

Changing Places in Parliament*

Stefanie Bailer[†]
Politikwissenschaft
Universität Basel

Sarah Bütikofer[‡]
Institut für Politikwissenschaft
Universität Zürich

Simon Hug[§]
Département de science politique
et relations internationales
Université de Genève

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Abstract

In bicameral systems members of parliament (MPs) may seek to advance career-wise by moving from the lower to the upper chamber. Such moves are especially sought after if the upper chamber has similar powers and is of smaller size. In this paper we present an analysis of members of the Swiss parliament that change their places and how this affects their behavior. While contrary to an often studied parliament like the US Congress the electoral districts do not change for MPs that change from one chamber to another, most Swiss MP that engage in such changes are subject to different electoral rules. We find that these differences affect considerably the behavior of MPs (in terms of voting, activities, etc.) that move from one chamber to another.

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[†] Universität Basel, Bernoullistrasse 14/16, CH-4056 Basel; Switzerland; phone: ++41 61 207 1381, email: stefanie.bailer@unibas.ch

[‡] Universität Zürich, Institut für Politikwissenschaft, Affolternstrasse 56, 8050 Zürich; Switzerland phone: ++41 44 634 54 11, email: sarah.buetikofer@ipz.uzh.ch

[§] Département de science politique et relations internationales, Faculté des sciences de la société ; Université de Genève; 40 Bd du Pont d'Arve; 1211 Genève 4; Switzerland; phone ++41 22 379 83 78; email: simon.hug@unige.ch

1 Introduction

In bicameral parliaments members of one chamber may advance their career by seeking a seat in the other chamber. Whether this is attractive depends on the respective prerogatives of the two chambers and the way in which their members are elected. In most cases, due to these differences, one would expect members of parliament (MPs) who change their place to adjust their behavior. This change in behavior, for instance in terms of voting, speech-making and personal activities, may be induced either by electoral constraints or institutions that differ between the two chambers. Consequently, such changing MPs allow for a glimpse at the effects of electoral systems and differing cameral institutions on the MPs' behaviors.¹

In this paper we conceptualize how MPs moving from one chamber to another are affected by different elements characterizing the two chambers and differences in the electoral process.² Drawing on some precursor work on the United States (US) representatives becoming senators (e.g., Grofman, Griffin and Berry, 1995; Francis and Kenny, 2000; Miler, 2016), we highlight what behavioral changes we would expect as a function of the characteristics of the two chambers and the differences in the respective electoral systems.

Drawing on unique detailed data on parliamentary behavior in both chambers in Switzerland, we evaluate our expectations empirically. As in the Swiss context moving from the lower to the upper house is a clear step "up the political ladder" (Francis and Kenny, 2000), our analysis of such movers suggests that the latter adjust their behavior to the new electoral context by becoming more moderate in their voting behavior. At the same time in terms of their speeches and personal activities we find that these changers adjust in part to the institutions prevalent in their new chamber, but some of their behavioral patterns set them apart from their new colleagues. Consequently, both reelection considerations and prevalent cameral institutions affect the behavior of MPs when they change from one chamber to the other.

In the next section we review existing work on MPs moving from one chamber to another and offer some background information on the two chambers of the Swiss

¹Needless to say, we do not consider such changes from one chamber to another as a sort of "natural experiment," as some authors do (e.g., Grofman, Griffin and Berry, 1995). We will return to this point in more detail below.

²Given that we consider the electoral process to be of considerable importance, we will, at the conceptual level, only consider bicameral systems in which members of both chambers are directly elected (Russell, 2012).

parliament on which we rely in the empirical part of this paper. In the third section we offer a theoretical and conceptual discussion why MPs who move from one chamber to another adjust their behavior. We discuss the relevant dimensions that may distinguish two directly elected chambers in a bicameral system and document these differences for some twenty parliaments of this type. These dimensions allow us also, for the empirical case we study, namely the Swiss bicameral system, to formulate expectations on how MPs who move will change their behavior. In the next section we discuss in detail the unique data on which we rely to assess the behavioral changes of MPs, before presenting in section five our empirical results. Finally, in the conclusion we put our findings in the general context and suggest further avenues for future research.

2 Literature Review

Moving from one chamber to another such as Congress to Senate or Swiss Lower Chamber to Swiss Upper Chamber, due to the institutional differences, almost always involves a step “up the political ladder” (Francis and Kenny, 2000). Thus, an important starting point for understanding the consequences of such changes is the literature on political ambition and work on behavior in bicameral parliaments. As our empirical focus below will be on the Swiss federal parliament, we will offer in a second part a short review of the literature on this parliament.

2.1 Career changes

If MPs move from one chamber to another in a bicameral system they most often do so for career reasons and, thus, this testifies to their ambition. In Schlesinger’s (1966) classical work on ambition, such MPs possess progressive ambition, as they attempt to move “up the political ladder” (Francis and Kenny, 2000). By doing so MPs will potentially face different reelection constraints and operate in a different institutional context.

A series of studies have relied on such career changers to assess various aspects of what influences MPs’ behaviors. Thus, Grofman, Griffin and Berry (1995) consider in the US context members of the House of Representatives who move to the Senate as subjects in a “natural experiment.” More precisely, as Senators (with exceptions) are elected in larger electoral districts than members of the House of Representatives, these authors wish to assess how such changes affect the behavior of newly elected Sena-

tors. Needless to say, the decision to seek a seat in the Senate and being elected by the concerned voters can hardly be considered as a “treatment” in a natural experiment. Stratmann (2000), studying in a similar vein Congressmen that change their careers, finds that the related constraints do affect the Congressmen’s behavior (for related studies, see Hibbing, 1986; Clark and Williams, 2014; Francis and Kenny, 1996; Francis and Kenny, 2000). Miler (2016) studies how legislators respond to changes in their constituency and by studying 100 legislators who have served both in the House and in the Senate she can show that representatives do indeed change their voting behaviour when their constituencies change: Senators vote more right- or left- wing depending on how their new constituency differs from their previous constituency in the House. This work builds on Hibbing’s (1986) findings who also found a strong relationship between the differences in constituencies and the differences in direction and size of the change of roll-call behavior of Congresspeople who became Senators.

Such changes in the representation behaviour due to changed constituencies have been shown by Buttice and Hightong (2016).

Focusing on the broader question of how behaviors change when MPs move up (and down) in multi-level political systems, Stolz (2003) and Borchert (2011) offer interesting new concepts but little data or analyses to demonstrate the empirical validity of their concepts. Most recently, Høyland, Hobolt and Hix (2019) argue and find that when MPs want to move away from the European Parliament to another elected chamber (or office) electoral systems that are more candidate-centered have as a consequence that changers engage in fewer legislative activities. Thus, while in the absence of “progressive” or dynamic ambition such electoral systems are often expected to increase activity levels, they have the downside that they also induce dynamically ambitious MPs to reorient their activities to ensure election, and activities in the European Parliament for its members are not ranking high among these activities (for a related study focusing on ambitious MPs in several countries but relying on survey data and not behavioral evidence, see Sieberer and Müller, 2017).

2.2 The Swiss upper and lower house

The Swiss federal parliament, designed in its essence in the Constitution of 1848, followed quite closely the blue-print that the framers of the US constitution (Hamilton, Jay and Madison, 1787) had developed for Congress (see for this, for instance Rappard, 1941). Thus, the two chambers have equal power, with the upper house being com-

posed of two, respectively one (for the six smallest cantons), members from each Canton, while in the lower house each Canton is represented with an approximately proportional (to its voting population) number of seats. In Switzerland, the introduction of the two-chamber system was intended to preserve the cohesion of the various cultural parts of the country. Due to the composition of the lower house of parliament, it would be possible for the populous, German-speaking and (at least formerly) Protestant cantons to overrule the less populous, Latin or Catholic cantons. The consequence, however, is that the small, sparsely populated cantons are clearly overrepresented in the Council of States.

Originally, the electoral system in both chambers was similar with elections run by majority rule, however, in the case of Switzerland, with several multi-member districts. Only early in the 20th century a proportional electoral system was introduced for the elections to the lower house (provided that the cantonal district magnitude exceeded one, see Lutz and Strohmann, 1998).³ The upper house is still elected by majority. The chambers therefore have very different partisan compositions. In the upper house, parties of the centre dominate, since centrist candidates tend to win in a majority voting system and because in Switzerland neither the right nor the left has a majority in a canton. In the lower house, the parties are represented according to their actual strength. But the two parliamentary chambers in Switzerland differ not only in terms of the institutional particularities and the partisan make-up. The Council of States is also acknowledged to have a different "political culture". For example, it is of predominant importance that the upper house is regarded as the representation of the cantons. The members therefore do not appreciate it if a speaker mentions his party by name in the floor of the parliament. In addition, some traditions are maintained, such as a dress code that prescribes very formal dress.

