

# **Parliamentary Playground or the People's Voice?**

## **On the Reasons for Parliamentary Questions in the Swiss National Parliament**

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### Abstract

Parliamentary research finds that parliamentary questions and question times offer the opportunity for parliamentarians to challenge the government or to raise issues which are more low-brow politics, and more citizen- than policy-oriented. Whereas there is some research on the function of parliamentary questioning, there is little knowledge on the motivation of the questioners and the type of parliamentarian choosing to speak during question time. Reasons could range from giving a voice to the voters to disseminating one's name among constituents (Mayhew 1974) or to voicing discontent in the party group. These questions are investigated with a new dataset that combines answers from a survey of Swiss parliamentarians carried out in 2006/2007 with the parliamentary questions in the legislative period from 2003 – 2007 in the Swiss Parliament. The results show that parliamentary questions time is rather a playground for young and ambitious parliamentarians who seek their career in Berne than a place where citizen's concerns are the motivation for asking questions.

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## Introduction

When searching literature about parliamentary question hours in the current political science literature, one is amazed how little information and analysis is available about this legislative activity which gives easy room for parliamentarians' expressions and concerns. Listening around practitioners and legislative experts in Switzerland one finds that the parliamentary questions hours does not have a prominent status in contrast to legislative debates and legislative initiatives. Since parliamentary question hours are a relatively low cost activity which in some countries do not receive particular attention in the public, one might wonder who is motivated to ask questions at all. This puzzle is even greater in the Swiss parliament which can be considered as a relatively weak parliament due to the Swiss governmental system which is characterized by strong direct-democratic elements and the parliament's lack of control over the government (Kriesi, 2003). The following article will investigate in more detail why parliamentarians might be motivated to ask questions.

## Theoretical Background

Parliamentary question hours are useful devices to exert *control*, *political profile* and *responsiveness* functions (Wiberg & Koura, 1994:31) in order to keep the government responsive to parliament. It depends on the national context and parliamentary culture whether parliamentary question hours receive a lot of media attention and are arenas for political contestation as in the case of House of Commons (Franklin & Norton, 1993) or whether they are rather an unimportant legislative event in which parliamentarians might pose questions to the government but receive little public attention. Parliamentary question hours in the Swiss parliament are not rated highly amongst other legislative activities. They usually happen in the last week of the three-week long parliamentary sessions which take place four times a year. Parliamentarians have the chance to submit these questions in the first two weeks of that session and can ask them during 90 minutes on a Monday afternoon. In the legislative period of 2003 – 2007 1132 questions were asked by 181 of the 200 parliamentarians from the legislative chamber (Nationalrat).

Legislative questions are a traditional parliamentary instrument to control the government. They allow a relatively spontaneous and quick questioning of government policies or a fast demand for information by the legislative. Apart from this macro function of government control, Wiberg (1994:30-31) identifies a list of micro functions which questions can fulfil for individual parliamentarians. Amongst these micro functions which I consider most relevant are *gaining personal publicity*, *showing concern for the interests of constituents*, *building up a reputation*

*in some particular matters*. These functions of parliamentary questions match the basic motivations of parliamentarians *advertising, credit claiming* and *position taking* identified by Mayhew (1974) in order to secure their reelection (Fenno, 1973:1).

Although the addressee of the question is always the government or the administration, the actual object can also be the citizen to whom the parliamentarian wants to signal an activity as well as the party group (Wiberg, 1995:180). This signalling towards the own party group and the citizen is possibly used as device to demonstrate activity, commitment, and interest in certain matters. However, it could also turn parliamentary questions even into an act of rebellion by using parliamentary question hours as a means to signal dissent or deviating opinions. Hence, the motivations for asking questions in the parliamentary question hour might have extra- and intraparlimentary roots. An extraparlimentary reason for a parliamentarian might be a desire to represent citizens' interests, the most prominent task of parliamentarians, in order to get reelected (Peltzman, 1985). Deputies may satisfy citizens' requests with relatively low costs in such a question hour. The question hour might thus provide an easy opportunity to signal to citizens that their representative is concerned about their particular issue.

