001
	(0.27)	(0.72)	(0.30)	(0.90)
RRight	-0.015	-0.169	-0.163	-0.130
	(0.27)	(0.50)	(0.30)	(0.56)
Regionalist	1.047**	0.521	0.970*	0.359
	(0.36)	(0.62)	(0.44)	(0.96)
Seat	-0.009***	-0.004*	-0.009***	-0.005*
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
N parties	0.015	-0.041	-0.041***	0.001
	(0.03)	(0.07)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Volatility	-0.035***	0.030+	0.030	-0.089
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.04)	(0.08)
Form of govt (r.c. *Split semi-pres.*)				
Unified semi-pres.	0.147	0.679	0.034	0.746
	(0.36)	(0.93)	(0.35)	(0.97)
Classic parliamentary	-0.680	0.941	-0.540	0.839
	(0.45)	(0.87)	(0.49)	(0.93)
Rationalized parl.	-0.252	1.980*	-0.073	2.469*
	(0.53)	(0.97)	(0.53)	(1.08)
Electoral System(1-4)				
2.	3.033***	0.485	-	-
	(0.71)	(0.86)	-	-
3.	2.199***	0.917	-0.660*	**-0.385**
	(0.71)	(0.79)	(0.22)	(0.61)
4.	2.816***	1.426+	-0.163	0.921+
	(0.71)	(0.79)	(0.23)	(0.50)
Regulation (1-4)				
2.	-0.166	-1.406***	-0.351+	-1.050*
	(0.18)	(0.36)	(0.20)	(0.41)
3.	-1.258***	-0.604	-1.143***	-0.312
	(0.29)	(0.45)	(0.32)	(0.53)
4.	-0.104	-0.395	-0.229	-0.244
	(0.22)	(0.41)	(0.23)	(0.46)
Constant	0.265	-3.183*	3.301***	-2.047
	(0.89)	(1.53)	(0.61)	(1.36)
Observations	4,828	4,828	4,371	4,371

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table 6.3: Marginal effects of some key explanatory variables (all other variables held at their mean, p-value in parenthesis)

		0 *no switches*	1 *individual*	2 *collective*
Age	+SD	0.019	-0.008	-0.011
		(0.00)	(0.10)	(0.00)
Extreme	+SD	-0.006	0.000	0.006
		(0.32)	(0.94)	(0.02)
Delta Rile	+SD	0.003	-0.002	-0.001
		(0.58)	(0.74)	(0.48)
Govt	1 vs 0	-0.002	-0.005	0.007
		(0.87)	(0.66)	(0.14)
N parties	+SD	0.005	-0.003	-0.002
		(0.50)	(0.67)	(0.39)
Volatility	+SD	-0.027	0.019	0.007
		(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)

the scope of collective changes vis-à-vis solo movements, which is opposite to what was stated in the theoretical section. Parties in government are - as predicted - more likely to suffer from collective switches. The variable has a positive and significant coefficient which means that compared to opposition parties, being in government makes groups more vulnerable to aggregate defections. The marginal effects are coherent with the result (the probability of a collective defection is 0.5 percentage points higher for governing parties, while the likelihood of single defectors is 0.007 times lower), even though they are not significant.

The last party-level characteristics to be analysed is family. The results of the regression suggest that Conservative parties tend to have a lower probability of group switching than the following three families: Communist, Social-Democratic and Regionalist. None of the coefficient, however, is significant, but from an analysis of marginal effects, it seems that the argument presented in the theoretical section overall finds support in the data. Table E.1 reports the marginal effects for each pair of families for the three different outcomes. From a comparison between Conservative and Radical Right parties vis-à-vis Social-Democratic and Communist parties, we can see that the former have a higher (and significant) chance of experiencing solo movements. Specifically, the Conservative and Radical Right families have a probability 0.10 times higher than the Radical Left of losing single legislators, while the coefficient is slightly smaller (0.05) compared to Social-Democratic parties. In absolute terms, the Radical Right family is confirmed as being the most subject to individual switching, because in every comparison it shows a higher predicted probability for this outcome. On the other hand, the Social Democratic family has

the highest likelihood of factional breakaways[5]. As has already emerged in Chapter 4, the Green family remains the least affected by switching also when using an alternative dependent variable: all the other families have a greater probability of witnessing both forms of switching (all coefficients from marginal effects are positive for outcome 1 and 2).

Turning to systemic variables, fragmentation does not reach statistical significance and - additionally - results are contrary to expectations, as it seems that having a greater number of parties reduces both forms of switching. Volatility, instead, as predicted, is positively correlated with both kinds of switching, and not only to collective instances. Specifically, for a standard deviation increase in electoral volatility (around 6.5 points), the probabilities of individual and collective defections grow respectively by 0.02 and 0.01. The difference between the two outcomes is not very large and, therefore, the hypothesis is confirmed.

For institutional variables, from a statistical point of view, most of the coefficients fail to reach significance, similarly to the findings of the pooled model at the end of Chapter 5. Yet, the results deserve a comment, especially because some of the marginal effects are significant (see Table E.2). I expected that parliamentary forms of government would experience more collective switching, compared to semi-presidential systems. Table 6.2 shows that indeed the probability of group defections is higher in countries with a parliamentary form of government. Marginal effects return a very similar picture, as classic and rationalized parliamentarisms are more likely to witness collective changes (by 1.5 and 3.3 percentage points respectively, both significant). The case of a semi-presidential system under a unified majority, instead, is mostly subject to individual defections, given that in every pair comparison the coefficients are positive. Hence, we can conclude that the hypothesis related to the role of the form of government finds almost full support in the data.

In the theoretical section I explained how under electoral systems that foster candidate visibility, legislators should prefer to switch individually. This argument does not hold against the results of my statistical analysis[6]. The coefficients of the multinomial regression return the opposite picture. Electoral systems under which candidate visibility is at its maximum have the highest probability of witnessing collective defections compared to individual ones. Marginal effects confirm this result: in all the pair comparisons, systems with minimum personal visibility have a greater probability of witnessing solo defections. Even more interestingly, because

[5]It is true that the according to the marginal effect Conservative parties have a 0.001 higher probability of suffering from collective defection, but the effect is not statistically significant and, hence, the overall argument seems to hold.

[6]Recall that higher values of the variable *Electoral Systems* correspond to greater visibility.

it is completely contrary to expectations, is the fact that systems with maximum candidate visibility display the highest chances of group breakaways.

This finding is particularly noteworthy because it contradicts the argument that personal electoral resources are a driving force for switchers (Nikolenyi 2011; Klein 2016). According to my results, when politicians compete by relying on their personal reputation, they do not have a higher tendency to leave their party. As underlined by Heller and Mershon (2005), a defection can be a stain on candidates' reputation and can result in severe costs to potential defectors. The only way to overcome these costs seems to be a collective switch that helps single legislators to share the burden of their choice, and perhaps to persuade the electorate of its goodness more effectively. On the contrary, legislators can better pursue their personal interest when they have less electoral visibility. The fact that candidates do not have to fight personally to get votes, allows them to switch without the need to explain their reasons to voters. As a consequence, a defection becomes much more of a tool to attain goals, which might bring advantages only to the switchers themselves.

Finally, according to the hypothesis on the role of parliamentary regulation, we should expect solo changes to be prevalent when rules are more restrictive. The results of the analysis suggest that this argument is correct. As we can see in Table 6.2, the probability of collective defections decreases the more limiting regulations are. At the same time, marginal effects (Table E.2) clearly show that the probability of individual defections grows for more limiting rules. It must also be stressed that the probability of single defections does not raise linearly. In fact, cases with the second most restrictive regulations show the highest likelihood of solo defections. It is also true that most of the coefficients are not statistically significant, therefore we cannot be fully sure that the differences between categories are not the result of randomness. However, when also taking into account also the low variation of this variable, overall the argument seems to hold.

6.3.1 Robustness checks

To check the robustness of my results, I perform a similar analysis using a different dependent variable, which counts the number of individual switchers and the number of collective switchers. Since the dependent variables are two, I run two separate negative binomial models, with the number of seats as the exposure variable (see Chapter 4 for more details). The model specification is the same as used for the analysis run in Section 5.6. The goal is to check whether certain features exert a different effect over the two types of switching, as predicted by my theoretical argument. Given that the scope of solo changes is larger, we should not compare

the magnitude of the effect across models, but mainly look at whether the signs of the coefficients differ between them.

Results are displayed in Table 6.4 and overall they tell us that, indeed, the two phenomena are affected differently by (most of) the explanatory factors. In more detail, we can see that the Radical Right is the party family with the highest predicted number of individual changes, followed by Regionalist and Conservative families. In contrast, the Communist family has the greatest number of collective defections, followed by the Radical Right, Regionalist and Social-Democratic families. This finding is coherent with the theory and with what emerged from the multinomial regression.

Extremism is positively correlated with both forms of defections, but the coefficient is sensibly larger for collective changes, as predicted by my hypothesis. An analysis of marginal effect shows that a unit increase in ideological extremisms brings 0.18 more collective switchers and only 0.02 additional individual defectors. The coefficient of the variable that measures governing status does not reach statistical significance, and it is positive for both types of defections and not only for collective de-affiliation strategies, as emerged in the multinomial model. Regarding ideological instability, the coefficient is negative and significant only for individual changes, as posited in the theory.