Given these differences, several scholars attempted to assess whether MPs' behavior differed between the two chambers. Thus Bütikofer and Hug (2010) rely on a small number of roll call votes in the upper house and a much larger number for the lower house (see Hug, 2010) to assess the ideological stances of members in both houses, finding a more centrist tendency for members of the upper house instead of the widely- believed shift to the right. Martin and Hug (2018 (forthcoming)), relying on voting data coded on the basis of video recordings from votes in the upper house (see Bütikofer, 2014) and taking advantage of the fact that MPs in both chambers vote

³ In Switzerland the electoral constituencies are the same while the electoral rules for electing members of the two chambers differ for almost all federal units.

on the same issues that are subsequently voted upon by citizens in referendums, locate with an IRT (item-response theory) model the median voter of each MP and all MPs in a common space (see also Hug and Martin, 2012). Their results suggest that MPs elected under majority rule (i.e., mostly MPs from the upper house) adopt positions much closer to their respective median voter than MPs elected under proportional representation (mostly from the lower house) (for a related study, see Stadelmann, Portmann and Eichenberger, 2019 (forthcoming)).⁴ However, this circumstance has an impact on the selection of all candidates running for the upper house. Central parties nominate conciliatory persons and the polar parties in general very moderate members. Members of lower house, including member of the party groups of the extreme parties, who are successfully elected to the upper house, rarely represent extreme positions.

3 Theory

Francis and Kenny (2000) in their work of career ladders in the United States consider several dimensions in order to arrive at a rank ordering of several elected positions in this political system. These dimensions are the size of the territorial jurisdiction over which an elected official gets a say, the size of the constituency, and (more implicitly) the influence of the official which might depend on the size of the chamber.⁵ Thus, moves from one elected office to another involve often changes along at least one of these dimensions and thus induce, in Francis and Kenny's (2000) terms, different utility levels.

We depict these three dimensions in Figure 1 and illustrate how moves from a position in a regional parliament can be depicted in this three dimensional space. In the case that interests us in this paper, Switzerland, moving from a cantonal parliament to the lower house at the national level implies a larger territorial jurisdiction and (in most cantons, i.e., those that have more than one electoral constituency for cantonal elections) a larger constituency.⁶ A move from the lower house to the upper house in Switzerland does not affect the size of the constituency or their territorial jurisdiction,

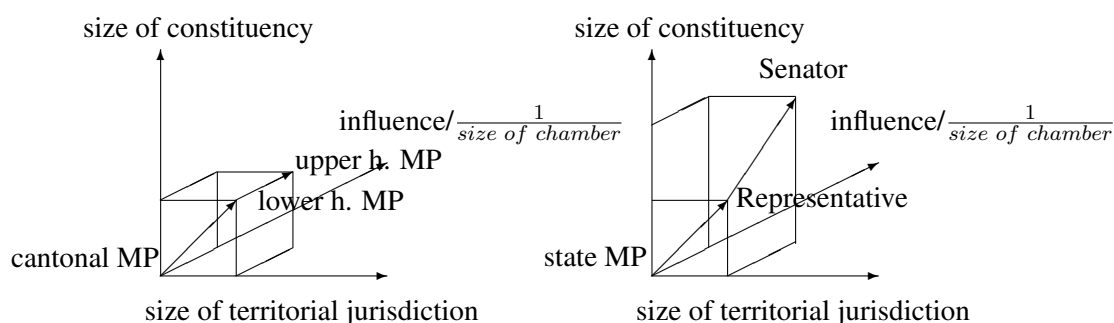
⁴See also the studies by Kriesi (1998) and Lachat (2006) focusing on the strategic nature of elections for the upper house.

⁵Oftentimes, as in Switzerland, smaller chamber size also goes along with smaller committees and, linked to this, more committee memberships per MP.

⁶While the size of the chamber also changes in such a move, we do not depict this change, as it is less relevant and changes as a function of the MPs' canton of residence (as the cantonal parliaments differ in size).

but increases the influence of MPs by being seated in a smaller chamber.⁷

Figure 1: Moving in Switzerland and the US



For comparative purpose we depict in the panel on the right similar moves in the context of the United States. Moving up from the state legislature to the House of Representatives implies identical changes as in Switzerland, namely a larger territorial jurisdiction and a larger constituency. On the other hand, moving from the House of Representatives to the Senate implies (with the few exceptions for states that only have one representative, see Francis and Kenny, 2000) not only a smaller chamber (as in Switzerland) but also an increase in the size of the constituency.

Based on her overview over elected second chambers Russell (2012, 120) provides a list of 21 national parliaments that fulfill this criterion. In table 1 we offer information on the elements identified by Francis and Kenny (2000)⁸ as affecting the attractiveness of seats in these upper and lower houses.⁹ Referring to the dimension “influence” depicted in Figure 1 this table shows that in all the parliaments listed by Russell (2012)

⁷It is noteworthy that among the countries with directly elected chambers Brazil is very similar to the Swiss case (see below). Both chambers are elected in state-wide electoral districts, with the members of the lower house elected in open list PR elections while those of the upper house are elected in a majoritarian electoral system (see, for instance Desposato, 2006). Studies focusing on the ambitions of members of the Brazilian Congress include Samuels (2000, 2003, 2003) and Leoni, Pereira and Renno (2004).

⁸Tsebelis and Money (1997, 47) also include Croatia, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Malaysia, Norway, Spain, Venezuela and new Yugoslavia. but not Palau, Uruguay in their list of bicameral systems with elected second chambers.

⁹We rely on the Interparliamentary Union’s parline database (<http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/parlinesearch.asp>) as the database on electoral systems provided by Bormann and Golder (2013) only offers information on elections to the lower house (and in addition fails to report the range of district magnitudes). Nevertheless, in the appendix, we report comparable information for the elections to the lower house for these countries.

the influence on decisions in the upper house is larger, as the latter are without a single exception smaller in size than their corresponding lower chamber.¹⁰

Regarding a second dimension depicted in Figure 1, in a majority of second chambers members are elected in a smaller number of districts, which implies that the size of the constituency (on average) increases. Finally, and this is of importance for the Swiss case, also the electoral systems employed for the elections to the two chambers differ in many cases.

The overview reported in table 1 and the conceptual ideas proposed by Francis and Kenny (2000) suggest that the effect of changing from one chamber to another will depend on the exact institutional configurations. In the Swiss case, changing from the lower to the upper house implies for almost all changers a different electoral system, namely a switch from a proportional representation system to a majoritarian one. This switch suggests that they will adjust their voting behavior according to what theory suggests concerning the ideological positioning of MPs (see Martin and Hug, 2018 (forthcoming)). More specifically, relying in part on Cox's (1997) theoretical argument, they suggest that centripetal behavior in terms of policy positions is more likely for members of the upper house.

As the two chambers also differ in size, while having the same number of standing committees (since the adoption of a reform in the late 20th century, see Lüthi, 1997) this also has implications for other behaviors than voting. In a smaller chamber (46 instead of 200 members) and a fixed number of committees (though with a less than proportional reduction of their sizes) MPs in the upper house are on average members of more committees than their colleagues from the lower house. In a smaller chamber speeches and speaking time are also likely to be more numerous, respectively longer.¹¹ Informal rules, namely that MPs of the upper house are supposed to represent, amongst others, the interests of their canton, is likely to affect behaviors as well.¹²

This leads us to expect the following:

¹⁰Obviously the influence of MPs depends also on the respective powers assigned to the two chambers. These are discussed in detail in Russell (2012), and as they are not the main focus in the empirical part of this paper, we will leave them aside, by noting that the Swiss upper house (and its relation to the lower house) was designed following the example of the United States Senate (Rappard, 1941). Both of these chambers, as well as the ones of Australia and Japan are considered by Lijphart (1999) as having symmetric power.

¹¹As Bütikofer and Hug (2010) discuss, the common conception is that the Swiss upper house is more of a debating club prone to "think."

¹²This may obviously also reflect the point that most MPs of the upper house are elected in majoritarian elections and thus cater more to the median voter in their respective cantons.

Table 1: Directly elected lower and upper chambers

	lower chamber				upper chamber			
	# districts	magn.	size	el. sys	# districts	magn.	size	el. sys
	<i>(parliamentary)</i>							
Australia	148	1	150	M	8	2/12	76	PR
Czech Republic	14		200	PR	81	1	81	PR
Japan	300	1-28	455	M/PR	91		242	M/PR
Romania	6		329	PR	43		136	PR
Switzerland	26	1-35	200	PR	26	1-2	46	M/PR
	<i>(presidential)</i>							
Argentina	24		257	PR	24	3	72	M
Bolivia	79	1-	130	PR/M	9	4	36	PR
Brazil	27	8-70	513	PR	27	3	81	M
Chile	28	3-8	155	PR	15	2-5	50	PR
Colombia	33	2-	172	PR	2	2/100	108	PR
Dominican Republic	35		190	PR	32	1	32	M
Haiti	119	1	119	M	10	3	30	M
Liberia	73	1	73	M	15	2	30	M
Mexico	301	1/200	500	PR/M	32	2/32	128	PR/M
Nigeria	360	1	360	M	37	1/3	109	M
Palau	16	1	16	M	1	13	13	M
Paraguay	18		80	PR	1	45	45	PR
Philippines	238	1/59	297	PR/M	1	24	24	M
Poland	41	7-19	460	PR	100	1	100	M
United States	435	1	435	M	50	2	100	M
Uruguay	19	2-	99	PR	1	30	31	PR

Note: M: majoritarian electoral system; PR: proportional representation electoral system

Source: <http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/parlinesearch.asp>

- MPs who move from the lower to the upper chamber will moderate their political stance due to the majoritarian electoral system.
- MPs who move to the upper chamber will increase their debate participation and focus in their speeches more on local concerns.
- MPs who move to the upper chamber will adjust their activities in terms of private member bills etc., to the norms prevalent in the new chamber.