In his famous study, Eulau, Wahlke et al (1959) captured that concept with various roles which they ascribed to parliamentarians. Their role concept of "delegate" describes a prototypical deputy representing certain instructions by principals be it voters or interest groups. In contrast to that, the "trustee" relies as a free agent on his own judgment and acts accordingly. The third role – the "politico" is supposed to be a mixture between the two extreme roles. This third role type tries to reconcile both concepts according to the situation. I will also investigate in this study whether this heavily debated concept (see for example Andeweg (1997) ) might help to describe parliamentarians and their probability to ask questions.

The same hypothesized link between representing a certain group and asking applies for interest groups. Swiss parliamentarians are expected to have especially close links to interest groups since they work in a militia parliament which does not provide them with full time jobs. Therefore, businesses and interest groups have good chances to influence parliamentarians by providing them with extra benefits such as management directorships. Especially the bourgeois parties are characterized by their close links to interest groups leading to "double loyalties" of parliamentarians (Linder, 1999). Consequently, I expect that parliamentarians who have very close connections to citizens and interest groups ask more often questions in parliamentary question hours.

The connection towards the citizen is mediated by the election system with which the parliamentarians got elected. The influence of the voters is stronger the more directly they can

influence the reelection of a candidate (Bowler & Farrell, 1993). If they are elected in a majority system, MPs are more responsive to voters' interests than MPs voted on national or regional party lists (Rasch, 1999). The more directly voters can influence the reelection of a candidate the stronger their influence on their deputy (Bowler and Farrell, 1993). The Swiss parliament offers some interesting variation of election systems. Given that electoral districts correspond to cantons, MPs are elected either in de-facto majoritarian elections in small cantons (such as Schwyz, Glarus) or proportional elections, though with different district magnitudes, in larger cantons such as Zurich, Berne and Geneva. Hence, the effect of the electoral system can be studied in more detail.

Additionally, voters in Switzerland can cumulate their votes and cross-vote which allows identifying parliamentarians who are more or less dependent on their cantonal parties. I expect candidates with a large share of votes from voters of other parties to be more independent on their cantonal party than candidates who receive their mandate only due to party votes. Therefore I expect that representatives elected by a quasi-majority voting system (in cantons with one or two seats) are more sensitive towards voters' preferences and than deputies voted in representative voting systems (Rasch, 1999). Due to these institutional variations, I can investigate the following hypotheses:

*H 1: The more direct the link between citizens and their representatives, the more often parliamentarians ask parliamentary questions.*

*H2: The more independent a parliamentarian is from his/her party and the more votes a parliamentarian receives from non-party voters (cross-votes), the more often parliamentarians ask parliamentary questions.*

as well as

*H 3: The greater the interest to represent interest groups, the more often parliamentarians ask parliamentary questions.*

An intraparlimentary reason might lie in the relationship between a party group member and the party group. A deputy might use parliamentary questions hours not to signal to his voters but to the party group leadership. On the one hand deputies might signal a certain degree of activity, but on the other hand they might use parliamentary question hours as one of the few possibilities to voice their opinion if their party does not provide opportunities for them.

*H4: The more distant a parliamentarian is from the party group line, the more often they ask questions in parliamentary question hour.*

Apart from extra- and intraparlimentary reasons, parliamentary question hours might serve as an opportunity for parliamentarians to improve their public image, to demonstrate their ambitions and to build up a political profile (Wiberg & Koura, 1994:35). Since asking

parliamentary questions is a parliamentary activity with relatively low costs which may or may not result in some media attention, especially young and less experienced parliamentarians might use this instrument to prove their activity and commitment. Parliamentary questions need only very little time of preparation, thus their costs are low whereas their potential positive payoff might be high if a young parliamentarian can demonstrate dedication to a certain policy to the media or the voters. Therefore, I am expecting that rather younger-serving and more ambitious parliamentarians ask questions during parliamentary question time.