Looking instead at systemic variables, volatility is positively associated with both kinds of switching, as predicted, even though the effect appears larger for collective changes. Fragmentation, instead, is significant only for individual changes and - in line with my argument - it is positive, that is the number of solo defections increases when the number of parties is larger. Conversely, the number of collective defections should decrease in more fragmented party systems, given that the coefficient is negative, albeit not statistically significant.

Turning to institutional features, several findings are noteworthy. First of all, my theoretical argument about the electoral system does not hold, as was already suggested by the multinomial logistic regression. Indeed, the number of solo switches decreases in systems with higher candidate visibility (even though in a non-linear fashion, but that coefficients are all significant). On the contrary, more candidate-centred systems are related to more numerous instances of collective changes (and the relationship looks linear, even thought coefficients are not significant). While in opposition with my theoretical expectation, the fact that I get the same results using two different dependent variables and two different statistical models, reinforces the argument that the cost imposed by highly personalised electoral system can only be

Table 6.4: Results of negative binomial models of party switching (collective and individual)

VARIABLES	Model A1 individual	Model A2 collective
Age	-0.004+	-0.042***
	(0.00)	(0.01)
Family (r.c. *Cons*)		
Green	-1.017*	-2.582
	(0.50)	(1.87)
Radical Left	-0.745*	0.965
	(0.34)	(1.28)
Social-Democratic	-0.566+	0.205
	(0.30)	(1.09)
Liberal	-0.116	-0.092
	(0.30)	(1.11)
Christian-Democratic	-0.964**	-1.917
	(0.35)	(1.35)
Radical Right	0.822*	0.747
	(0.32)	(1.48)
Regionalist	0.104	1.055
	(0.46)	(1.55)
Delta Rile	-0.011*	-0.012
	(0.00)	(0.02)
Extreme	0.007+	0.055*
	(0.00)	(0.02)
Seat	-0.004***	-0.001
	(0.00)	(0.01)
Govt (0-1)	0.089	0.690
	(0.11)	(0.63)
Volatility	0.025***	0.105*
	(0.01)	(0.04)
N parties	0.091*	-0.007
	(0.04)	(0.15)
Electoral System (1-4)		
2.	-1.830***	-0.762
	(0.48)	(2.15)
3.	-1.055**	0.345
	(0.33)	(1.84)
4.	-1.515***	1.182
	(0.41)	(2.10)
Form of govt (r.c. *Split semi-pres.*)		
Unified semi-pres.	0.417	-0.129
	(0.36)	(2.18)
Classic parliam.	0.923*	0.217
	(0.42)	(2.33)
Rationalised parliam.	0.767	1.075
	(0.54)	(2.53)
Regulation (1-4)		
2.	0.155	-1.884+
	(0.38)	(1.10)
3.	0.565	0.093
	(0.52)	(1.53)
4.	0.064	-0.728
	(0.48)	(1.31)
Constant	-5.198***	-7.473*
	(0.70)	(3.40)
Country	0.188	0.455
	(0.13)	(0.78)
Party	0.613***	4.392*
	(0.16)	(2.09)
Alpha (Ln)	0.504***	4.334***
	(0.11)	(0.15)
Observations	4,828	4,828
Number of countries	14	14
Number of parties	170	170
Wald chi2 (23)	131.7	34.93
Prob > chi2	0	0.0529

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.1

overcome with an aggregate defection, because for single legislators it might be too risky to do so alone.

Restrictive parliamentary regulations should be correlated with a lower number of collective defections. This argument again finds support in the data, as only two out of the three coefficients from the variable *Regulation* are negative. Moreover, the relationship is not perfectly linear, as observations with the most limiting parliamentary rules have the second smallest coefficient. So even though overall the argument seems to hold, the relationship is not as directly proportional as imagined. When it comes to individual switching, instead, it seems that its scope, in line with the theory, increases for middle categories of regulation, but then it becomes smaller for the most restrictive instances. The fact that the number of solo changes becomes smaller suggests that, overall, highly limiting regulations tend to witness very little switching of any kind.

Finally, as predicted by the theory, parliamentary systems witness a greater number of collective defections than semi-presidential systems, still, I do not find that the latter are correlated with a higher pervasiveness of single defections. On the contrary, both classic and rationalised parliamentary systems have positive and larger coefficients than the other two forms of government. Nonetheless, like in the previous negative binomial regression, the variable does not reach statistical significance (expect for one coefficient).

To summarise, it seems that most of the findings obtained using a multinomial specification also hold when a different dependent variable is employed. In particular, results are confirmed for the effect of the following variables: party family, ideological extremism, fragmentation, volatility, electoral system and regulations. Conversely, the effect of variables such as governing status, and form or government cannot be confirmed as they are not statistically significant and, in a couple of instances, opposite to the theoretical predictions.

There is another question that needs to be addressed before validating the results of the multinomial logistic model: how much does Italy and its very high switching levels drive these findings? In order to answer this question, I run the same multinomial logistic regression excluding Italy from the analysis. Results are displayed in Table 6.2 and, as we can see, the majority of the previous findings seem to hold even when Italy is discarded. Most of the variables show comparable effects (same sign and magnitude), even though some coefficients are no longer significant as in the first model. However, there are also some substantive differences. The coefficients that show the opposite sign compared to the first model are highlighted in bold. The most relevant difference concerns party families and in particular the

case of Social-Democratic parties which appear to be less subject to collective defections than Conservative parties. This is not surprising given the troubled history of the Italian left. At the same time, Communist parties seem to still have a greater chance of suffering group breakaways than the Conservatives. This means that the argument presented in the theoretical section has not been completely undermined. Interestingly enough, when Italy is excluded, Liberal parties seem to also be more prone to experiencing aggregate defections.

Another difference concerns the effect of ideological instability, whose coefficient is still not significant, but at least, without Italy, it shows a sign coherent with expectations (that is, parties with very stable platforms are more likely to see group defections). Finally, the only other variable that shows an opposite effect compared to the first model is the electoral system. Countries that ensure medium-high visibility are more likely to suffer from individual switches than collective, in line with the theory, even though the relationship reverses for the following category (highest candidate visibility), as was also true for the full model.

6.4 Chapter conclusions

What have we learnt from this chapter? By separately analysing collective and individual switching strategies, we have seen that these two forms of switching are not only theoretically different, but they are also affected by different sets of factors. In other words, the most important finding of this chapter is that we should study switching by keeping the two forms of defection separate.

The fact that the two types of switching are correlated differently with the covariates of interest helps to explain why some results from the analysis performed in the previous chapters were not always consistent with the theory presented. On the contrary, we have seen that the same factor can have a positive impact on the scope of collective switching, while reducing the probability of single defections. This is, for instance, the case of the electoral systems and specifically candidate visibility, which is negatively correlated with solo changes, but, at the same time, reinforces the likelihood of aggregate forms of switching. Similarly, we have seen that party families are exposed to different types of switching, with left-leaning parties more subject to splits and mergers, in accordance with their "fissiparous nature" (March and Mudde 2005). In the reverse, Conservative and Radical Right parties are generally more volatile, but are particularly subject to single defections. Among the variables that have a dissimilar effect on the two switching strategies are also ideological extremism

Table 6.5: Summary of the conditions associated with the prevalence of individual or collective types of switching

Individual switching	*Collective switching*
Young party	Young party
Centrist parties	Extremist party
Opposition party	Governing party
Radical Right party	Social-democratic party
Highly fragmented party system	Little fragmented party systems
Volatile elections	Volatile elections
Semi-presidential system	Parliamentary system
Low candidate visibility	High candidate visibility
Highly restictive regulations	Little restrictive regulations

and instability, governing status, parliamentary regulation restrictiveness and, to a partial extent, the form of government.

There are only two features that, instead, exert the same influence over the two kinds of switching, namely party age and electoral volatility, which are used as proxies for party and party system institutionalisation. This result is in line with what has been argued by Kreuzer and Pettai (2009), who explain how a lack of stability leads to greater chances to witness of both party splits and party hopping. This is a noteworthy result because it tells us that institutionalisation both at the party level and at the systemic level is one of the main factors affecting the scope of switching. If we were to reduce this phenomenon, therefore, a stabilisation of political parties and their interactions would be absolutely necessary.

Table 6.5 summarises the characteristics that are associated with the two types of switching. Variables, such as fragmentation and ideological instability, whose effect was found to be not significant both in the regression model and in the analysis of marginal effects, were excluded.

The most crucial result of this chapter is therefore that when we study switching we should not only look at its presence or its scope, but also and foremost at the *nature* of the changes. By looking at the *quality* of switching, the results of my analysis suggest that not only do party-level characteristics matter, but some institutional designs do as well. Hence, if other works do not find a significant effect of institutional variables, it might be due to the fact that researchers have not distinguished between these two forms of switching. However, this chapter indicates that parties as well as countries are affected by different types of defections, based on their characteristics. These features, as summarised in Table 6.5, can be seen as

the ideal conditions under which individual and collective defections are more likely to occur. The fact that these conditions affect not only the quantity but also and especially the quality of inter-party movement, also has important implications also in terms of policy making. Indeed, a hypothetical regulation aimed at reducing the episodes of defections might produce results only for individual changes, but not on aggregate movements or vice versa (on this see, for instance, the work done by Nikolenyi (2017) on the Israeli anti-defection law that has changed the modality of defections but not their presence).