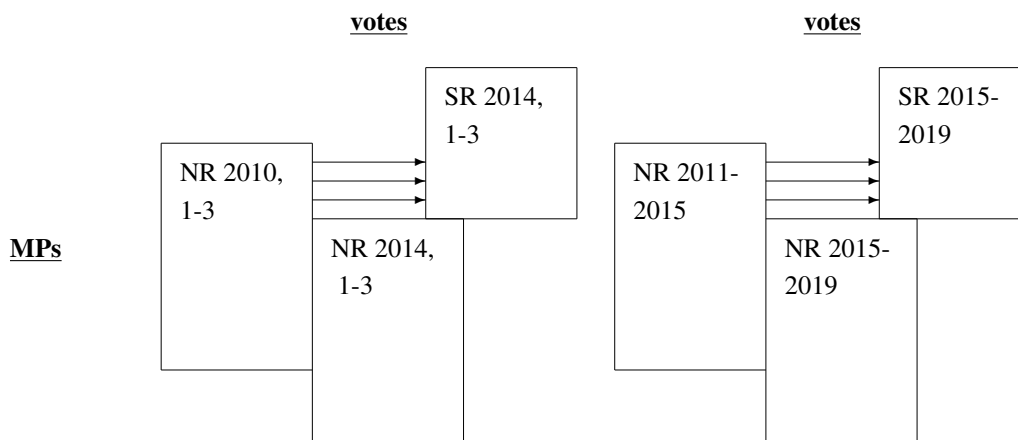
4 Data and empirical approach

The focus on Switzerland, apart from presenting a case different from the heavily studied US bicameralism, has the advantage that a rich set of data is available on parliamentary behavior. First of all regarding voting, since the introduction of an electronic voting system in the lower chamber in 1996 all votes are recorded, while not all are publicly available (the non published votes were obtained by Hug, 2010). In the early 21st century the lower house has decided, however, to make all votes publicly available on the website of the parliament. The upper house refrained from introducing an electronic voting system only until recently and follows at the moment the same restrictive policy of making voting information available as the lower house in the late 20th century (see Hug, 2010). For this study we obtained, however, for several legislative sessions of the 49th legislative period (2011-2015) and for the 50th legislative period the full voting record (even for those votes that were not published) from the upper house. As this data covers the legislative sessions from spring 2014 to fall 2015, respectively winter 2015 to fall 2019, we combine this data with votes in the lower chamber from the same periods by using bridging observations (i.e., final passage votes which are taken in identical terms in both chambers) and combine this data with voting data from the preceding 48th legislative period (2007-2011, covering the same sessions), respectively the 49th legislative period (2011-2015, all regular sessions) to assess changes in positions of chamber changers (for similar approaches, see Bütikofer and Hug, 2010; Martin and Hug, 2018 (forthcoming)). In Figure 2 we depict how we use final passage votes as bridging observations (votes, horizontal dimension, that appear for both SR 2014 (upper house) and NR 2014 (lower house)).¹³

The voting data does not only allow us to compare voting behavior, but also to measure, through the MPs' submission of individual amendments, the legislative activity of MPs. For this we can rely on all legislative sessions covered by the data from the upper house and use the corresponding data from the lower house. In addition drawing on several other sources we have information on interventions in parliament (Gava, Sciarini and Varone, 2017), and speeches in parliament (Frech, Goet and Hug, 2018)

¹³As we could only identify bridging observations in the year 2014, we discarded the voting data from the upper house covering the votes in 2015. For the analysis we rely on the IRT-model provided in Jackman's (2012) `psc1` package. To relax some of the underlying assumption that we adopt we also rely on Imai, Lo and Olmsted's (2016) expectation-maximization IRT (emIRT) estimator, and especially its dynamic version (dynIRT, for an application to votes in the European parliament, see Lo, 2018). We will explain these estimations in more detail below.

Figure 2: Bridging voting data from upper (SR) and lower (NR) house in Switzerland



(for more general analyses, see Frech, Goet and Hug, 2020 (forthcoming))¹⁴

Finally, relying on Turner-Zwinkels, Huwyler, Bailer, Frech, Manow and Hug’s (2019) Swiss MPs’ career data, we identify all MPs who, after having had a seat in the lower house, have sought and won a seat in the upper house.¹⁵ Here we present some initial descriptive information on who the MPs attempting to change from the lower to the upper chamber and those that succeed are. For this we focus on the most recent full legislative periods for which we have full information.¹⁶ In Figure 3 (data from Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2019) we report for MPs who were in the lower house in the legislative period 2007-2011 and compare them to those who ran unsuccessfully for a seat in the upper house and those you did so successfully.

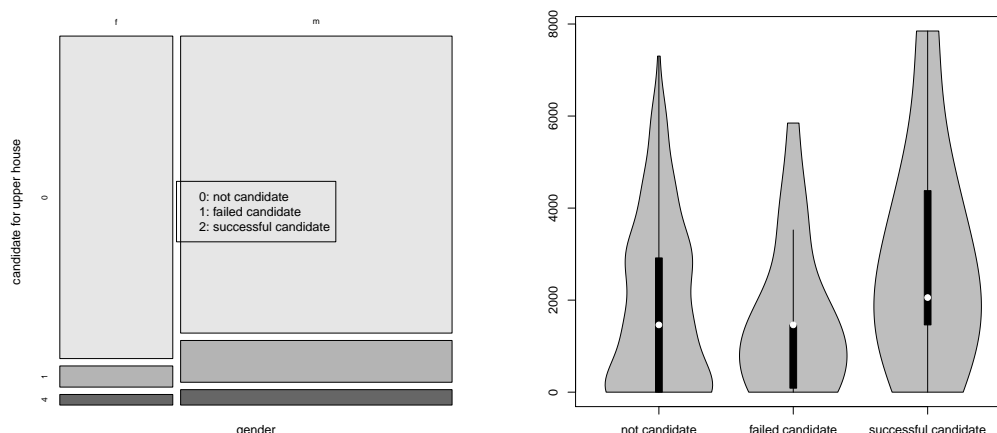
As the left panel in Figure 3 nicely shows, women are still considerably underrepresented in the lower chamber (they are also in the upper chamber) and they are also underrepresented among MPs who aim for a step “up the political ladder.” Also among

¹⁴Questions in parliament, which are often studied for the same purpose (see Bailer, 2011) do not lend themselves for such analyses on Switzerland. As only the lower house organizes question hours (see article 31 of the standing orders <https://www.admin.ch/opc/de/classified-compilation/20030895/index.html#a31>, accessed February 13th, 2019) while the upper house does not have this practice (see standing order <https://www.admin.ch/opc/de/classified-compilation/20030743/index.html> we would not be able to carry out any comparisons).

¹⁵Several tables in the appendix offer lists of new members of the upper house after the last five elections and indicate whether some newly elected members of the upper house have had a seat in the lower house before their election.

¹⁶In the appendix we provide for the last five legislative periods information on whether newly elected members of the upper house had previously sat in the lower chamber

Figure 3: Gender and experience of changers compared (2007-2015)



the successful (nine members of the lower house succeeded in their dynamic ambition to move to the upper house) MPs, the share of women is lower.

These three categories also differ with respect to their political experience in the lower chamber (measured as number of days in office at the beginning of the legislative period 2007-2011). Not surprisingly the right panel in Figure 3 shows that on average successful candidates running for a seat in the upper house have more political experience in the lower chamber. This distribution is interesting to compare with those for the two other categories of MPs. Surprisingly, those that ran unsuccessfully for the upper chamber have less political experience in the lower chamber than the average MP of this chamber, while both sets of MPs have lower averages.

These differences across different categories of MPs in the lower house will be at the heart of our empirical analyses that follow. As our voting data, interventions, and speeches cover longer time periods we have the possibility to use this information in differences-in-differences design, comparing MPs who changed to the upper house to those that stayed put in the lower house, both before and after the change. As our voting data for the upper house is currently limited to some sessions from the 49th legislative period, we will restrict our analysis to MPs of the 48th and 49th legislative period, some of which stayed in the lower house, some of which changed from the lower to the upper house at the beginning of the 49th legislative period, etc.

While such differences-in-differences designs (Angrist and Pischke, 2008; Lech-

ner, 2011) have intuitive appeal and great strengths in estimating causal effects, they also rely on a series of assumptions, which are unlikely to all hold in our case. A major challenge appears due to the fact that MPs who change from the lower to the upper house first of all seek such a move and in addition are allowed such a move by voters. This obviously is likely to violate the parallel slope assumption required in the differences-in-differences design. Or to put it into more substantive terms: MPs who seek to change to the upper house are likely to change their behavior already in their last term in the lower house, especially when it comes to increasing their election chances. If such changes in behavior are occurring (for discussions, respectively related empirical analyses regarding this, see Miler, 2016; Høyland, Hobolt and Hix, 2019), however, they will tend to bias our findings against our hypotheses. Thus, we will proceed without taking this problem into account, which might be taken as an indication that our results are largely (only) descriptive.