*H5: The shorter the parliamentary career of parliamentarians, the more often they ask questions in parliamentary question hour.*

*H6: The more ambitious parliamentarians, the more often they ask questions in parliamentary question hour.*

## **The data**

The hypotheses described above will be investigated with a dataset which contains all parliamentary questions from the legislative period 2003 – 2007. These 1132 questions by 181 of the 200 parliamentarians are combined with a dataset containing the answers of a survey of Swiss parliamentarians carried out in 2006-2007. In the context of a research project entitled “Parliamentary Decisions: Electoral consideration, party pressure and strategic calculations”<sup>1</sup>, we conducted an online-and written survey among all members of both houses of the Swiss parliament in the first half of 2007. In order to guarantee representativity, some non-respondents were contacted and interviewed in person so that we achieved a response rate of 65%. The sample represents parties and cantons in roughly the same proportion as their actual strength in the Federal Assembly.

In order to measure representation orientation we use the answers to our survey questions “How important is it to you to represent the following groups in Parliament?” “All the people who voted for my national party” (in contrast to people who voted for my cantonal party, all the people who voted for me, my national party, my local party at the constituency level, my constituency, my personal opinion”. The answers were on a scale from 1= “not at all important” to 5= “extremely important”. In order to operationalize different roles, I use the answer to the question “How do you vote when the opinion of your parliamentary party group differs from that of your constituents?” (I vote with the party group, I vote with the constituents.

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The institutional constraints are the election system used in the 26 cantons. For the cantons with only one or two parliamentary seats (Glarus, Nidwalden, Obwalden; Appenzell Innerrhoden, Appenzell Ausserrhoden, Uri, Jura, Schaffhausen) we used a dummy variable accounting for the quasi-majoritarian voting system in those cantons (Linder, 1999).

In order to measure the support of other voters than party-voters I use the ratio of votes received from voters of other parties than the one of the parliamentarian to the total number of votes. I use this measure because I assume that a larger percentage of crossvoters supporting a candidate is an indicator for broad voter support and therefore independence from the party. This independence from the party accounts more for cantonal parties than national ones, however, I assume that the ratio is still a valid approximation of our independence concept. Furthermore, I measure the position of a parliamentarian within his or her party group with the distance of his position to the median of all positions of his party group members. The left-right positions were measured according to their voting behaviour in roll call votes(www.sotomo.ch). Time in Parliament is measured in years starting from the date of entry in parliament. In order to account for the time they decide to spend in parliament, we use the answer of a survey question in which we asked the respondents to indicate which percentage of their time they spend for their mandate.

The following table gives an overview of the hypotheses under investigation as well as the independent variables used for their operationalization.