Chapter 7

Final Considerations

This work had three different motivations. The first, simply, was to satisfy an intellectual curiosity, by analysing a phenomenon that has rarely has been studied in depth and, above all, comparatively. By collecting a unique data set of all the inter-party defections that occurred in a sample of 14 Western European countries, I was first of all able to *describe* how party switching has evolved over time and the patterns that each country has followed. In other words, the first main achievement of this work was to answer the very simple question about *how much* switching there has been in Western Europe in the last 70 years. To my knowledge, there is no other study that is equally extensive (especially on the temporal dimension) and homogeneous[1]. Chapter 3 in particular has shown how an initial phase of instability in the 1950s has been followed by almost 50 years of stabilisation, while recently the scope of inter-party movements has been increasing again.

The second objective of this thesis was to explore what the determinants of switching might be. I did not analyse the decision to switch from an individual level perspective. Hence, this work did not try to answer the question of why a single legislator would defect. Rather, the questions addressed were "why would a party lose legislators?" and "why do countries display different levels of switching?". In brief, only inter-party and inter-country variances were considered in the present work. More specifically, the analysis focused on the connection between switching and party features (Chapter 4) or institutional designs (Chapter 5). I argued in my theoretical framework that party features affect the so-called cost of *voice*, while political institutions influence the cost of *exit*, that is, to switch. From Chapter 4 we learnt that, as expected, switching is usually triggered by an excessive cost of *voice*.

[1]Other studies, like for instance the one by O'Brien and Shomer (2013), analyse countries at very different points in time, while other researchers, such as Heller and Mershon (2009), compare democratic and authoritarian countries.

Whenever politicians cannot express their dissatisfaction, they are more likely to change party. The statistical analysis showed that two factors exert a particularly strong effect over the scope of the phenomenon. On the one hand, ideologically extreme parties are sensibly more likely to experience defections compared to centrist parties. On the other hand, party systems characterised by high electoral volatility are also more volatile at the parliamentary level.

Results from Chapter 5, however, were not fully consistent with the theory. In fact, switching does not only occur where it is less costly and, at same time, its pervasiveness is not greater when defecting costs are lower. From the analysis, it seems that the political (and contingent) factors are more important and that switching is the output of party instability, rather than stemming from the institutional context. Still, a restrictive environment might be helpful to avoid that switching becomes even more widespread in phases of greater dis-unity.

The fact that especially institutional variables did not seem to be correlated with switching in the expected manner, was the motivation to carry out a separated analysis of individual and collective forms of switching. Analysing the two de-affiliation strategies separately was the third goal of the thesis. In this respect, Chapter 6 represents the first comparative study in which individual and group switching are analysed independently. The results of Chapter 6 are crucial because they suggest that the explanations for the two phenomena are different. In a few words, solo defections and party splits/fusions follow different logics, that should be acknowledged when these behaviours are studied. More concretely, the results of Chapter 6 told us that de-institutionalisation both at the party level (measured in terms of age) and at the systemic level (measured in terms of electoral volatility) are the two factors that more affect the scope of switching of any kinds. Defections can therefore be seen as the legislative manifestation of a more general instability within a given country. Moreover, in line with the theoretical argument, collective switching seems to be especially related to the ideological profile of parties, not only in terms of the representative style that they promote, but mostly in terms of their collocation in the ideological space. Indeed, the more extreme parties are on the left-right continuum, the more likely that they will experience collective switching.

The decision to carry out an aggregate analysis, discarding the individual level was motivated by several reasons. First of all, theoretically, by looking only at individuals and their motivations, we cannot explain why both parties and countries differ in the amount of switching they witness. For example, knowing that a legislator left his/her party because of electoral concerns, does not help us to understand why overall in Italy the percentage of switchers is greater than in the rest of the sample,

or why Radical Right parties seem to be particularly unable to keep their ranks together. Secondly, as I already underlined repeatedly in the previous pages, the question of why MPs change affiliation has already been asked and answered by other researchers, while not a lot has been done to explain other kinds of variance. My research design was selected accordingly, but at the same time the data collection process affected the questions that could be answered. Finding reliable information on individual-level factors (that are also relevant for defections) for so many countries over 70 years would not have been possible with the limited time of a Ph.D. program and especially for someone working alone. Therefore, both because of theoretical and practical reasons, I decided to analyse switching using this specific approach and shifting the focus from legislators' motivations to party and institutional weaknesses.

The impossibility of studying the reasons behind defections, however, comes at a cost. Indeed, many of the hypotheses tested in Chapter 4 and 5 might be very different if MPs' goals were taken into account. Factors that drive ideological switching might not be the same for more opportunistic switchers. In order to - partially - control for legislators' motivations, in the last empirical chapter, I distinguished between collective and solo defections, using the former as an instance of ideologically motivated switching and the latter as an example of instrumentally-driven switching.

Still, even though I used the two de-affiliation strategies as proxies for different motivations, reality is surely more complex. In fact, we can imagine that both individual and collective switching might be motivated by ideological or opportunistic concerns. In other words, motivations and modalities are two separate dimensions that, for the reasons listed above, I collapsed together in my analysis. However, if the two dimensions are singled out, they can also be combined in a typology of switching, as Table 7.1 illustrates. Assuming that we know both *how* and *why* MPs defect, we would obtain four ideal types of defections.

The first case is represented by a legislator who switches alone and is motivated exclusively by his/her personal interest. This might be the case for instance of former French Prime Minister Manuel Valls, who in spring 2017, after having lost his party's primary elections and just before the presidential vote, abandoned the French Socialist Party (that was performing very badly in the polls) and switched to the newly-established party of Emmanuel Macron (who then did indeed win the presidential race). Benoît Hamon, the official Socialist presidential candidate, said that Valls' turncoating was a stab in the back, and that he is an example of

Table 7.1: A typology of party switching

Modality / **Motivation**	*Individual*	*Collective*
Opportunism	Spoiled opportunists	Governmental opportunists
Ideology	Idealist dissidents	Splits

"those who no longer believe in anything"[2]. I call instances of this category "*Spoiled opportunists*".

However, there are solo switchers who are driven by ideological concerns as well. An illustrative example is the story of Ole Donner who left the Danish People's Party, which he contributed to founding in 1995 (Nielsen, Andersen, and H. H. Pedersen 2018). Donner had criticised the party leadership several times. In particular he was against the proposal of his party leader, Pia Kjærsgaard, to expel immigrants if one member of the same family commits a crime. Previously in 1998, Donner had left the party board, and in 2000 he decided to exit the parliamentary group, keeping his seat as an independent[3]. At least based on journalistic accounts of the events, it seems that Donner switched because of his uneasiness with certain policy proposal from the party leadership. In other words, Donner did not change party to achieve career advancement or re-election (on the contrary, he left politics at the end of the term), but to reveal the mismatch between his opinions and the management of the party. I shall call his case and all the other similar instances of non-opportunistic switchers, "*idealist dissidents*".

At the same time, while in Chapter 6 any collective defections were seen as ideologically motivated, there are several examples of group-switchers who changed party in order to obtain personal rewards. There have been instances of this behaviour in Italy, especially among former members of the old Italian Republican Party. In particular, the faction of so-called "Liberal Democrats" changed sides several times between 2007 and 2011. Elected as part of the centre-left coalition in 2006, the faction withdrew its support to the government in 2008, determining the resignation of the Prime Minister (Romano Prodi) and the call of snap elections. During the following electoral campaign, the faction got recompensed by the centre-right as it was allowed to run together with the newly established conservative party, "People of Freedom", and four of its members were elected. Hence, the decision of withdrawing their support for Prodi's government turned out to be electorally rewarding for

[2]For the exact words used by Hamon, see `https://www.letemps.ch/monde/manuel-valls-risquetout-promacron`.

[3]For more details on the sequence of events that led Donner to leave his party, see: `https://jyllands-posten.dk/indland/ECE3290428/JP-portraet-af-Ole-Donner-Glidetur-fra-magten/`.

the small liberal faction. But the story goes on, as few month after 2008 elections, the "Liberal Democrats" turned their back also the new conservative cabinet, led by Silvio Berlusconi. The faction left the party and established their own parliamentary group. However, later in 2011, the "Liberal Democrats" returned to support the government, rejoining their former party. The faction was well rewarded, as one of the members (Daniela Melchiorre) was appointed as vice-secretary of Economic Development. To cut the story short, by switching party several times, a small faction was able to achieve both re-election and career advancement. This example clearly shows that there are in reality also cases of instrumentally-motivated collective switchers, who in my typology, are called "*governmental opportunists*".

Finally, the fourth category in the typology, labelled "*splits*", corresponds to all the forms of collective defections motivated by intra-party ideological conflicts and that, as suggested by the analysis in Chapter 6, mainly affect left-leaning parties. Apart from the already mentioned case of the split of the successors of the Italian Communist Party in 1991 studied by Eubank, Gangopadahay, and Weinberg (1996), there are similar examples of ideological breakups in Finland (between the Social Democratic Party of Finland and the Social Democratic Union of Workers and Smallholders in 1959), Ireland (between the Irish Labour Party and the Socialist Party in 1996), Great Britain (between the Labour Party and the Social Democratic Party in 1981), Greece (between the Party of Democratic Socialism and the Union of Democratic Center in 1979 or, more recently, between Syriza and the faction of Popular Unity in Summer 2015)[4], just to mention a few of them.

To summarise, all these examples suggest that switching is a complex phenomenon that takes different forms based on the motivations behind it, as well as its modality. Hence, both the *why* and the *how* are relevant dimensions. This work, because of its specific research design and because of data limitations, could only study the second dimension, while the first was only explored by using proxies that, however, are not very precise.