5 Results

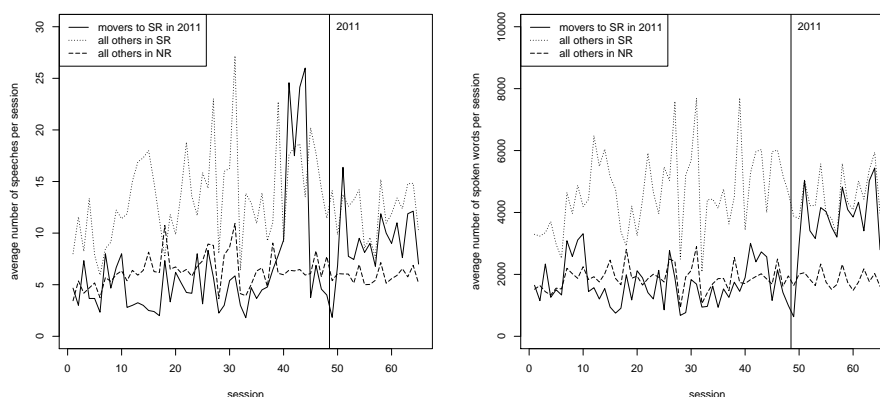
Our expectations for MPs who change from the lower to the upper house in Switzerland come basically in two categories. On the one hand as the upper (and smaller) chamber operates in part in a different institutional context, we expect that changing MPs adjust their activities to reflect these chamber specific constraints. On the other hand, we expect behavioral differences that are due to the fact that these MPs have moved up the ladder and, due to a largely different electoral system, will make adjustments. Thus, we present our empirical results in two subsections.

5.1 Level of activities

A considerable time of MPs is devoted to participation in floor debates (Proksch and Slapin, 2012, 2012). Thus, speeches allow for a first glimpse at the activity of MPs who change from one chamber to the other. Relying on the speeches from both chambers collected by Frech, Goet and Hug's (2018) (i.e. from the 46th to the 49th legislative period) we assess how speech activities evolve for changing MPs. For this analysis it has to be kept in mind that, as Frech, Goet and Hug (2020 (forthcoming)) show, speaking is much more regulated and constrained in the lower house than in the upper house. Consequently, we would expect in general more speech-activity in the upper house than in the lower house.

The left-hand panel in Figure 4 depicts the average number of speeches for three groups of MPs over time, namely those that change chamber in the 49th legislative period and those of each chamber minus the changing MPs. This panel shows that on average MPs of the upper house intervene more often than their colleagues in the lower chamber. This is not surprising, given that it is a much smaller chamber (46 instead of 200 members). Interesting is, however, the speech-pattern of changing MPs. While for most of the time preceding their change, these MPs speak at similar rates as their colleagues in the lower chamber, in the last legislative period before their change (sessions 37 to 48, arbitrary numbering), their speech activity increases dramatically (this especially in the middle of this legislative period). These peaks correspond to speech-activities almost identical to those of their future colleagues in the upper house. After their change to the upper house these MPs' average number of speeches per session tracks more closely the corresponding number of their colleagues of the upper house, though, being on average slightly lower.

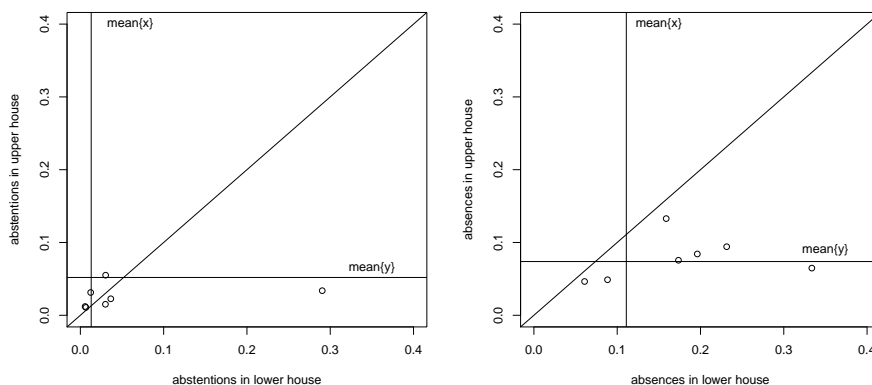
Figure 4: Number and length of speeches



The right-hand panel of Figure 4 depicts the average length of the MPs' speeches for the same three groups. Again, we find that members in the upper house make on average longer speeches, while those of the lower house and the changing MPs make shorter speeches. These two groups, contrary to what appeared in the left-hand panel, follow identical trends all the way up to the end of 2011 when the changers move to the upper house. Starting from the second session these latter MPs catch immediately up and utter per session very similar number of words as their new chamber colleagues.

Making speeches is obviously a low cost activity and thus it can not surprise that changing MPs, quickly after finding themselves in the upper house, adjust to the institutions prevalent in their new “home.” A similarly low cost activity is obviously the one MPs are primarily elected for, namely voting on proposals in the plenary. In Figure 5 we depict for the nine changers how their participation, measured on the one hand as the proportion of abstentions and on the other as the proportion of absences at votes, changes pre- and post-change.

Figure 5: Abstentions and absentism (before and after a change, 2007-2015)



The left panel of Figure 5 shows that with one exception all changing MPs behave very similarly regarding abstentions before and after their step “up the political ladder.” More specifically, while these nine MPs were still in the lower chamber they abstained from a very small proportion of votes. The only exception is one MP who presided for a year over the lower chamber and this, by custom, meant that she abstained from most votes. Thus, the abstention rate of changers is very close to the average in the lower chamber (vertical line). Interestingly, once they change to the upper house they largely retain their abstention-activity, as the observations all cluster close to the 45-degree line. Thus, as on average abstentions are more frequent in the upper house (horizontal line) they abstain (with one exception) less often than this average. Once they changed their seat to the upper house, their absences became less frequent (all observations are below the 45-degree line) and become much more aligned with the average in the upper house.

The panel on the right in Figure 5 depicts the same information for absences during

votes. Being present during votes is obviously more costly than abstentions and the pattern that appears differs as well. First of all, the vertical lines show that absences or on average more frequent in the lower house than in the upper house. In addition, the nine changers, with two exceptions, were absent from votes more often than the average lower house MP.

Thus, like for speeches we find changing MPs to adapt to their new chamber in votes. For more costly activities, like personal proposals and amendments we might expect a lesser adjustment by these MPs. In Figure 6 we report the results of three quasi-poisson models assessing whether changers adapt the behavior in terms of parliamentary interventions when arriving in the upper chamber.¹⁷ The three models differ with respect to whether we only compare (over all legislative periods) those that switch to the upper house in the 49th legislative period to all other MPs,¹⁸ whether we interact this variable with a dummy for the 49th legislative period and whether we control for the upper house.¹⁹ The coefficients suggest two main insights. First of all, parliamentary interventions are on average less frequent in the upper house than in the lower house. This is likely due to the fact that in the upper house MPs are on average members of more committees than their colleague in the lower house, and thus can influence (and initiate) legislative matters beyond the floor. Second, the MPs who switch, while not displaying distinct activity levels when it comes to parliamentary interventions compared to their colleagues in the lower house, stand out after their switch. As the sum of the coefficients for ‘after switch’ and ‘upper house’ is slightly negative, this suggests that MPs who changed from the lower to the upper house reduce the number of their parliamentary interventions in their first term in the new chamber, but have not yet completely reduced it to the level common among their new colleagues.

In Figure 7 we depict the average number of individual amendments that MPs proposed in the 48th and the 49th legislative periods during seven legislative sessions each.²⁰ Figure 7 shows that before changing to the upper house MPs who do change submit individual amendments to similar degrees as their colleagues (though at a

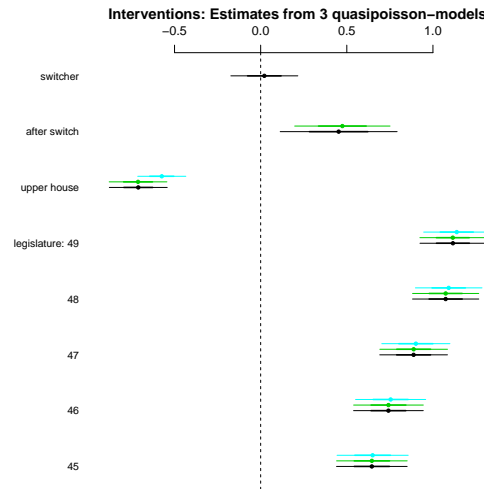
¹⁷We rely on a quasi-poisson model to take into account that overdispersion might affect our estimates of the standard errors. In the appendix we report in Table 8 the full results of this analysis but relying on a simple poisson model.

¹⁸This would account for the possibility that MPs who wish to step “up the political ladder” adjust their behavior already before taken this step.