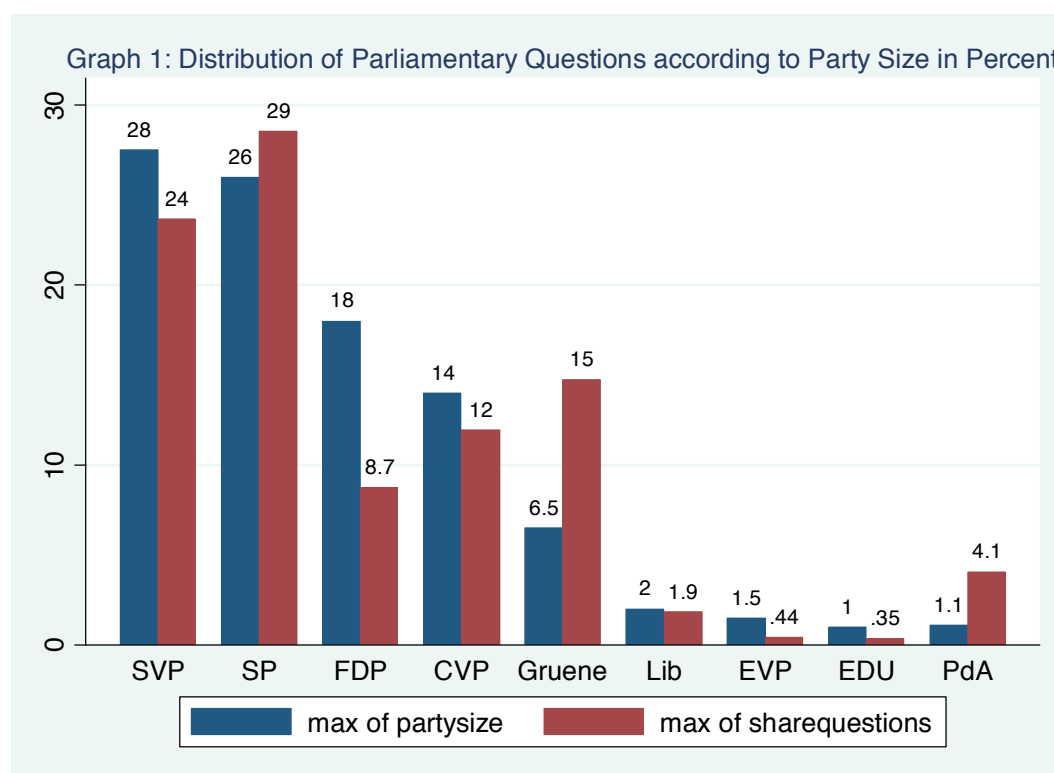
Table 1: Overview of Independent and Dependent Variables used in this study

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Obs
Survey Question: Representation of everyone who voted for national party	3.94	0.86	2	5	104
Survey Question: Representation of other Groups	3.42	1.47	1	5	77
Left-Right Position	-0.49	6.34	-10	10	160
Position in Party Group: Distance to Ideological Median	0.81	0.93	0	7.37	159
Party Group Leader	0.49	0.21	0	1	181
Representing Party Group or Constituency (0=party group, 1=constituency)	0.5	0.5	0	1	90
Distance of parliamentarian to minister of department to whom question was asked	7.37	3.61	0.27	17.28	160
Length in Parliament in years	7.17	4.32	0.29	20.60	128
Percentage of Time used for	5.67	1.83	1	10	127

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Obs
Parliamentary Service on a scale from 1-10 (=100%)					
Majority Voting System	0.05	0.21	0	1	128
Share of votes from other parties	0.26	0.16	0	0.69	126

## Results and Discussion

Of the 200 Swiss parliamentarians from the legislative assembly (“Nationalrat”) 181 asked between 1 and 36 questions in the legislative period from 2003-2007, the average number of questions was therefore 5.66 questions. In Graph 1 I show how the parliamentary questions in the parliamentary period between 2003-2007 were distributed according to party groups.