Still, in order to uncover the real motivations driving switchers, a completely different kind of research strategy should have been employed. One way would have been to interview defectors. Another would have been to rely on newspaper articles describing the facts in order to find out the source of each defection. Both strategies are not without pitfalls: interviews and media analysis do not assure us

[4]There are of course also remarkable instances of ideological splits within right-wing/conservative parties. For example, the breakup between the Freedom Party of Austria and the Alliance for the Future of Austria in 2005, or the breakaway of the Finnish Christian League (SKL, but nowadays Christian Democrats) from the National Coalition Party (KOK) in 1958, or finally, the split between the Swiss People's Party (SVP) and the Conservative Democratic Party (BDP) in 2008.

that MPs will be totally honest about the real reason for their change. In this regard I can mention the case of the Italian switcher Domenico Scilipoti who left his party (Italy of Values) in December 2010 and saved Berlusconi's cabinet from a vote of no confidence. Scilipoti officially declared that his decision to switch party was motivated by the fact that his party never supported him in his campaigns for acupuncture[5], while most likely the Italian MP simply saw a good opportunity for career advancement (not by chance, Scilipoti ran as candidate for Berlusconi's party in the following general election in 2013 and obtained a seat in the Senate).

To conclude, in order to account for switchers' motivations a very different kind of research strategy would have been necessary. A strategy that, in any case, has some restrictions and that - once again - is not compatible with an extensive comparative research design. For very similar reasons, my theoretical framework is mostly focused on the cost of switching rather than on its benefits. While certainly legislators weigh both aspects before deciding whether to switch or not, benefits are extremely uncertain and because of that hard to assess for researchers and politicians alike. Again, the only strategy to gauge the advantages connected to a defection, would be to study MPs' careers tracks in order to identify whether promotions or re-selection were connected to a prior change of affiliation. However, this is a research question that would be answered with a completely different data set (and data collection effort) and, therefore, did not fit with the overall aim of this work.

In light of this, the results of my thesis are arguably even more remarkable, given that some clear patterns emerge despite not having more precise measures of switchers' motivations and benefits. In a way, the analysis performed in the previous pages was still able to capture the contrast between individual and collective defections and their different origins. In the future, with a greater availability of information about legislators, it will hopefully be possible to refine the investigation in order to properly account for all the potential factors that might influence the two forms of switching. But in the absence of better individual level information, I believe that my findings represent an important contribution to the literature on switching, but also more generally on legislative dynamics and intra-party politics.

In this regard, the topic of switching in Western Europe is linked to the broader issues of party change and party decline. Indeed, an implicit goal of this thesis was also to assess the current viability of political parties, that is, whether they are still solid actors, or - on the contrary - they are less and less institutionalised. In other words, switching could be seen as one of the symptoms of the decline of the

[5]The text of the official interview can be found here: `https://www.repubblica.it/politica/2010/12/09/news/intervista_scilipoti-9986508/`.

"partyness" of politics (Katz 1986). I did not address this topic in a direct manner, but my analysis suggests that, with some exceptions, in recent years, organisational loyalty of MPs to their parties has become less important (Katz and Mair 2006).

Of course, there are differences across countries. In Germany, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom legislative parties seem to be in a good shape, as switching is extremely rare. In contrast, in Italy and France political parties are much more unstable and are frequently subject to transformations. At the same time, there are also cases of countries whose parties have become more volatile over time. There are several examples of this trend: the Netherlands, Ireland, Greece, Austria, and Denmark. In these countries switching has usually been rare, but in recent years the average percentage of switchers has substantially increased. This development suggests that generally European parties might witness even more switching in the future. However, it is too soon to tell whether this development will continue in the coming years, revealing a new pattern in the relationship between legislators and their parties, or if this is just a temporary phase of instability.

The fact that defections have started to increase only in the last 10 years (with the exception of Italy, which in this respect, is an early-comer) does not allow us to say that parties are not doing well. On the contrary, according to the data presented in Chapter 3, political parties in Western Europe have overall maintained their disciplinary abilities within the parliamentary arena, as the pervasiveness of switching is still rather low. The "partyness" of government and legislatures looks generally strong, as in legislators tend to be loyal to their groups. The results on switching are in contrast with the hypothesis on the decline of parties. It is true that parties have been facing several challenges in the last 30 years, such as increasing popular disenchantment, distrust towards politicians, lower party identification, diminishing party membership, and growing electoral volatility. Nonetheless, these difficulties are all related to parties as representative agencies (Bartolini and Mair 2001). But the same cannot be said of parties' organisational and institutional functions. In this regard, my findings support the hypothesis developed by Bartolini and Mair regarding an enhanced procedural role of political parties. These actors do not seem to have lost their capability of organising and structuring the legislative process, and they are still effectively incorporated in the structure of the state, as suggested by the cartel party model (Katz and Mair 1995, 2009).

Still, the results of my analysis suggest that we might expect greater switching in the future, because in very few countries there are there parliamentary regulations that seriously limit this phenomenon. Even thought it is true that not all the cases of permissive regulation show high levels of defections, in *all* the instances with very

strict rules, there is little switching. To put it differently, in most of the countries analysed there are no measures that would be able to forestall legislators from leaving their parties, in the case that this behaviour becomes a more common practice.

Parliamentary regulations in most of the Western European democracies were designed when political parties were highly disciplined and united actors. Parties did not need further support of regulations to keep their ranks together. However, if the party model changes, most of the countries do not have any additional tool to strengthen and protect parties from defections. Only Germany and Spain, together with Austria, have at the moment regulations that protect parties from excessive switching. Compared to Western countries, in new democracies, anti-defection laws are instead a common practice. Janda (2009), for instance, finds that among established democracies only Portugal and Israel restrict switching opportunities, while 25% of newer democracies have this kind of legislation that is used as a (temporary) measure to consolidate chaotic party systems. It will be interesting to see if an increase in switching will also bring forward requests for more restrictive regulations in Western Europe, as it has already happened in the Netherlands, for example.

Where can we go from here? Since any piece of research on switching would benefit from having more details on switchers' motivations, one alternative method to infer them could be to analyse the characteristics of the party joined by the defectors. For instance, when MPs are ideologically-motivated they might not care about whether their new party will be successful in the next election. Similarly, we could argue that instrumentally driven legislators would only choose to become members of large, governing groups. In other words, the data set developed for this thesis could be used in a different way by focusing less on the party of departure and more on the one of arrival.

Future works could also explore in more depth the connection between switching and party-level characteristics. For instance, we could try to find better and more precise measures of party internal level of *voice* or of their ideological position. With more information regarding internal decision making, leadership role, selection procedures, we could probably tell in a more systematic way whether the parties that experience more switching are also those that are less internally democratic, as posited by my theoretical framework.

Another potential avenue of research would be to analyse whether switching correlates with other measures of party system de-institutionalisation, like those proposed by Chiaramonte and Emanuele (2017, 2018). If indeed switching varies together with other indexes of instability (as the correlation between switching and electoral volatility found in Chapter 4 suggests) then it could be used to study the

evolution of party systems between elections, avoiding the electoral bias in party-change research reported by Mair (1997) and Marinova (2016).

Related to the topic of party system de-institutionalisation, there is the issue of voters' alignment. I did not try to put defections in relation with other aspects of electoral dynamics, such as declining partisan affiliation (Drummond 2006; Dalton and Wattenberg 2000). It might indeed be that switching is the legislative manifestation of an increasing instability in party support within the electorate itself, that is, the legislative arena and electoral arena are both affected by the growing fluidity of partisan affiliations. Besides long-term electoral developments, switching could also be related to short-term dynamics in voters' preferences. For example, it might be that MPs are more likely to abandon parties that do not perform well in the polls and join groups that are expected to win elections. In other words, it might be that the size of a parliamentary group changes also as an effect of increasing/decreasing support in the electorate for the same party, as for instance the work by Klein (2016) suggests.

Finally, this thesis did not engage with the potential consequences of party switching. Indeed, defections have been analysed here as a dependent variable. If generally the literature on switching is scarce, research on its effect is even rarer. Some work has been done on the electoral costs of switching (Grose and Yoshinaka 2003) or on its benefits in terms of career advancement (Yoshinaka 2005). Other researchers, like for instance Hug and Wüest (2012) or Nokken (2000), look at the behavioural consequences of switching, such as the voting behaviour of switchers or their ideological preferences (for a larger review of the current status of the literature on the consequences of defections, see Mershon 2014). However there are still many questions that could be studied: e.g. What are the consequences of switching on the policies approved by parliaments? What happens to the parties that suffered from switching? What kind of electoral strategies do they adopt to make up for the loss of MPs? And how do voters react when their representatives defect? Do they support the abandoned party or do they follow switchers (for new evidences on the subject, see McAndrews, Snagovsky, and Thomas 2019)?

Unanswered questions abound, but many of them could be tackled using the data set collected for this thesis. Arguably, the most important contribution of the present work is to offer a base from which the topic of party switching could be explored in more depth and more extensively, connecting it with other relevant aspects of the political realm and democratic life.

Appendix A

Appendix to Chapter 1

As already mentioned in the introductory chapter, the data collection process was mainly carried out relying on the minutes of the parliamentary sessions of each country. While this was the general rule, there are several alternative sources that were used to create the data set, especially because each country has different methods of storing details regarding their own parliamentary life. For the sake of transparency, therefore, I would like to summarise for each country the exact procedure followed to collect the data on the defections.