¹⁹We also control for the legislative periods.

²⁰As we determine the individual author of amendments on the basis of our data on votes, we can only determine the number of amendments proposed by members of the upper house for the 49th legislative period.

Figure 6: Parliamentary interventions (1995-2015)

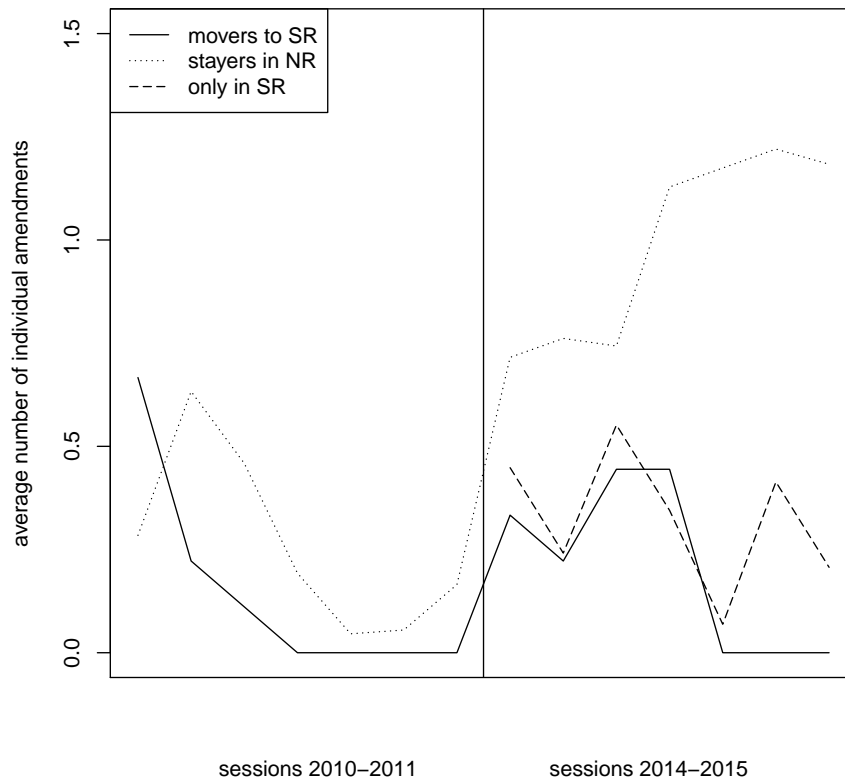


slightly lower rate). After their change the average number of individual amendments tracks very closely the average of their new colleagues in the upper house. Meanwhile, in the same legislative period the members of the lower house increase their amendment activity considerably. Again, this suggests that MPs that change chamber adjust, in terms of their activities, quite remarkably to the levels found among their new colleagues.

5.2 Ideological positions and speech topics

With regard to the ideological positions of MPs that move to the upper house, we have the clear expectation that they will move to more centrist positions. For estimating the ideological positions of MPs we rely on the dataset with bridging observations (as discussed in the previous section), analyze it with an item-response theory (IRT) model in two different ways. First, we estimate an IRT model by assuming that MPs who stay in the same chamber will not change their ideological position, while those moving to a new chamber may freely alter their position once they vote in their new chamber. This implies that we estimate for every MP in the data (independent of whether s/he is a member of the upper or lower house) an ideal-point. For those MPs who belonged to two different chambers in the period of study we estimate two ideal-points, namely one during their time in office in the lower house and one during the time in office in

Figure 7: Number of individual amendments in 48th and 49th legislative period

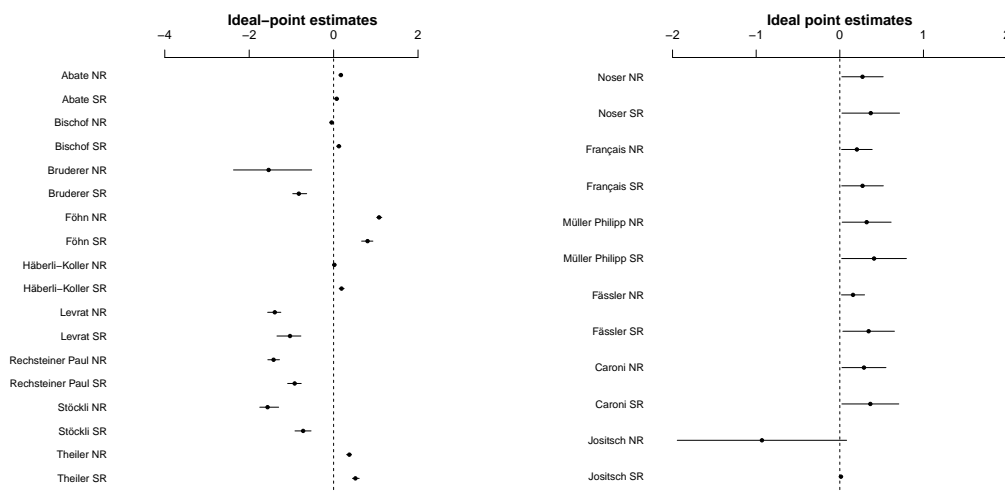


the upper house.

In figure 8 we report the results of the estimations of ideal-points for members of parliament that moved from the lower to the upper house at the beginning of the 49th legislative period, respectively in the 50th. Of the nine MPs that changed from the lower to the upper house in the 49th legislative period, almost all adopt in their voting record a more moderate stance. Only for two MPs, namely Mrs. Häberli-Koller and Mr. Theiler, who are positioned more on the center-right do we observe a slight leftward move.²¹

²¹Note that large confidence intervals for Mrs. Bruderer's ideal-point during her time in office in the lower house (NR) is due to the fact that for most of time from which the voting record used for estimation, she presided the lower house. By custom, the president normally does not cast votes, so we have only few votes for this MP.

Figure 8: Changing places after changing chambers (2007-2015, respectively 2011-2019)



Regarding the second panel depicting the changes in ideological positions of changers from the 49th to the 50th legislative period, the differences are more muted. While we find that for a representative of the social-democrats (Mr. Jositsch) a similar shift to the center occurs, for all other changers the differences in ideal point estimates from the two chambers are quite small. Interestingly, though the uncertainty to these estimates is quite considerable, for all other changers we observe a slight move to the right.

While Figure 8, especially the first panel, provides quite strong support for our expectations, the underlying analysis is based, however, on the strong assumption that MPs who remain in the same chamber do not change their ideal-point. To relax this assumption we rely on a dynamic IRT model proposed by Martin and Quinn (2002). This model assumes that from legislative session to the next MPs may shift their position, and these shifts follow a normal distribution.²² For the estimations we rely on the one hand on the exact same set of votes as for the previous analyses, including the bridging observations, divide, however, all observations into the corresponding leg-

²²Martin and Quinn (2002) as well as Imai, Lo and Olmsted (2016) discuss this model in detail. Given the computational complexities of these models, we rely on the latter's implementation using an Expectation-maximization algorithm instead of the Monte-Carlo Markov chain implementation provided by Martin and Quinn (2002) (for an application of this implementation to the European parliament, see Lo, 2018). We gratefully acknowledge the recommendations James Lo offered us.

islative sessions (three in 2010 and 2014). On the other we expand this set of votes with all available votes in both chambers for the 2007-2011 and 2011-2015 legislative period. We do so because in the first analysis we will model changes in ideal-points on the one hand between subsequent sessions, but also (especially for MPs who change from the lower to the upper house) changes that occur over a period of almost four years.²³

While this panel seems to offer some support, comparing it to the panel on the left suggests that even among those MPs that stayed in the lower house, a general move towards the center may be observable. This is especially visible on the right, where most MPs at extremer position in 2010 adopted slightly more moderate positions in 2014. Consequently, even though the panel on the right appears to support our expectations, the comparison with the panel on the left suggests that we should be more cautious. Thus, in order to assess more formally whether changing MPs move more strongly to centrist positions than all other MPs, we calculate for all MPs that were present in both the 48th and the 49th legislative period in one of the chambers their absolute distance from the mean ideal-point over all MPs.