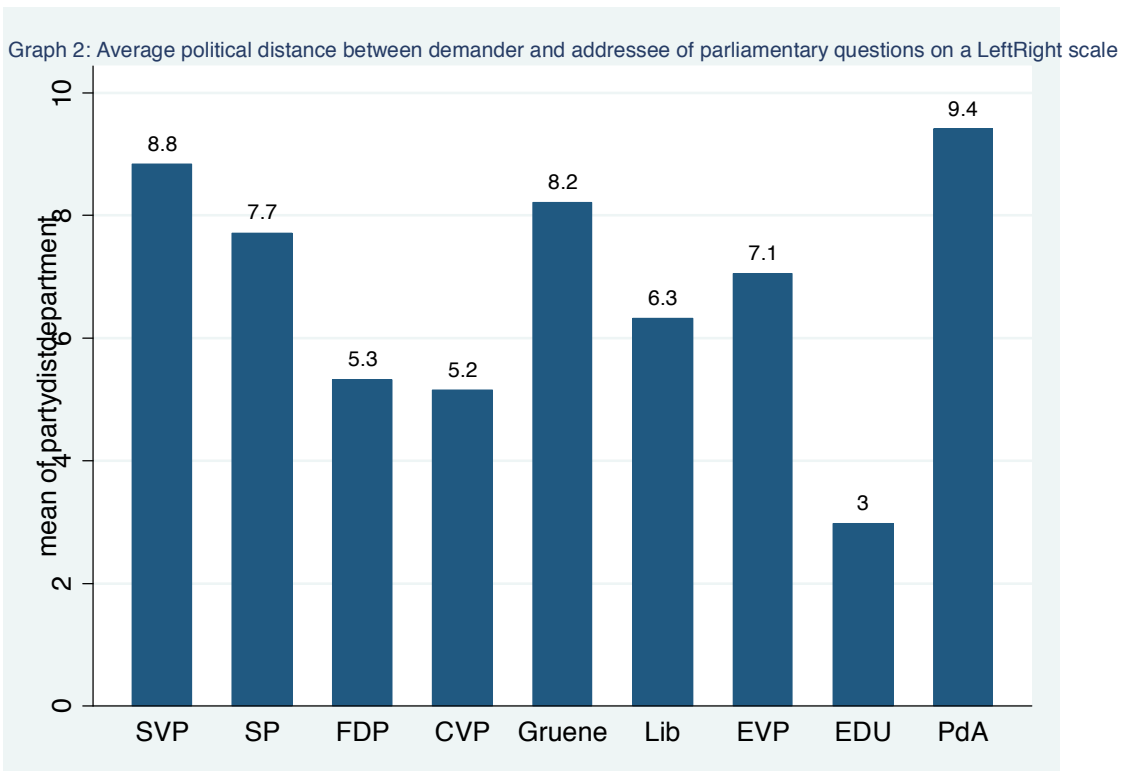
The two measures, percentage of questions asked and party size in percent are closely related (their Pearson correlation coefficient is 0.84), however, the tendency to ask questions varies according to party groups. Party groups from the center/center-left such as the Greens (Gruene) and the Social Democrats (SP) ask over proportionally more often questions than their colleagues from more conservative or liberal parties such as the Christian Democrats (CVP), the Free Democrats/Liberals (FDP) or the Conservatives (SVP). Small party groups (such as the right wing Protestant People’s Party (EVP) or the right wing Swiss Democratic Union (EDU) do not

seem to use parliamentary question time more than one would expect judging from their size. An outlier is the Workers Party (Partei der Arbeit, PdA) whose only representant in the Swiss parliament, Josef Zisyadis, asked 35 questions and can be regarded as a sort of maverick<sup>2</sup>.

As mentioned before, parliamentary question hours serve as a tool to control government. However, in the Swiss context this has a special meaning since the government is nearly always composed of the four biggest parties (according to the so-called “magic formula”) in parliament so that it represents a large majority of parliamentary parties. Additionally, the parliament elects the government but afterwards the government is not responsible to the parliament anymore and cannot be deselected by the parliamentarians. Therefore, the Swiss governmental system is called a “hybrid” between a parliamentary and a presidential system (Kriesi, 1995). However, that means that we cannot treat the Swiss parliament as a parliamentary system which divides the floor into opposition and government parties. At most, the small parties not represented in government such as the Green party can be considered as a sort of opposition. Parties distinguish themselves by being represented in the government and being represented in certain departments which would effectively mean that deputies only ask questions to departments which their party does not preside. If they ask questions to departments presided by party colleagues the probability is high that the questions are arranged (Wiberg & Koura, 1994:36) in order to give one’s minister the possibility to publicize a certain policy activity or to explain a certain policy matter before the opposition attacks it. Actually, only one question of 1132 questions was directed towards a minister from the same party so that arranged questions do not seem to be an obvious problem.