A.1 Austria

The data collection for Austria was entirely carried out by analysing the electronic archive of Austrian MPs provided by the historical service of the Austrian Parliament. The list of all legislators who were elected to the Nationalrat (the lower Chamber) since 1918 is available at the following link: `https://www.parlament.gv.at/WWER/PARL/`. The user can select one specific legislative term or all those of interest. The web page then returns a list of all the MPs with their party affiliation. When a legislator has more than one party listed in the column of his/her affiliation, then it means that the person switched. In order to obtain more details (like for instance on the date of the defection) it was sufficient to click on the file of the legislator him/herself.

A.2 Belgium

For each legislative term, the historical archive of the Belgian Parliament provided me with the composition of the Chamber of Representatives at various points in time. Thanks to these lists, it was possible to track whether a legislator belonged

always to the same parliamentary group or if s/he changed affiliation during the term. Recall that parliamentary groups were established in Belgium only in 1961, it is for this reason that the observation for this country only trace back to that year.

A.3 Denmark

The Library service of the Danish Parliament (Folketinget) provided me with a list of all the MPs who changed party affiliation from 1918 to 2014. The list included both legislators who took up a different party label, but also those who became/left the status of independent.

A.4 Finland

Similarly to the Danish case, it was the Library of Parliament's Information Service that sent me the list of all the changes of affiliation from 1945. As for Denmark, the list included the name of the MP who switched, his/her affiliations, and the duration of their switch (that is, date of entry and exit).

A.5 France

The process of data collection for France was probably the most challenging one, especially for the legislative terms of the Fourth Republic. While the Archive of the National Assembly has put on-line the files of all the MPs who have been serving in Parliament since 1789, these files usually show the last party affiliation of a legislator. Therefore, it is not possible by only looking at these files to tell whether an MP is a switcher or not. The only way to trace affiliation changes was to read the official transcript of each parliamentary session, as these documents always include a section about inter-party movements. I took as a point of reference the composition of groups at the beginning of a legislative term and from there I could reconstruct the changes that took place. This procedure was followed for the entire period of time from 1946 to 1958. The official transcripts for the Fourth Republic can be accessed here: `http://4e.republique.jo-an.fr/tables-matieres.jsp`. For the legislative terms of the Fifth Republic, instead, it is possible to consult on-line the so-called "Nominative Tables of Deputies" which present a parliamentary biography of each of them listing their mandates, their membership in parliamentary groups and their other appointments. These tables also list the composition of groups and all the modifications to them, as well as the date they took place. These

tables are organised by year and can be downloaded at the following link: http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/histoire/tables_archives/index.asp.

A.6 Germany

The Archive of the German Federal Parliament (Bundestag) regularly publishes handbooks with detailed information about the activity of the Bundestag. One section of these books is devoted to parliamentary groups (Fraktionen und Gruppen) and there is also a list of legislators who changed affiliation (Fraktionswechsel). There are two editions of the handbook, the first covering the years 1949-1999 while the second refers to all the legislative terms after 1990. The historical book can be downloaded at this link: https://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/parlamentsarchiv/datenhandbuch_archiv, while the volume dealing with more recent years is available at this link:
https://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/parlamentsarchiv/datenhandbuch/.

A.7 Greece

In order to collect data on switching in Greece, I examined the files of each legislator elected since 1974. The file shows the group affiliation of the MP and records whether and when the person changed party. Usually when someone switched the webpage reports also whether the legislator was expelled or whether s/he left spontaneously. The descriptions used are the following: "Accession/ re-affiliation to Parliamentary Group", "Expelled", "Became Independent". The files of Greek legislators can be accessed at this link: https://www.hellenicparliament.gr/en/Vouleftes/Diatelesantes-Vouleftes-Apo-Ti-Metapolitefsi-Os-Simera/.

A.8 Ireland

As explained in Section 3.1, data on Irish defectors comes from three different sources:

1. For the period 2010-2013 (the 31st Dáil), data was provided by the Library & Research Service of the Irish Parliament.

2. For the years 1993-2010, I used the list of changes of alliances collected by Gallagher (2010).

3. For the years 1968-1993, I retrieved information on switchers from the dissertation by Martin (1997).

Before 1968 it was not possible to find reliable sources, therefore, the legislative terms before that year had to be excluded from the data set.

A.9 Italy

To collect data on Italian switchers I checked the individual files of all the deputies who were elected to the Chamber of Deputies since 1948. Legislators' files report information about their affiliation and, in the case of a switch, the date of the change and the new label taken by defectors. These personal files of Italian deputies can be accessed at the following link: `http://legislaturepreceden ti.camera.it`.

A.10 The Netherlands

The process of collecting data about switching in The Netherlands was very similar to the one followed for Austria. I analysed the electronic archive of Dutch MPs managed by Leiden University. MPs' files contain details regarding their political affiliation as well as other socio-demographic pieces of information. The archive can be access upon request at the following link: `https://www.parlement.com/id/vhnnmt7ihwyl/het_biografisch_archief_van_pdc`.

A.11 Norway

Data for the Norwegian Parliament (Storting) was retrieved from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD). More specifically the NSD has several electronic archives about the Storting and its legislators, but I consulted the Archive on politicians from 1945 to the present day. The archive is very rich and also includes details on legislators' party affiliation and changes to them. The data set can be requested at the following link: `http://www.nsd.uib.no/polsys/en/`.

A.12 Spain

Similarly to what was done with Greece and Italy, the data collection for Spain relied on the file of each legislator elected since 1977. The personal page of the MP registers his/her affiliation and tracks also whether and when s/he changed party. I

cross-validated the information collected for the first legislative terms by checking the list of switchers created by Reniu Vilamala (1996). The complete archive of Spanish MPs can be found on this website: `http://www.congreso.es/portal/page/portal/Congreso/Congreso/Diputados/Historia`.

A.13 Switzerland

The statistical service of the Swiss Parliament makes available on-line the complete data set of all those who have been elected to the National Council (Nationalrat) since 1848. The data set can be downloaded as an Excel file which contains several socio-demographic details regarding each MP. Every person who has been elected corresponds to a line in the file and it reports the date in which the person entered the Nationalrat for the first time as well as the date the person stopped serving as MP. When a legislator has changed affiliation, however, his/her name appears in more than one line and the dates record the time the person spent in a given parliamentary group. Therefore, identifying switchers is not too difficult. The data set of Swiss MPs can be downloaded at the following link: `https://www.parlament.ch/en/ratsmitglieder?k=*#k=*`.

A.14 United Kingdom

Data for the changes of alliances that took place in the House of Commons were retrieved from two different sources. For the years before 1979 I relied on the book *British Political Facts* by D. Butler and G. Butler (2011). The authors provide the reader with a full list of all the defections and they also specify whether the switcher lost the whip for disciplinary reasons (like voting against the party line). For the period after 1979, instead, I referred to the official documentation of the House of Commons. The Library of the House notes every switch and makes the list available on-line at the following link: `https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN02537#fullreport`.

Appendix B

Appendix to Chapter 3

Table B.1: Green Family

Abbreviation	**Party**	**Country**	**Years**	**Notes**
Grüne	Die Grüne Alternative (Green Alternative)	AU	1987-2015	
ECOLO	Écologistes Confédérés pour l'Organisation de Luttes Originales (Ecologists)	BE	1982-2014	
Groen (Agalev before)	Anders Gaan Leven (Live Differently) / Groen! (Green!)	BE	1982-2014	
GLP	Grünliberale Partei der Schweiz (Green Liberal Party)	CH	2008-2015	
GPS	Grüne Partei der Schweiz/Parti écologiste suisse (Green Party of Switzerland)	CH	1980-2015	
VL	Vihreä Liitto (Green Union)	FL	1983-2014	
V	Les Verts, Confédération Écologiste - Parti Écologiste (The Greens)	FR	1997-2015	
Grüne	Die Grünen (The Greens) / Grüne/Bündnis'90 (Greens/Alliance'90)	GE	1983-2015	
Greens	Green Party/Comhaontas Glas (Green Party)	IR	1989-2010	
VERDI	Federazione dei Verdi (Green Federation)	IT	1987-2007	
GL	GroenLinks (Green Left)	NL	1990-2015	

Table B.2: Communist/Radical Left Family

Abbreviation	Party	Country	Years	Notes
PdA	Partei der Arbeit der Schweiz/Parti suisse du travail (Swiss Labour Party)	CH	1948-2011	
DKP	Danmarks Kommunistiske Parti (Danish Communist Party)	DK	1945-1979	
SKDL-VAS	Suomen Kansan Demokraattinen Liitto (Finnish People's Democratic Union)/Vasemmistoliitto (Left Wing Alliance)	FL	1945-2014	
PCF	Parti Communiste Français (French Communist Party)	FR	1946-2015	
KPD	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (Communist Party of Germany)	GE	1949-1953	
KKE	Kommounistiko Komma Elladas (Communist Party of Greece)	GR	1974-2015	
WP	Páirtí na nOibri (Workers' Party)	IR	1981-1992	
PCI	Partito Comunista Italiano (Italian Communist Party)	IT	1948-1991	
PSIUP-PDUP-DP	Partito di Unità Proletaria per il Comunismo (Il Manifesto + Partito di UnitÃă Proletaria) (Proletarian Unity Party for Communism (The Manifesto + Proletarian Unity Party))	IT	1968-1991	
RC	Partito della Rifondazione Comunista (Communist Refoundation Party)	IT	1992-2007	
CI	Partito dei Comunisti Italiani (Party of Italian Communists)	IT	2001-2007	