In figure 9 we depict the averages for MPs who changed to the upper house and those that remained in the lower house.²⁴ While the panel on the left, based on a smaller set of votes suggests that MPs who moved to the upper house became more centrist, those who remained in the lower chamber experienced an even larger shift to the center in the 49th legislative period. This shift, as mentioned above, occurs, however, over a considerably long period, which makes the analysis more tentative. This drawback in the first dynamic analysis is absent in the second, as we employ all votes, allow, however, that the changing MPs adopt completely new positions in their new chamber. Under this assumption the panel on the right in figure 9 suggests that the changing MPs, while still in the lower chamber, were actually on average less centrist than their colleagues, even those that unsuccessfully ran for the upper house.²⁵ After the change to the upper house we find that these MPs have become much more centrist,

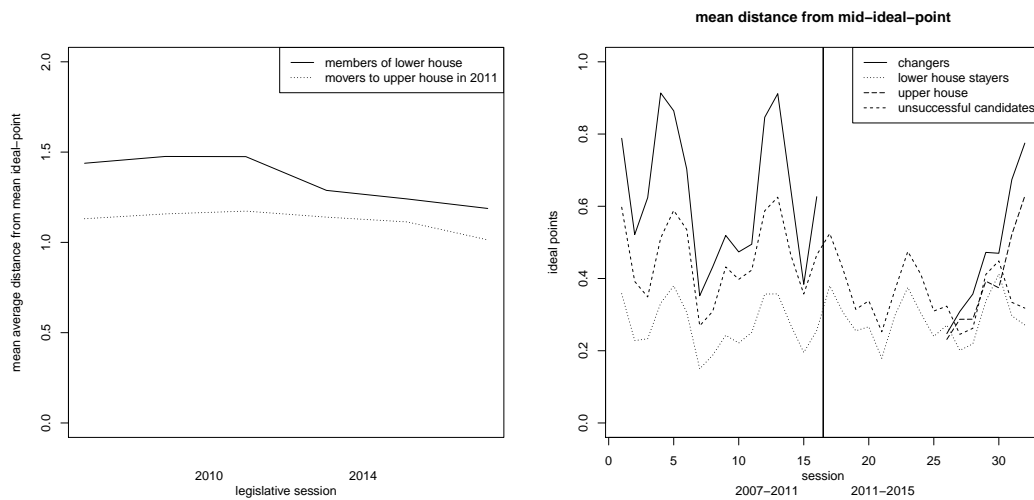
²³This comes from the fact that we only have the full voting record from the upper house for the years 2014 and 2015. For the members of the upper house who changed from the lower house, we have information on their votes, however, only up to the end of 2011. Thus, we have a break of almost four years. For MPs who remained in the lower house, we have, however, no such breaks, as all votes are publicly available.

²⁴The underlying distributions of ideal-points for these two analyses appear in Figures 9 and 13 in the appendix.

²⁵We have not added this information for the first panel, yet, but will do so for the next version of this paper.

but as their first legislative term in the upper house comes to an end, they distanced themselves again from the center. This distancing from the center is, however, equally observable for the other members of the upper house.

Figure 9: Changing places after changing chambers: dynamics diff-in-diff (2010,2014, resp. 2007-2015)



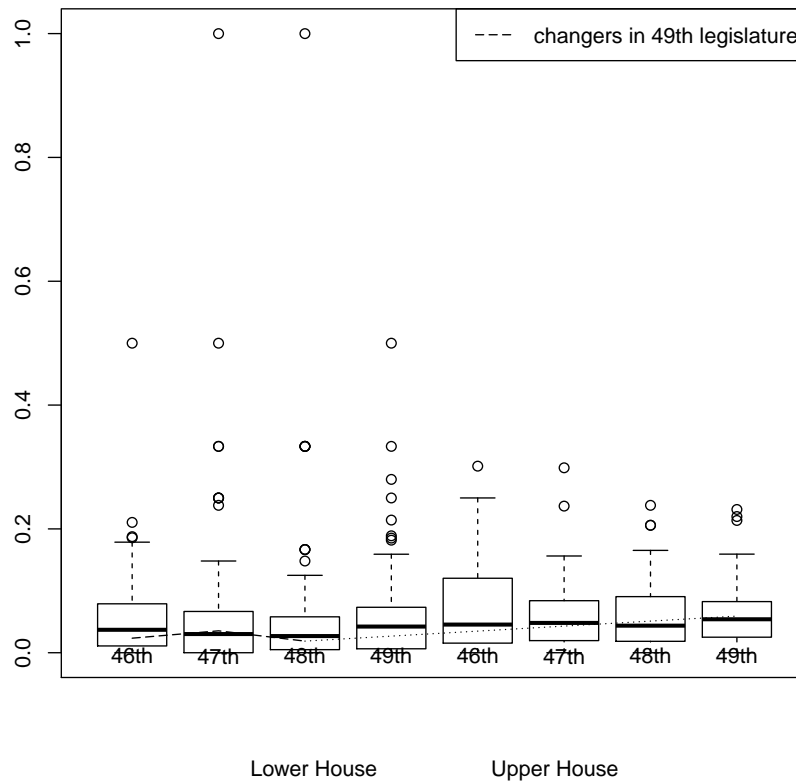
Apart in votes MPs also offer also behavioral information on their political views in speeches. Thus, Schwarz, Traber and Benoit (2017) compare ideological positions estimated from Swiss MPs based on votes and speeches in two policy areas, using, amongst other Slapin and Proksch's (2008) *Wordfish* procedure. As the latter is very dependent on having speeches on the same general topic, their analysis is restricted to two policy areas. For this reason, we will refrain from using speeches to assess policy positions.²⁶ Speeches obviously offer also information on what MPs speak, and more specifically whether they focus on their constituencies.²⁷ Thus, one might expect that MPs in the Swiss upper house, which is supposed to be the representation of the cantons, might refer more often to their constituency (for a related analysis of parliamentary questions in Ireland, see Martin, 2011).²⁸

In figure 10 we compare the speaking activity of MPs that have moved to the upper

²⁶Relying on data generated by Frech, Goet and Hug's (2018) application of Peterson and Spirling's (2018) machine learning technique to assess an MP's closeness to her party as a function of her speeches (for a detailed evaluation of this technique, see Goet, 2019 (forthcoming)), we report in the appendix some suggestive results

²⁷We searched all speeches of MPs for mentions to their home canton and all municipalities in this

Figure 10: Speaking about one's canton (before and after a change)



house in the 49th legislature to those that did not move in this legislature. In the left panel we see that the changers after their change made more often references to their constituency than before their change. While this implies that they reach the same level as their new colleagues in the upper house, also their colleagues in the lower house referred more often to their constituency in the 49th legislative period. Thus, contrary to our expectations we find not an increase in the share of speeches focusing on their cantons amongst these changers.

canton.

²⁸Given that in the Swiss parliament question-time only exists in the lower house and not in the upper house, we are unable to carry out a similar analysis based on questions (though see Bailer, 2011).

6 Conclusion

MPs who change from one chamber to another in a bicameral system do this most often for career reasons and consider it a step “up the political ladder.” In many contexts this step is up as in the new chamber MPs may represent more citizens, have more influence, etc. All this depends on the exact differences between the chambers and affects also the behavior of MPs who move.

Assessing these effects for MPs who move from the Swiss lower to the upper house allows demonstrating their importance, especially as a wealth of unique data is available. Expecting that moving MPs will become more centrist as for almost all of them it implies facing voters in majoritarian elections (and not in PR elections as for most lower house seats), we can demonstrate on the basis of a full voting record for both upper and lower houses that changers do on average become more centrist. This result, however, only holds up if we assume that MPs staying in the same chamber do not change their position. When assessing these changes without this assumption, this result does not hold up.

If we consider other activities we find also the expected trends. As amendments and parliamentary interventions are less frequent in the upper than in the lower house, we show that while before changing chambers MPs behave not differently from their colleagues in the lower house, they adjust after the change to the lower level of activities and speeches in the upper house. Interesting are the effects for parliamentary interventions, as they show that changing MPs adjust to the level of activities in the upper house, but not completely, by being on average more active than their new colleagues in the upper house.

While these results are suggestive and rely on several unique datasets, our findings are not yet on completely sound foundations. More specifically, as some analyses have clearly shown, some of the changers adapt their behavior already well before being elected to join the upper house. This suggests that for a clearer assessment of the effects we are interested, more attention has to be given to the process that makes an MP in the lower house to be dynamically ambitious, and on whose support she has to rely on to succeed in her ambition. Addressing these points would, however, go beyond what we can cover in this paper.

Appendix

In tables 3-6 we report the newly elected members of the Swiss upper house for the the elections in 2015, 2011, 2007, 2003, and 1999 and indicate whether, and for how long, they have been seated in the lower house.

Table 2: New members of the Swiss upper house in 2015

canton	name (party)	term in lower house
AR	Caroni Andrea	05.12.2011 – 29.11.2015
UR	Dittli Josef (FDP)	-
OW	Ettlin Erich (CVP)	-
AI	Fässler Daniel (CVP)	05.12.2011 – 02.06.2019
VD	Françis Olivier (FDP)	03.12.2007 – 29.11.2015
ZG	Hegglin Peter (CVP)	-
ZH	Jositsch Daniel (SP)	03.12.2007 – 07.12.2015
LU	Müller Damian (FDP)	-
AG	Müller Philipp (FDP)	01.12.2003 – 29.11.2015
ZH	Noser Ruedi (FDP)	01.12.2003 – 07.12.2015
VS	Rieder Beat (CVP)	-
FR	Vonlanthen Beat (CVP)	-
NW	Wicki Hans (FDP)	-
SG	Würth Benedikt (CVP)	-

Table 3: New members of the Swiss upper house in 2011

canton	name (party)	term in lower house
BE	Stöckli Hans (SP)	20.09.2004 - 04.12.2011
LU	Theiler Georges (FDP)	04.12.1995 - 04.12.2011
UR	Baumann Isidor (CVP)	-
UR	Stadler Markus (GLP)	-
SZ	Föhn Peter (SVP)	04.12.1995 - 04.12.2011
GL	Freitag Pankraz (FDP)	-
ZG	Eder Joachim (FDP)	-
SO	Bischof Pirmin (CVP)	03.12.2007 - 11.12.2011
SH	Minder Thomas (Übrige)	-
SG	Keller-Sutter Karin (FDP)	-
SG	Rechsteiner Paul (SP)	02.06.1986 - 11.12.2011
GR	Engler Stefan (CVP)	-
GR	Schmid Martin (FDP)	-
AG	Bruderer Pascale (SP)	15.04.2002 - 04.12.2011
TG	Eberle Roland SVP)	-
TG	Häberli-Koller Brigitte (CVP)	01.12.2003 - 04.12.2011
TI	Abate Fabio (FDP)	25.09.2000 - 04.12.2011

Sources: <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/de/home/statistiken/politik/wahlen/staenderatswahlen.assetdetail.284043.html>

and PCP-database (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2019).