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<sup>2</sup> He became famous on a nation-wide scale when he moved from his home canton Waadt to the small canton Obwalden in the center of Switzerland in order to sue the cantonal government about the injustice of the recently introduced flat tax favouring rich and disadvantaging poor people.



Graph 2 displays the average political distances between a parliamentarian’s position on a Left-Right scale and the ministers to whom a question is asked sorted by party. The result is not very surprising since it shows that parliamentarians from the two extremes right (SVP, EVP, EDU) and from the left (SP, PdA) have larger distances to the addressees of their questions than the center parties FDP and CVP. However, the Green’s position as basically only serious opposition party is shown in these two graphs since it shows that they use parliamentary questions more often and more adversarial against ministers with a larger ideological distance than their colleagues represented in government.

In the following table I list my results of the multivariate data analyses testing my hypotheses. Since the parliamentary questions are count data which are not normally distributed and skewed to the left I use a poisson regression model which models the log of the expected count as a function of the independent variables. This means that the coefficients of the model are not as easy to interpret as in an OLS regression<sup>3</sup> so that I provide an easier interpretation of the coefficients after this first table of results. I also apply the robust option in order to account for multivariate outliers.

<sup>3</sup> The coefficient in a poisson regression says that for a one unit change in the dependent variable (one more question) the difference in the logs of expected counts is expected to change by the regression coefficient given all other variables held constant.

Table 2: Results from the Poisson Regression Models Analysing the Number of Votes per parliamentarian

	Representati on Model	Interest Group Model	Role Model	PartyPosition Model	Career Model	Full Model
Representing Voters from National Party	0.24*					0.22**
	(0.12)					(0.11)
Opinion Conflict between party group (=0) and constituency (=1)			-0.31*			
			(0.19)			
Majority voting system	-0.58	0.53				
	(0.48)	(0.44)				
Share of Votes from other parties	0.34	0.06				
	(0.35)	(0.41)				
Representing others (Interest Groups)		-0.17**				
		(0.08)				
Time invested for Mandate					0.11*	0.09
					(0.06)	(0.06)
Length in Parliament					-0.05**	-0.04*
					(0.02)	(0.02)
Distance from the Party Group Median on a Left Right Scale				0.02		
				(0.09)		
Party or Party group President				-0.36		
				(0.24)		
Leftright Position (-10 left, 10=right)	-0.04**	-0.04	-0.03	-0.04**	-0.04**	-0.04**
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)
Constant	0.91*	2.23***	1.87***	1.83***	1.54***	0.79*
	(0.49)	(0.32)	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.32)	(0.48)
Observations	94	70	81	159	102	95
Pseudo-R2	8.55	7.32	5.14	4.7	9.95	12.0

In all models I control for the ideological position of the parliamentarians on a left-right scale. This variable turns out to be significant in most of the models and illustrates again the result from graph 1 in which we saw that parliamentarians from the left tend to ask more questions than parliamentarians from the political right.

Several of my hypotheses concerning the use of parliamentary questions to represent citizens' desires were not confirmed. In my first model I estimated whether parliamentarians from cantons where there is practically a majoritarian voting system and parliamentarians with a large share of votes from non-party list voters have a higher probability to ask parliamentary

questions. Being from a small canton and having thus a closer relationship to the voters actually decreases the likelihood to ask questions. The variable which captures the importance to represent the voters from the national party is significant and positive indicating that the likelihood for asking questions rises when parliamentarians consider it important to represent the voters of their national party. In additional models which are not reported here I also analysed differed representation orientations (representing the own opinion, the party at the local level, my voters) and the coefficients were all positive so that a more intense representation desire led to a higher probability to ask more questions, however they were not significant and the coefficients were all substantively smaller. That means that a more nationally orientated representation mechanism motivates more to ask questions than the desire to represent grassroots interests. Zittel (2009:15) even describes parliamentarians who place such a high importance on representing voters of their own party as “party delegates”. Only the result for the share of cross-votes in the total of votes confirms my expectation: the higher the share of cross-votes, the more likely parliamentarians seem to ask questions. However, this effect is not significant according to conventional levels of significance.