CPN	Communistische Partij van Nederland (Communist Party of the Netherlands)	NL	1946-1985
SF-SV	Sosialistisk Folkeparti (Socialist People's Party) /Sosialistisk Venstreparti (Socialist Left Party)	NW	1962-2015
NKP	Norges Kommunistiske Parti (Norwegian Communist Party)	NW	1945-1961
PCE-IU	Partido Comunista de España (Communist Party of Spain) / Izquierda Unida (United Left)	SP	1977-2015
EL	Enhedslisten - De Rød-Grønne (Red-Green Unity List)	DK	1995-2014
VS	Venstresocialisterne (Left Socialist Party)	DK	1968-1987
Die Linke (before PDS-LL)	Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (Party of Democratic Socialism) / Die Linke (The Left)	GE	1991-2015
SYN	Synaspismos tis Aristeras kai tis Proodou (Progressive Left Coalition)	GR	1989-2003
SYRIZA	Synaspismós Rizospastikís Aristerás (Coalition of the Radical Left)	GR	2004-2015
DL	Democratic Left Party	IR	1993-1999
SP	Páirtí Sóisialach (Socialist Party)	IR	1997-2015
SEL	Sinistra Ecologia Libertà (Left Ecology Freedom)	IT	2013-2015
SP	Socialistische Partij (Socialist Party)	NL	1994-2015
PPR	Politieke Partij Radicalen (Radical Political Party)	NL	1971-1989

Table B.3: Social-Democratic Family

Abbreviation	Party	Country	Years	Notes
Spö	Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs (Austrian Social Democratic Party)	AU	1949-2014	
BPS	Belgische Socialistische Partij/Parti Socialiste Belge (Belgian Socialist Party)	BE	1961-1978	
PS	Parti Socialiste (Francophone Socialist Party)	BE	1979-2014	
SP/spa	Socialistische Partij (Flemish Socialist Party)/ Socialistische Partij Anders (Socialist Party Di	BE	1979-2014	
SP	Sozialdemokratische Partei der Schweiz/Parti socialiste suisse (Social Democratic Party of Switzerland)	CH	1945-2015	
SD	Socialdemokratiet (Social Democratic Party)	DK	1945-2014	
SF	Socialistisk Folkeparti (Socialist People's Party)	DK	1961-2014	
SSDP	Suomen Sosialidemokraattinen Puolue (Finnish Social Democrats)	FL	1945-2014	
TPSL	Työväen ja Pienviljelijäin Sosialdemokraattinen Liitto (Social Democratic League of Workers and Smallholders)	FL	1959-1969	
DEVA	Demokraattinen Vaihtoehto (Democratic Alternative)	FL	1987-1990	
PS	Parti Socialiste (Socialist Party)	FR	1946-2015	
UDSR	Union démocratique et socialiste de la Résistance (Democratic and Socialist Union of the Resistance)	FR	1946-1955	
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social Democratic Party of Germany)	GE	1949-2015	
PASOK	Panellinio Socialistiko Kinima (Panhellenic Socialist Movement)	GR	1974-2015	

Dikki	Dimokratiko Kinoniko Kinima (Democratic Social Movement)	GR	1997-1999
Dimar	Dimokratiki Aristera (Democratic Left)	GR	2012-2014
To Potami	To Potami (The River)	GR	2015
Labour	Páirti Lucht Oibre (Labour Party)	IR	1954-2015
PSI	Partito Socialista Italiano (Italian Socialist Party)	IT	1948-1995
PSDI	Partito Socialista Democratico Italiano (Italian Democratic Socialist Party)	IT	1948-1993
DS-PD	Partito Democratico della Sinistra (Democratic Party of the Left) / Partito Democratico (Democratic Party)	IT	1992-2015
RNP	Rosa nel Pugno (Rose in the Fist)	IT	2001-2007
PvdA	Partij van de Arbeid (Labour Party)	NL	1946-2015
DnA	Det norske Arbeiderparti (Norwegian Labour Party)	NW	1945-2015
PSOE	Partido Socialista Obrero Español (Spanish Socialist Workers' Party)	SP	1977-2015
Labour	Labour Party (Labour Party)	UK	1945-2015

Table B.4: Liberal Family

Abbreviation	Party	Country	Years	Notes
LIF	Liberales Forum (Liberal Forum)	AU	1995-1999	
PVV-VLD	Partij voor Vrijheid en Vooruitgang (Party of Liberty and Progress)/ Vlaamse Liberalen en Demokraten (Flemish Liberals and Democrats)	BE	1972-2014	
PL	Liberale Partij/Parti Libéral (Liberal Party)	BE	1961-1971	
PLP-PRLW-PRL-MR	Parti de la Liberté et du Progrès (Party of Liberty and Progress)/Mouvement Réformateur (Reform Movement)	BE	1972-2014	
FDP	Freisinnig-Demokratische Partei der Schweiz/Parti radical-démocratique suisse (Radical Democratic Party)	CH	1945-2015	
LPS	Liberale Partei der Schweiz/Parti libéral suisse (Liberal Party of Switzerland)	CH	1945-2011	
LdU	Landesring der Unabhängigen/Alliance des Indépendants (Independents' Alliance)	CH	1945-2003	
RV	Det Radikale Venstre (Danish Social-Liberal Party)	DK	1945-2014	
V	Venstre (Liberals)	DK	1945-2014	
RF	Retsforbund (Justice Party)	DK	1945-1981	
CD	Centrum-Demokraterne (Centre Democrats)	DK	1974-1999	
NY	Ny Alliance (New Alliance)/ Liberal Alliance (Liberal Alliance)	DK	2008-2014	
LKP	Liberaalinen Kansanpuolue (Liberal People's Party)	FL	1945-1982	
RRRS	Parti Répulicain Radical et Radical-Socialiste (Radical Socialist Party)	FR	1946-1966	

UDF	Union pour la Démocratie Française (Union for French Democracy)	FR	1978-2015
PRG	Parti Radical de Gauche (Left Radical Party)	FR	1973-2015
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party)	GE	1949-2013
PD	Progressive Democrats	IR	1987-2009
PLI	Partito Liberale Italiano (Italian Liberal Party)	IT	1948-1993
PRI	Partito Repubblicano Italiano (Italian Republican Party)	IT	1948-1993
IDV	Lista di Pietro - Italia del Valori (List Di Pietro - Italy of Values)	IT	2006-2012
LD-RI	Rinnovamento Italiano (Italian Renewal)	IT	1996-2000
Scelta Civica	Scelta Civica (Civic Choice)	IT	2013-2015
NPSI	Nuovo Partito Socialista Italiano (New Italian Socialist Party)	IT	2001-2007
RADICALI	Partito Radicale (Radical Party)	IT	
M5S	MoVimento 5 Stelle (Five Star Movement)	IT	2013-2015
VVD	Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy)	NL	1946-2015
D66	Democraten'66 (Democrats'66)	NL	1967-2015
V	Venstre (Liberal Party)	NW	1945-2015
CDS	Centro DemocrÃątico y Social (Centre Democrats)	SP	1983-1992
UCD	Unión de Centro Democrático (Union of the Democratic Centre/Centrist Bloc)	SP	1977-1985
PL	Partido Liberal (Liberal Party)	SP	1986-1989
UPyD	Unión, Progreso y Democracia (Union, Progress and Democracy)	SP	2012-2015
PDP	Partido Demócrata Popular (Popular Democratic Party)	SP	1983-1989

BGB	Schweizerische Bauern-, Gewerbe- und Bürgerpartei/Parti suisse des paysans, artisans et bourgeois (Farmers',Traders' and Citizens' Party)	CH	1945-1971	Former Agrarian
KESK-SK	Keskustapuolue (Centre Party)	FL	1945-2014	Former Agrarian
SMP	Soumen Maaseudun Puolue (Finnish Rural Party)	FL	1966-1998	Former Agrarian
CnT	Clann na Talmhan (Party of the Land)	IR	1954-1964	Former Agrarian
BP	Boerenpartij (Farmers' Party)	NL	1963-1976	Former Agrarian
SP	Senterpartiet (Centre Party)	NW	1945-2015	Former Agrarian
Liberal, then Lib Dem	Liberal Party (Liberal Party) / Liberal Democrats (Liberal Democrats)			

Table B.5: Christian-Democratic Family

Abbreviation	Party	Country	Years	Notes
Övp	Österreichische Volkspartei (Austrian People's Party)	AU	1949-2015	
PSC/CVP	Parti Social Chrétien/Christelijke Volkspartij (Francophone Christian Social Party and Flemish/Christian People's Party)	BE	1961-1967	
PSC	Parti Social Chrétien (Christian Social Party)	BE	1968-2014	
CVP-CD&V	Christelijke Volkspartij (Christian People's Party)/Christen-Democratisch en Vlaams (Christian Democratic and Flemish)	BE	1968-2014	
CVP	Christlichdemokratische Volkspartei der Schweiz/Parti démocrate-chrétien suisse (Christian Democratic People's	CH	1945-2015	
EVP	Evangelische Volkspartei der Schweiz/Parti Evangélique Suisse (Protestant People's Party of Switzerland)	CH	1945-2015	
KrF	Party of Switzerland)	DK	1974-2004	
SKL-KD	Suomen Kristillinen Liitto (Finnish Christian Union)/Suomen Kristillisdemokraatit (Christian Democrats in Finland)	FL	1970-2014	
MRP	Mouvement Républicain Populaire (Popular Republican Movement)	FR	1946-1977	
CDP	Centre Démocratie et Progrés (Centre, Democracy and Progress)	FR	1973-1977	