Table 4: New members of the Swiss upper house in 2007

canton	name (party)	term in lower house
ZH	Gutzwiller Felix (FDP)	1999-2007
ZH	Diener Verena (GLP)	1987-1998, 2007 (3 days)
BE	Luginbühl Werner (SVP)	-
LU	Graber Konrad (CVP)	-
NW	Niederberger Paul (CVP)	-
BL	Janiak Claude (SPS)	1999-2007
AI	Bischofberger Ivo (CVP)	-
AG	Egerszegi-Obrist Christine (FDP)	1999-2007
VD	Savary Géraldine (SPS)	2003-2007
VD	Recordon Luc (GPS)	2003-2007
VS	Fournier Jean-René (CVP)	-
VS	Imoberdorf René (CVP)	-
NE	Burkhalter Didier (FDP)	2003-2007
GE	Maury Pasquier Liliane (SPS)	1995-2007
GE	Cramer Robert (GPS)	-
JU	Seydoux-Christe Anne	-
JU	Hêche Claude	-

Sources: <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/de/home/statistiken/politik/wahlen/staenderatswahlen.assetdetail.284043.html>

and PCP-database (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2019).

Table 5: New members of the Swiss upper house in 2003

canton	name (party)	term in lower house
ZH	Heberlein Trix (FDP)	1991-2003
BE	Sommaruga Simonetta (SP)	1999-2003
SZ	Kuprecht Alex (SVP)	-
FR	Schwaller Urs (CVP)	-
FR	Berset Alain (SP)	-
BS	Fetz Anita (SP)	1985-1989, 1999-2003
NE	Ory Gisèle (SP)	-
JU	Amgwerd Madeleine	-

Sources: <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/de/home/statistiken/politik/wahlen/staenderatswahlen.assetdetail.284043.html>

and PCP-database (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2019).

Table 6: New members of the Swiss upper house in 1999

canton	name (party)	term in lower house
BE	Schmid Samuel (SVP)	1994-1999
UR	Stadler Hansruedi (CVP)	-
SZ	Dettling Toni (FDP)	1991-1999
OW	Hess Hans (parteilos)	-
NW	Slongo-Albrecht Marianne (CVP)	-
ZG	Schweiger Rolf (FDP)	-
FR	Cornu Jean-Claude (FDP)	-
SO	Leuenberger Ernst (SP)	1983-1999
BL	Fünfschilling Hans (FDP)	-
SH	Briner Peter (FDP)	-
SH	Wenger Rico E. (SVP)	-
SG	David Eugen (CVP)	1987-1999
AG	Pfisterer Thomas (FDP)	-
TG	Stähelin Philipp (CVP)	-
TG	Bürgi Hermann (SVP)	-
TI	Lombardi Filippo (CVP)	-
VD	Langenberger Christiane (FDP)	1995-1999
VD	Béguelin Michel (SP)	1987-1999
VS	Epiney Simon (CVP)	1991-1999
VS	Escher Rolf (CVP)	-
NE	Studer Jean (SP)	-
NE	Berger-Wildhaber Michèle (FDP)	-

Sources: <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/de/home/statistiken/politik/wahlen/staenderatswahlen.assetdetail.284043.html>

and PCP-database (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2019).

In table 6 we depict information on the electoral systems of the lower chambers gleaned from Bormann and Golder (2013). As the latter source does not cover upper chambers and only provides information on the average district magnitude, we draw in the main text on the IPU’s parline-database.

Table 7: Electing members of the lower chamber

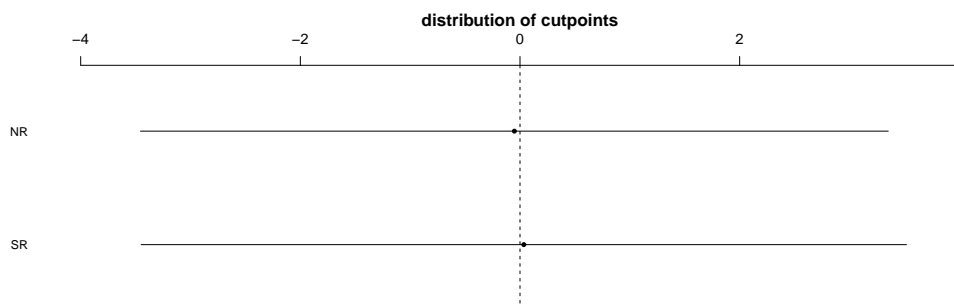
country	date	legislative_type	seats	tier1_districts	upperseats	tier2_districts	tier3_districts	tier4_districts
parliamentary								
81	Australia	2-Jul-16	maj.	150	150	0	0	0
312	Czech Republic	25-Oct-13	PR	200	14	0	0	0
677	Japan	14-Dec-14	mix.	475	295	180	11	0
1020	Romania	11-Dec-16	PR	329	43	17	1	0
1182	Switzerland	18-Oct-15	PR	200	26	0	0	0
presidential								
48	Argentina	25-Oct-15	PR	257	24	0	0	0
175	Bolivia	12-Oct-14	mix	130	70	60	9	7
189	Brazil	5-Oct-14	PR	513	27	0	0	0
241	Chile	17-Nov-13	PR	120	60	0	0	0
262	Colombia	9-Mar-14	PR	166	33	0	0	0
359	Dominican Republic	15-May-16	PR	190	32	0	0	0
706	Liberia	11-Oct-11	maj.	73	73	0	0	0
776	Mexico	1-Jul-12	mix	500	300	200	5	0
876	Nigeria	28-Mar-15	maj.	360	360	0	0	0
930	Palau	1-Nov-16	maj.	16	16	0	0	0
947	Paraguay	21-Apr-13	PR	80	18	0	0	0
973	Philippines	9-May-16	mix.	297	238	59	1	0
989	Poland	25-Oct-15	PR	460	41	0	0	0
1278	Uruguay	26-Oct-14	PR	99	19	0	0	0
1314	United States of America	8-Nov-16	maj.	435	435	0	0	0

Source: Bormann and Golder (2013)

In table 8 we report the detailed results of our analysis of parliamentary interventions.

Figure 11 depicts the distribution of cut-points for votes in the upper and lower chamber.

Figure 11: Distribution of cut-points in upper and lower house votes



In Figure 12 we depict the ideal-points estimations based on a dynamic model using the same set of votes as for the main analysis reported in the main text. Figure 13 the same information based on data using all available votes in the 2007-2011 and

Table 8: Explaining the number of parliamentary interventions per legislative period (Poisson regression, only legislatures 44-49)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
after switch		0.47*	0.45*
		(0.04)	(0.05)
switcher			0.02
			(0.03)
upper house	-0.57*	-0.71*	-0.71*
	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)
45	0.65*	0.65*	0.65*
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
46	0.75*	0.74*	0.74*
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
47	0.90*	0.89*	0.89*
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
48	1.09*	1.07*	1.07*
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
49	1.14*	1.12*	1.12*
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
constant	1.94*	1.96*	1.95*
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
<i>N</i>	1537	1537	1537
AIC	20606.36	20488.00	20489.48
BIC	20755.81	20658.81	20681.64
log <i>L</i>	-10275.18	-10212.00	-10208.74

Standard errors in parentheses

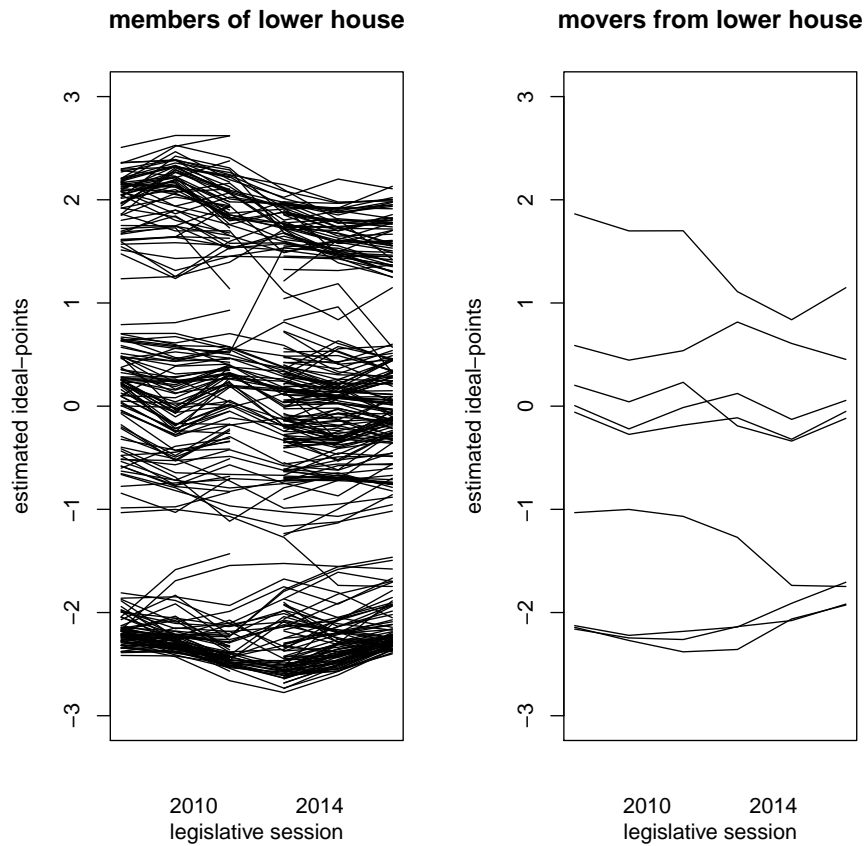
* indicates significance at $p < 0.05$

2011-2015 legislative periods as estimated with a dynamic IRT model.