The impression that parliamentary questions are not necessarily linked to the idea of representation is confirmed by my interest group model which tests the third hypothesis. In this model, the survey answers to the question to which degree the parliamentarians represent other groups were used to investigate the links between interest groups and parliamentarians. In a first step, the parliamentarians could indicate how important it is for them to represent other groups and afterwards they could indicate which groups these are. Surprisingly, the desire to represent other groups rather decreases the preparedness to ask parliamentary questions as the negative and significant coefficient shows. This rather rough measure for interest group representation suggests that deputies choose different channels to represent their supposedly close links to societal and business groups.

In the third model I investigated whether the role concept might explain why some parliamentarians choose to ask more questions. I chose a survey question in which the parliamentarians had to decide between the opinion of the constituency and the opinion of the party group in order to see to which principal a parliamentarian rather tends. Other studies used to operationalize roles often use survey questions in which parliamentarians have to decide between the party group and their own opinion or the constituents and their own opinion (Andeweg, 1997). In the case of the Swiss parliamentarians the overwhelming majority usually opted for “my own opinion” option which would not have given sufficient variance. By using the choice between party and constituents I operationalized the role concept of delegate

representing the constituency and voter's interest and a party-group oriented parliamentarian interested in keeping up his reputation in the party group. The results show that it is rather parliamentarians opting for the opinion for the party group in contrast to their constituents who ask more questions in parliament. This result corroborates again the previous results in the first model that it is rather the party delegates who ask questions. These results demonstrate that parliamentary questions do not seem to result from a close orientation towards citizen needs but that it is rather the orientation towards party group and parliament.

In a party group model I expected parliamentary questions to be a means to voice inter-parliamentary dissent so that I expected outlier party group members to ask questions. This is also not the case. The distance from the party group median has an extremely small effect on the dependent variable; its coefficient is hardly distinguishable from 0. Obviously, parliamentary questions are not an adequate instrument to demonstrate an outlying opinion to the party group. Probably discussions about party positions and conflicts about the group line are mostly dealt with during party group sessions and party group leaders will take great care ensuring that internal conflicts are not communicated to the outside world.

My dummy variable accounting for party and party group presidents and its negative and significant coefficient confirms my expectation that parliamentary question hour is rather a forum for backbencher parliamentarians than for people with higher offices. Parliamentarians with higher functions probably use other means to voice their opinions.

In the career model I analysed personal career variables which give a better indication about the motivating factors which drive a parliamentarian to ask questions in the question hour so that hypotheses 5 and 6 can be confirmed. The variable accounting for the time a parliamentarian invests for his mandate is positive and significant, so that we can see that dedication to the political profession increases the likelihood to be active in the question hour. In the context of the Swiss parliament this variable is rather meaningful since it describes how important the parliamentarians consider their political mandate to be. By law there are not obliged to spend more time than 12 weeks a year for their parliamentary work, but the reality of this rule is interpreted very differently. Some have active professional lives next to their mandate, and others soon decide to consider the political mandate as professional career. Considering parliament as profession and dedicating more time to the mandate raises the number of parliamentary questions. It is also rather the newly-arrived parliamentarians who are rather likely to ask questions as the negative and significant variable of the number of years in parliament shows. Longer serving parliamentarians seem to choose different means of communicating their opinions.

Since this study has a rather exploratory character, I combined in a last model the most promising variables from the career model and the representation model in order to see how they explain the likelihood to ask more parliamentary questions. And it turns out, that it is the career oriented, nationally- oriented parliamentarians who dedicate their energy to this forum of parliamentary activity. Since a poisson regression does not allow easy interpretations of the coefficients as a linear regression, I show the predicted changes in the dependent variable using the prchange command of Stata in table 3.