CDU/CSU	Christlich-Demokratische Union/ Christlich-Soziale Union (Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union)	GE	1949-2015
DZ	Deutsche Zentrumspartei (Centre Party)	GE	1949-1953
EK-EDIK	Enosis Kentrou (Centre Union) /Enosi Dimokratikou Kentrou (Union of the Democratic Centre)	GR	1974-1981
FG	Fine Gael (Familiy of the Irish)	IR	1954-2015
DC	Democrazia Cristiana (Christian Democrats)	IT	1948-1993
CCD-UDC	Centro Cristiano Democratico (Christian Democratic Centre)/Unione dei Democratici Cristiani e di Centro (Union for Christian and Center Democrats)	IT	1994-2012
PPI-MARG	Partito Popolare Italiano (Italian Popular Party)/ Margherita (Daisy)	IT	1994-2005
UDEUR	Popolari Unione Democratica per l'Europa (Popular Democratic Union for Europe)	IT	2006-2007
KVP	Katholieke Volkspartij (Catholic People's Party)	NL	1946-1976
CHU	Christelijk-Historische Unie (Christian Historical Union)	NL	1946-1976
ARP	Anti-Revolutionaire Partij (Anti-Revolutionary Party)	NL	1946-1976
CDA	Christen-Democratisch Appèl (Christian Democratic Appeal)	NL	1977-2015
RPF	Reformatorische Politieke Federatie (Reformatory Political Federation)	NL	1981-2001
GPV	Gereformeerd Politiek Verbond (Reformed Political League)	NL	1994-2001
KrF	Kristelig Folkeparti (Christian People's Party)	NW	1945-2015

Table B.6: Conservative Family

Abbreviation	Party	Country	Years	Notes
BDP	Bürgerlich-Demokratische Partei Schweiz/Parti Bourgeois Démocratique Suisse (Conservative Democratic Party of Switzerland)	CH	2012-2015	
KF	Konservative Folkeparti (Conservative People's Party)	DK	1945-2014	
KK	Switzerland)	FL	1945-2014	
CNIP	Centre National de Independants et Paysans - Conservatives (National Centre of Independents and Peasants - Conservatives)	FR	1946-2015	
RPF-RPR-UMP	Rassemblement du Peuple français - Gaullists (Rally for the French People - Gaullists)/Rassemblement pour la République - Gaullists (Rally for the Republic - Gaullists)/Union pour un Mouvement Populaire (Union for a Popular Movement)	FR	1946-2015	
NC	Nouveau Centre (New Centre)	FR	2007-2015	
IR	Independants républicains (Independent Republicans)	FR	1963-1977	
DP	Deutsche Partei (German Party)	GE	1949-1961	
ND	Nea Dimokratia (New Democracy)	GR	1974-2015	
EP	Ethniki Parataxis (National Alignment)	GR	1978-1981	
Pola	Politiki Anixi (Political Spring)	GR	1994-1996	
FF	Fianna Fáil (Soldiers of Destiny)	IR	1954-2015	
FI-PDL	Forza Italia (Go Italy)/Popolo della Libertà (People of Freedom)	IT	1994-2015	

PNM-PDIUM	Partito Nazionale Monarchico (Monarchist National Party) / Partito Democratico Italiano di Unità Monarchica (Italian Democratic Party of Monarchist Unity)	IT	1948-1971
PMP	Partito Popolare Monarchico (People's Monarchist Party)	IT	1958-1962
AN	Alleanza Nazionale (National Alliance)	IT	1994-2007
H	Høyre (Conservative Party)	NW	1945-2015
AP-PP	Alianza Popular (Popular Alliance)/ Partido Popular (Popular Party)	SP	1977-2015
Conservatives	Conservative Party (Conservative Party)	UK	1945-2015

Table B.7: Radical Right Family

Abbreviation	Party	Country	Years	Notes
Fpö (before VdU)	Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (Austrian Freedom Party)	AU	1949-2015	
Stronach	Team Stronach	AU	2014-2015	
Bzö	Bündnis Zukunft Österreich (Alliance for the Future of Austria)	AU	2007-2013	
VB	Vlaams Blok (Flemish Bloc)/Vlaams Belang (Flemish Interest)	BE	1979-2014	
SVP	Schweizerische Volkspartei/Union démocratique du centre (Swiss People's Party)	CH	1972-2015	
SD	Schweizer Demokraten/Démocrates suisses (Swiss Democrats)	CH	1968-2007	
FPS	Freiheitspartei der Schweiz (Freedom Party of Switzerland)	CH	1988-1999	
NA	Nationale Aktion für Volk und Heimat/Action nationale pour le peuple et la patrie (National Action for People	CH	1972-1987	
FP	Fremkridtspartiet (Progress Party)	DK	1974-2001	
DF	and Fatherland)	DK	1998-2014	
PS	Perussuomalaiset (True Finns)	FL	1999-2014	
FN	Front National (National Front)	FR	1986-2015	
UFF	Union et fraternité française (Union and French Fraternity)	FR	1956-1958	
WAV	Wirtschaftliche Aufbauvereinigung (Economic Reconstruction League)	GE	1949-1953	
DRP	Deutsche Reichspartei (German Reich Party)	GE	1949-1953	

GB/BHE	Gesamtdeutscher Block/Bund der Heimatvertriebenen und Entrechteten (Refugee Party)	GE	1954-1957
LAOS	Laikós Orthódoxos Synagermós (Popular Orthodox Rally)	GR	2008-2011
ANEL	Anexartitoi Ellines (Independent Greeks)	GR	2012-2015
XA	Chrysi Avgi (Golden Dawn)	GR	2012-2015
CnP	Clann na Poblachta (Republican Party)	IR	1954-1968
SF	Sinn Féin (We Ourselves)	IR	1997-2015
MSI	Movimento Sociale Italiano (Italian Social Movement)	IT	1948-1993
FdI	Fratelli d'Italia - Centrodestra Nazionale (Brothers of Italy - National Centre-right)	IT	2013-2015
PVV	Partij voor de Vrijheid (Party of Freedom)	NL	2007-2015
CU	ChristenUnie (Christian Union)	NL	2002-2015
LPF	Lijst Pim Fortuyn (List Pim Fortuyn)	NL	2002-2006
FrP	Fremskrittspartiet (Progress Party)	NW	1982-2015

Appendix C

Appendix to Chapter 4

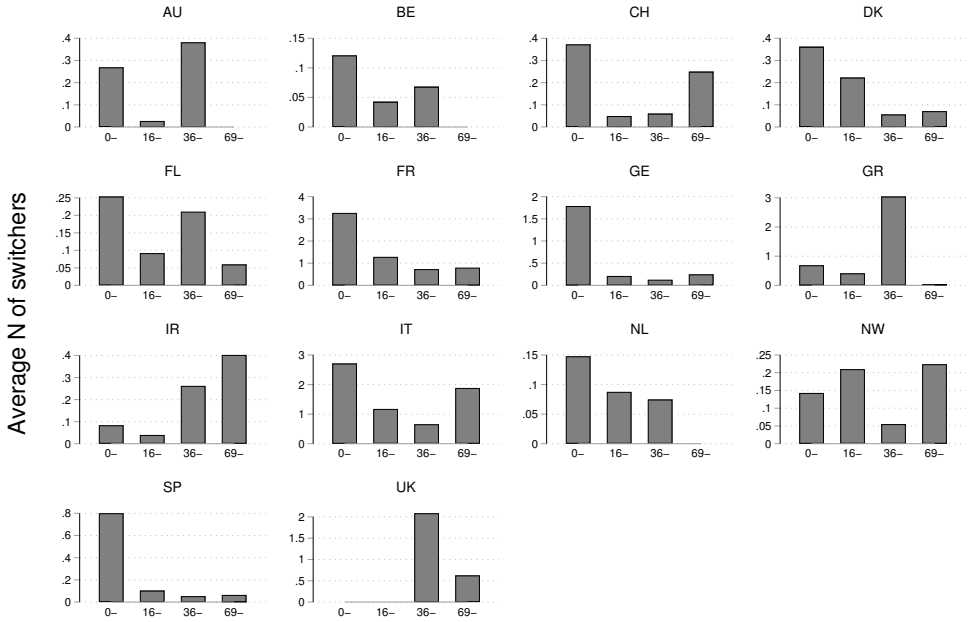


Figure C.1: Average number of switchers for different categories of age in each country, rescaled vertical axis

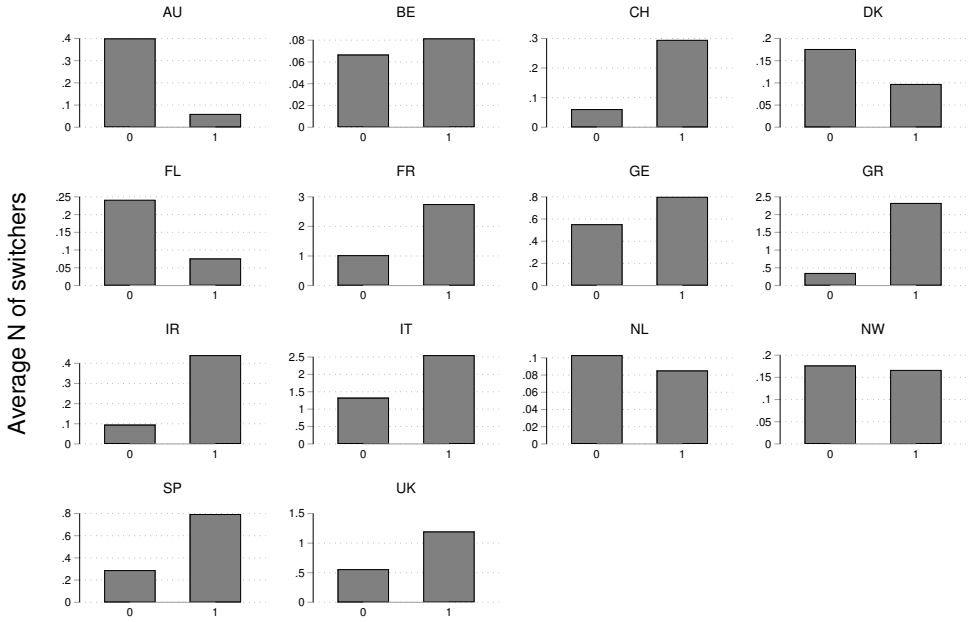


Figure C.2: Average number of switchers for parties in opposition and in government in each country, rescaled vertical axis

