

Appendix

A. Overview country cases

Austria

In Austria, interviews were conducted between February and April 2025, during the post-election period and the formation of a new government, while coalition negotiations were still ongoing. The party constellation in parliament remained unchanged compared to the previous legislative period, with the SPÖ, ÖVP, FPÖ, DIE GRÜNEN, and NEOS all retaining representation. Only their relative vote shares shifted. Given their experience across legislative cycles, interviewees were well positioned to provide insights unaffected by the timing of coalition negotiations.

Germany

In Germany, interviews were conducted between February and March 2025, during the coalition negotiations following the federal election. While the FDP did not return to parliament, the staffer interviewed had extensive experience working for the party and was preparing to continue in a party-affiliated role, ensuring the relevance of their insights. The overall party constellation remained largely stable, with the SPD, AfD, Die Linke, Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, and CDU/CSU retaining parliamentary representation.

Luxembourg

Between March and April 2025, four parliamentary groups (“groupes parlementaires” with 5 or more MPs: CSV, DP, LSAP, ADR) and three sensibilités politiques (less than 5 MPs: Déi Gréng, Piratepartei, déi Lénk) were represented in the Chambre des Députés (ChD). For simplicity sake we will refer to all seven as “party groups”. As part of this study we conducted interviews with 1-2 staff members of each party group, with the exception of the Piratepartei. The reason why we interviewed party group staff in the case of Luxembourg has to do with a special feature of the case: MPs are entitled to a certain allowance for personal assistants. However, this allowance is very limited, and as MPs usually sit on several committees as a result of the small size of the parliament, it is generally felt that MPs would not be able to get adequate substantive advice through personal assistants. In addition, there would be no replacements in case of holidays, sickness etc. As a result, over time a system has evolved whereby MPs of the same party “pool” their allowances and allow the party group to hire a “pool” of staff, i.e. they opt for collective assistants rather than personal assistants. In practice, as MPs mainly work with the staff member(s) who cover(s) their committees, staff members still tend to work with only a small number of MPs. There are exceptions to this. For example, the division of labour in the Green group is so that most staff members work with 3-4 MPs. However, many other interviewees emphasized that closer working relationship between specific MPs and staff members are typical for their groups (e.g. Interview CSV; Interview LSAP). This system is currently used by all six of the party groups covered by the study.

Table A1. Overview interviewees for expert interview per country

Country	Code	Party	Date	Staff Profile (anonymized)
Austria	AT01	SPÖ	25.02.2025	Woman, 8+years, MP in party leadership or similar
	AT02	ÖVP	28.03.2025	Man, 4+ years
	AT03	DIE GRÜNEN	07.04.2025	Woman, 2+ years
	AT04	DIE GRÜNEN	11.04.2025	Woman, 2+ years
	AT05	NEOS	11.04.2025	Man, 1+ years
Germany	GER01	CDU/CSU	26.02.2025	Man, 3+ years

	GER02	Bündnis 90/DIE GRÜNEN	27.02.2025	Man, 3+ years
	GER03	FDP	05.03.2025	Man, 10+ years, MP in party leadership or similar
	GER04	SPD	14.03.2025	Man, 20+ years, MP in party leadership or similar
Luxembourg	LU01	ADR	27.03.2025	Man, 4+ years
	LU02	CSV	12.03.2025	Man, 4+ years
	LU03	Déi Gréng	18.03.2025	Man and Women, 10+ years
	LU04	Déi Lénk	18.03.2025	Man, 10+ years
	LU05	LSAP	18.03.2025	Man 1+ years
	LU06	LSAP	18.03.2025	Woman 3,5 years
	LU07	DP	10.04.2025	Woman, 6 years

Table A2. Interview guide for the semi-structured expert interview

Key question	Follow-Up	Follow-Up	Follow-Up	Follow-Up
1) What tasks do personal staff carry out for your MP? Could you describe and outline the different tasks in detail?	What role does team size play in the division of tasks, and what factors influence it? Are teams always the same size?	What role do other parliamentary services play in taking over tasks for MPs? How does the cooperation work?		
2) How is the work organized within teams of personal staff? Do individual team members specialize?	Are there differences in team organization between parties?	Are there differences in specialization between parliamentary offices and constituency offices?	Are tasks divided into administrative vs. substantive categories?	
3) Which factors influence task allocation and specialization of personal staff in Germany? Please feel free to provide examples.	What role do expertise, experience, interests, and the MP's political focus play?	What role do parliamentary committees play (including the number of committees)?	What role does the MP's constituency play?	Are there external requirements or expectations that influence division of labor (e.g., from party groups, parliament, committees)?
4) To what extent are personal characteristics of MPs and staff relevant to the division of labour?	What role does the political orientation of staff members play in task distribution?	Are tasks allocated based on age or parliamentary experience?	What role does the level of trust between MP and staff play?	What role does the gender of team members play?