Table 3: The predicted changes of the full model

Full model	Min->Max	0->1
Representing Voters from National Party	3.7299	0.6398
Time invested for Mandate	4.7282	0.333
Length in Parliament	-3.2812	-0.3598
Leftright Position (-10 left, 10=right)	-4.0803	-0.2068

In the first column, we can see how the predicted value of the number of parliamentary questions changes when the independent variables change from their minimum to their maximum value. The second column displays the change in the independent variable if the independent variables changes from 0 to 1. We can see that the four variables have quite a strong impact on the dependent variable. A parliamentarian is supposed to ask 4.7 questions more when he or she decide to spend not 0 but 100% of his working time in Berne. Furthermore, when the desire to represent the voters from the national party changes from “not very important at all” to “very important” a parliamentarian is expected to ask 3.7 questions more all other factors held constant. Similarly, we can simulate with the prchange option how many questions a parliamentarian is expected to ask depending on certain parameters. If we model the case of a young parliamentarian from the Social Democrats whose left-right position is at the party median and is in his first year in parliament, an increase of his parliamentary working time from 50% to 100% would mean that he or she asks on average 5 questions more.

These results indicate that the questions in the parliamentary question hour in the Swiss parliament are less an arena to voice people’s concern but rather a parliamentary playground where especially young, unexperienced, but ambitious politicians can practice their political skills.

Two examples for such a behavior are the parliamentarians Pascale Bruderer (Social Democrats) and Maya Graf (Green Party). Bruderer entered the Swiss Parliament as the youngest parliamentarian with 25 years in 2002 and has asked eight parliamentary questions in the

legislative period under investigation. Since her entry in the Swiss parliament she had a very steep and impressive career by becoming first vice-president of the parliament in 2008, furthermore she is discussed to become the youngest parliamentary president in 2009. In her case, the parliamentary questions asked might have proved to be a successful means to receive attention. In three of her eight questions she asked questions concerning the European football championship having taken place in Switzerland in 2008. In other questions she was asking about areas which match her portfolio of education policy and social affairs. Five of her eight questions were asked in her first year in parliament illustrating again that parliamentary question hour might be a low-level arena where young parliamentarians can test their ideas and learn more routine for the legislative work.

Similarly, Maya Graf from the Green Party having joined the parliament in 2001 asked 12 questions. With those questions she covered a wider and far more fundamental array of questions covering subjects from capital punishment in Tibet to chemical waste in Basel up to the question whether recycling is considered for office material when a ministry moves houses. These partly very broad questions also signify that this representant of a party which is not in government needs these additional opportunities to demonstrate the general opinions of her party which is not always possible as opposition party.

## **Conclusion**

The above analysis presents a small glimpse about the political economy of legislative activities and investigates which resources lead to asking questions in parliamentary question hour in Switzerland, which is not a high-ranking, particularly important part of the legislative weeks. The analyses and considerations above have shown that the decision to ask more questions in parliamentary question hour is determined more by career-oriented reasons than the desire to represent citizen's concerns. Our institutional measurements and our survey answers which operationalized the interest in representing voters at the local level did not show the expected effects. If the representation orientation matters for deciding whether to be active during parliamentary question hour, it is the desire to represent the voters of the national party which is a rather abstract group to represent. This matches, however, the variable "time dedicated for the political mandate" and "parliamentary experience" which can explain why deputies ask more questions. It shows that deputies who decide to make politics to a more full-time profession in the Swiss militia parliament and parliamentarians who are in their early phases of the legislative careers use parliamentary questions as first parliamentary playground to show their activity and commitment to political affairs. It is quite probable that this activity is more directed towards the

party group or the media than actually towards the citizens as a cursory look at the content of the 1132 questions shows. However, a next step about the role of these questions in this direction would be to identify in more detail the content of the questions to learn more about the motivation why representatives decide to ask which kind of questions.

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