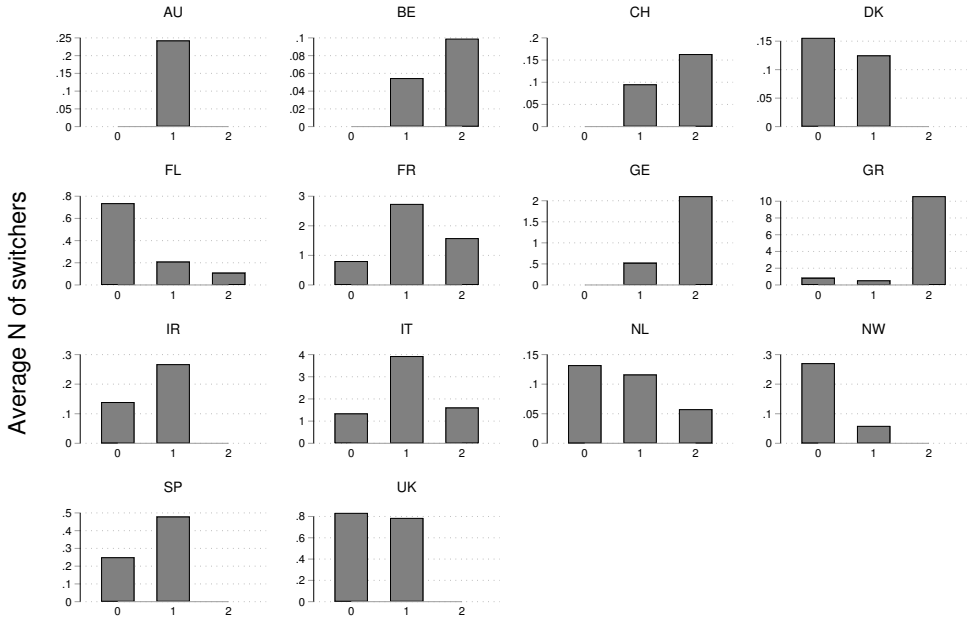


Figure C.3: Average number of switchers for different majority sizes in each country, rescaled vertical axis

Appendix D

Appendix to Chapter 5

Table D.1: List of sources used to retrieved each country's parliamentary standing orders

Country	**Articles of reference in the standing orders**	**Link to Standing Order (English text only if available)**
Austria	Art. 7	https://www.parlament.gv.at/ENGL/PERK/RGES/GOGNR/gog01_P1-8.shtml#P7
Belgium	Art. 11	http://www.dekamer.be/kvvcr/pdf_sections/publications/reglement/reglementFR.pdf
Denmark	Annex (page 76-77)	https://www.thedanishparliament.dk/Publications/$\sim$/media/PDF/publikationer/English/Standing_Orders_of_the_Danish_Parliament.ashx
Finland	Law 979/2012; Art. 6	https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2012/20120979
France	Art.19-23	http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/connaissance/reglement.pdf
Germany	Rule 10	https://www.btg-bestellservice.de/pdf/80060000.pdf
Greece	Art.15-17	https://www.hellenicparliament.gr/en/Vouli-ton-Ellinon/Kanonismos-tis-Voulis/
Ireland	Art.143	https://webarchive.oireachtas.ie/parliament/media/about/standingorders/standing-orders-2016.pdf
Italy	Art.14-15(ter)	http://leg16.camera.it/application/xmanager/projects/camera/file/conoscere_la_camera/regolamento_camera_25_settembre_2012.pdf
The Netherlands	Sections 11 and 12	https://www.houseofrepresentatives.nl/sites/default/files/content/rules_of_procedure_1.pdf
Norway	Art.77	http://www.parliament.am/library/Standing%20orders/norvegia.pdf
Spain	Sections 23-27	http://www.congreso.es/portal/page/portal/Congreso/Congreso/Hist_Normas/Norm/standing_orders_02.pdf
Switzerland	Art.61-62	https://www.admin.ch/opc/en/classified-compilation/20010664/index.html
UK	N/A	https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmstords/2/2.pdf

Appendix E

Appendix to Chapter 6

Table E.1: Marginal effects of party family on different categories of defections

Party Family	0 *no switches*	1 *individual*	2 *collective*
RLeft vs Green	-0.039	0.019	**0.020**
SDem vs Green	**-0.087**	**0.065**	**0.022**
Lib vs Green	**-0.077**	**0.063**	**0.013**
CDem vs Green	-0.003	0.001	0.002
Cons vs Green	**-0.134**	**0.111**	**0.022**
RRight vs Green	**-0.138**	**0.120**	**0.018**
Reg vs Green	-0.028	0.012	**0.016**
Sdem vs Rleft	**-0.048**	**0.046**	0.002
Lib vs Rleft	**-0.038**	**0.044**	-0.006
Cdem vs Rleft	**0.036**	-0.018	**-0.018**
Cons vs Rlef	**-0.095**	**0.092**	0.003
Rright vs Rleft	**-0.099**	**0.101**	-0.002
Reg vs Rleft	0.011	-0.007	-0.004
Lib vs Sdem	0.010	-0.002	-0.008
Cdem vs Sdem	**0.084**	**-0.063**	**-0.020**
Cons vs Sdem	**-0.047**	**0.047**	0.001
Rright vs Sdem	-0.051	**0.055**	-0.004
Reg vs Sdem	**0.059**	**-0.052**	-0.006
Cdem vs Lib	**0.073**	**-0.062**	**-0.012**
Cons vs Lib	**-0.057**	**0.048**	0.009
Rright vs Lib	**-0.061**	**0.057**	0.004
Reg vs Lib	**0.048**	**-0.051**	0.002
Cons vs Cdem	**-0.131**	**0.110**	**0.021**
Rright vs Cdem	**-0.135**	**0.119**	**0.016**
Reg vs Cdem	-0.025	0.011	0.014
Rright vs Cons	-0.004	0.009	-0.005
Reg vs Cons	**0.106**	**-0.099**	-0.007
Reg vs Rright	**0.110**	**-0.108**	-0.002

Coefficients in bold are
significant at least at 90% level

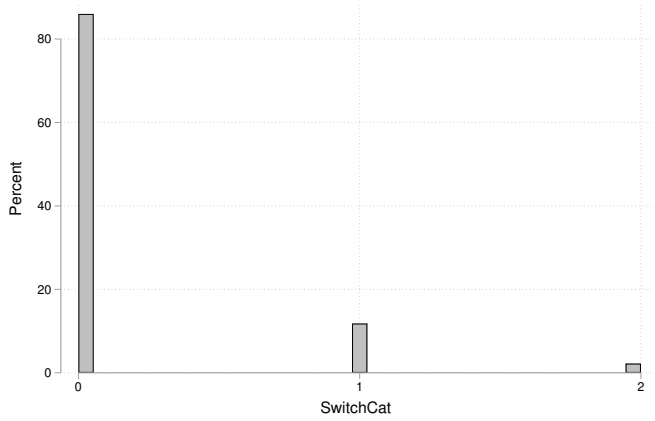


Figure E.1: Percentage of observation for each category of the variable *SwitchCat*, 0= no switching; 1= prevalently individual; 2= prevalently collective

Table E.2: Marginal effects of institutional variables on different categories of defections

		0 *no switches*	1 *individual*	2 *collective*
Electoral System				
	2 vs 0	**0.478**	**-0.455**	-0.024
	3 vs 0	**0.392**	**-0.382**	-0.01
	4 vs 0	**0.451**	**-0.441**	-0.01
	3 vs 2	**-0.086**	**0.072**	**0.014**
	4 vs 2	-0.028	0.013	**0.014**
	4 vs 3	**0.059**	**-0.059**	0
Form of Government				
	United s.p. vs Split s.p.	0.007	-0.011	0.004
	Classic p. vs Split s.p.	**-0.071**	**0.056**	**0.015**
	Rat. p. vs Split s.p.	-0.045	0.012	**0.033**
	Classic p. vs United s.p.	**-0.078**	**0.067**	**0.012**
	Rat. p. vs United s.p.	-0.052	0.023	**0.03**
	Rat. p. vs Classic p.	0.026	**-0.044**	**0.018**
Regulation				
	2 vs 1	0	0.017	**-0.017**
	3 vs 1	**-0.149**	**0.14**	0.009
	4 vs 1	-0.003	0.009	-0.006
	3 vs 2	**-0.148**	**0.123**	**0.026**
	4 vs 2	-0.003	-0.007	0.011
	4 vs 3	**0.145**	**-0.13**	-0.015

Coefficients in bold are significant at least at 90% level

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