In figure 14 we report estimations from a model where the share of questions that refer to an MP's home canton is the dependent variable. We carry out the analysis for four legislative periods.

In figure 15 depict the average closeness of MPs that changed in 2011 to the upper house, as well as the averages, per year, for the lower and upper houses (while excluding the changers). While up to 2011 changing MPs are on average as close to their respective parties as other MPs in the lower house (the two curves track each other very closely), after 2011 changing MPs behave more like their new colleagues in the upper house. The latter, as their curve up to 2011 showed, behaved quite differently

Figure 12: Changing places after changing chambers: dynamics



than their colleagues in the lower house.²⁹

²⁹It is also notable that on average speeches in the upper house, on average, allow us more easily to predict party affiliation than speeches in the lower house. This is notable as most observers suggest that in terms of voting behavior parties are less disciplined in the upper house (Bütikofer and Hug, 2010).

Figure 13: Changing places after changing chambers: 2007-2015

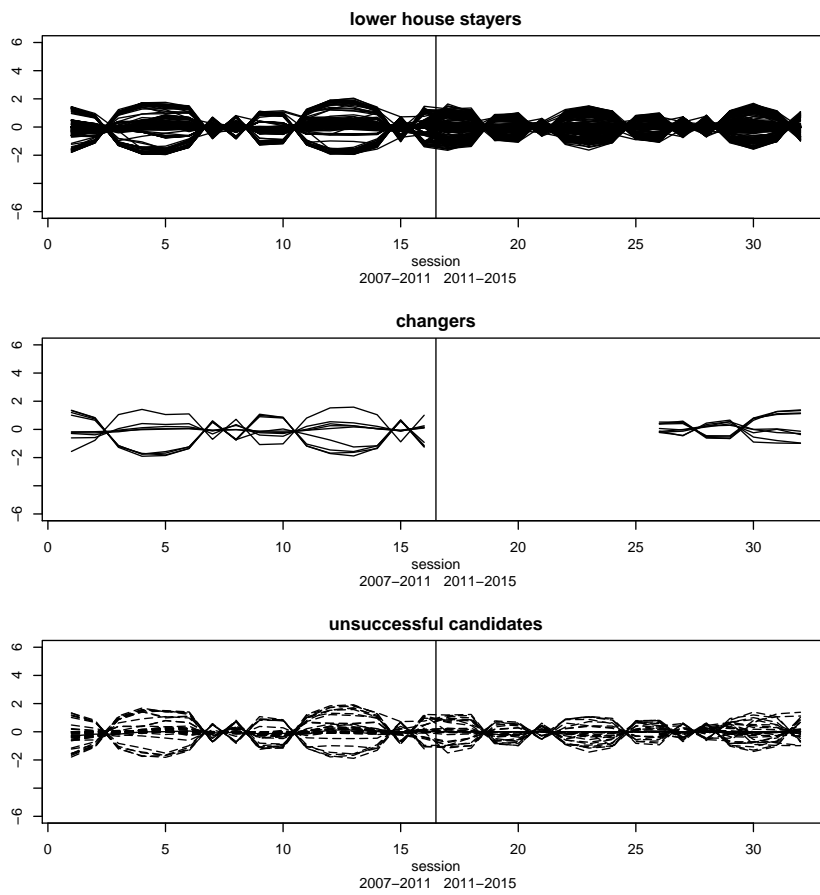


Figure 14: Speaking about one's canton

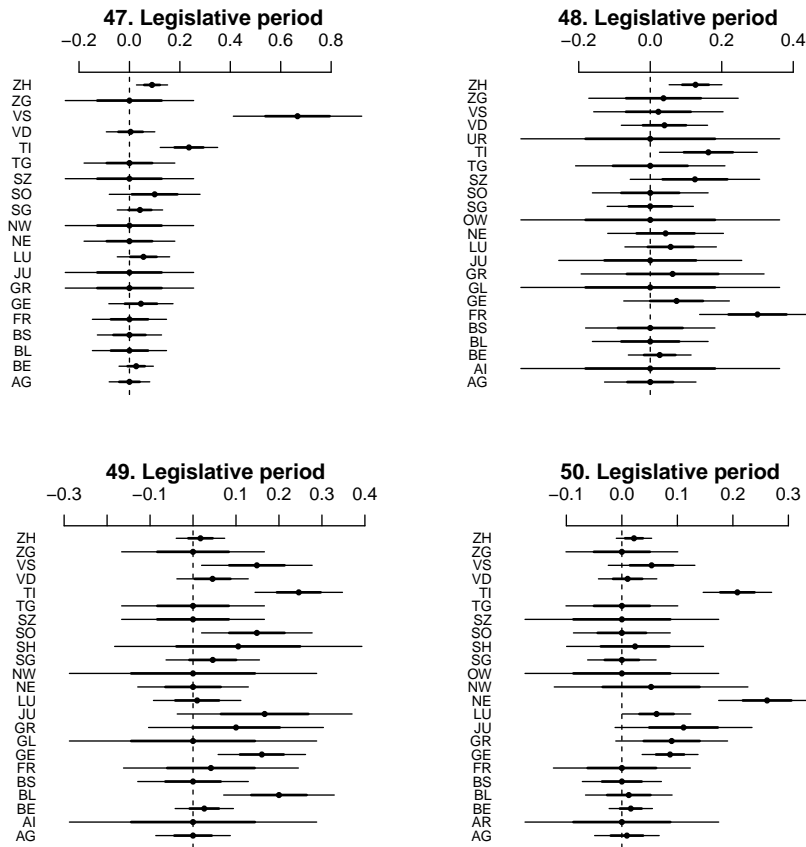
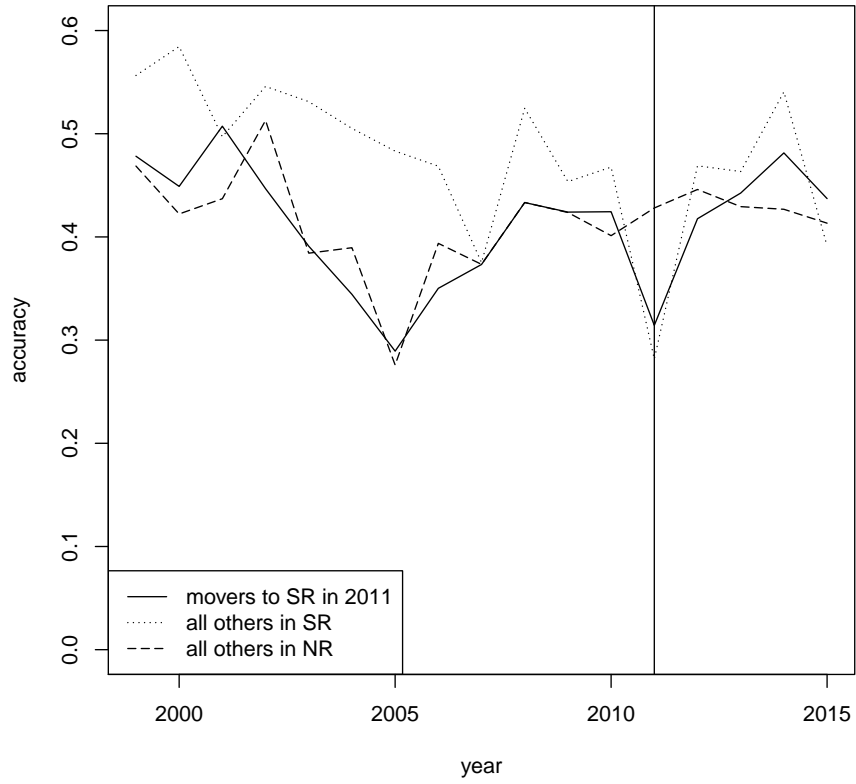


Figure 15: Closeness to party in speeches



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