


Individuals, Disaggregation of the State, and Negotiation Tactics: Evidence from the European Union

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This article intends to investigate to what extent, how, and when individuals who are below the leader's level affect the processes and outputs of international politics. It does so by analyzing one group of below-leader actors—diplomatic negotiators in EU foreign policy. It first shows how, despite all the bureaucratic layers they are embedded in, individual negotiators have de facto acquired ultimate policymaking responsibilities, most prominently in the selection of tactics. This empowerment of individual diplomats occurs through a process of double state disaggregation: Policymaking responsibilities have shifted from the political to the bureaucratic level; then, within the latter, from the capital-based administration to the officials involved, often in single capacity, in negotiations. Next, it tests three individual characteristics (experience, style, and identity) against an original dataset of 138 questionnaires completed by EU diplomats and 17 interviews. It shows that negotiators' personal traits explain the use of some, but not all, tactics. Specifically, they are less likely to matter when negotiators have to commit the state in significant and explicit ways, e.g., when threatening/exercising veto. When this does not happen (e.g., showing flexibility in the delegation's position or using persuasion), the influence of individual characteristics is instead strong.

Este artículo pretende investigar cómo, cuándo y en qué medida los individuos que están en niveles por debajo del líder influyen en los procesos y en los resultados de la política internacional. Para ello, analizamos a un grupo de agentes que están por debajo del líder: los negociadores diplomáticos en la política exterior de la UE. En primer lugar, el artículo demuestra cómo, a pesar de todas las capas burocráticas en las que se encuentran involucrados, los negociadores individuales han adquirido de facto responsabilidades finales en la formulación de políticas y, sobre todo, en la selección de tácticas. Este empoderamiento de los diplomáticos individuales se produce a través de un proceso de doble desagregación estatal: Por un lado, las responsabilidades de formulación de políticas se han desplazado desde el nivel político al nivel burocrático y, por otro lado, dentro del nivel burocrático, estas responsabilidades se han desplazado desde la administración central capitalina a los funcionarios que participan, a menudo a título individual, en las negociaciones. A continuación, el artículo pone a prueba tres características individuales (experiencia, estilo e identidad) usando, para ello, un conjunto de datos original formado por 138 cuestionarios completados por diplomáticos de la UE y por 17 entrevistas. El artículo demuestra también que las características personales de los negociadores explican el uso de algunas tácticas, pero no de todas. En concreto, es menos probable que las características personales resulten relevantes cuando los negociadores tienen que comprometer al Estado de manera significativa y explícita, como, por ejemplo, cuando amenazan o ejercen el veto. Cuando esto no sucede (por ejemplo, cuando se muestra flexibilidad en la posición de la delegación o cuando se usa la persuasión), la influencia de las características individuales es fuerte.

Cet article vise à examiner dans quelle mesure, comment et quand les personnes situées en dessous du dirigeant ont une incidence sur les processus et les résultats de la politique internationale. Pour ce faire, il analyse un groupe d'acteurs qui se situent en dessous du dirigeant, les négociateurs diplomatiques en politique étrangère de l'UE. D'abord, il montre comment, malgré toutes les couches bureaucratiques dans lesquelles ils sont enfouis, les négociateurs ont, dans les faits, acquis des responsabilités politiques suprêmes, particulièrement dans la sélection des tactiques. Cette émancipation des diplomates intervient par le biais d'un double processus de désagrégation étatique : les responsabilités politiques sont transférées du niveau politique au niveau bureaucratique; puis, dans ce dernier, de l'administration fondée sur le capital aux fonctionnaires impliqués, souvent à titre individuel, dans les négociations. Ensuite, il évalue trois caractéristiques personnelles (expérience, style, identité) par rapport à un ensemble de données inédit de 138 questionnaires remplis par des diplomates de l'UE et 17 entretiens. Il montre que les traits de caractère des négociateurs expliquent l'emploi de certaines tactiques, mais pas de toutes. Plus précisément, leur importance sera souvent moindre quand les négociateurs doivent engager l'État de manière importante et explicite (par ex., quand ils menacent d'utiliser/appliquent un veto). Sinon, s'ils font par exemple preuve de souplesse dans la position de la délégation ou s'ils utilisent la persuasion, l'influence des caractéristiques personnelles est alors forte.

Introduction

As the US army and allies regained, in 1965–1966, territories from the Vietcong, the US government sought “pacification” in these areas; it aimed to win the “hearts and minds” of the rural population and cut the support for the Vietcong. The US strategy was to let the South Vietnam government take control of the territories and to assist their initiatives. Being highly skeptical of this policy and the corrupt and inept South Vietnam government, Lieutenant Colonel William Corson followed a pacification approach that was

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Author's note: I would like to thank the editors at *International Studies Quarterly* and the anonymous reviewers for their valuable feedback. I am also grateful for the helpful comments and advice I received from Niheer Dasandi on an earlier draft of this paper. The data underlying this article are available on the ISQ Data-verse at <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/isq>.

Chelotti, Nicola (2024) Individuals, Disaggregation of the State, and Negotiation Tactics: Evidence from the European Union. *International Studies Quarterly*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/isq/sqae081>

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“contrary to the spirit and intent of every directive, regulation, or order issued by COMUSMACV (Commander U.S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam) and the U.S. Embassy in Saigon” (Corson 1968, 155). In the hamlet of Phong Bac, he bypassed South Vietnam’s political/military hierarchy and directly approached the rural population—leading to greater economic performance and intelligence gathering in Phong Bac. As Corson (1968, 155) recalls, “[f]or this breach of discipline the responsibility [wa]s mine.”

This article intends to investigate to what extent, how, and when individuals who are below the leader’s level affect the processes and outputs of international politics. Even though many activities that characterize international politics are shaped by people (like Lieutenant Colonel Corson) who do not sit at the top of a state’s political hierarchy, we do not know much about whether they (and the traits of their persona) can/do influence what aspects of politics. Below-leader individuals not only prepare almost every decision that is made by top politicians. They are often at the forefront to address international challenges—be they officials of governmental or nongovernmental organizations operating in developing countries, military personnel in charge of operational plans, financial regulators involved in banking reforms, etc. (Slaughter 2005; Halperin and Clapp 2007; Oksamytna et al. 2023).

If International Relations (IR) as a discipline has for a long-time overlooked explanations at the individual level, there has been a reinvigorated interest in recent years (Hafner-Burton et al. 2017; Kertzer and Tingley 2018). The “renaissance” of individual-level explanations—while not being as strong as many would think (Holmes, Jordan, and Parajon 2021)—has nonetheless mainly concerned the “great (wo)men” of international politics: authoritarian and democratic leaders, US presidents, and foreign ministers (e.g., Rathbun 2014; Van Esch and Swinkels 2015; Saunders 2017; Thiers and Wehner 2022). Yet, this narrow focus on leaders would mean limiting the study of individuals to a very restricted group of actors, leaving out many of the interactions that happen without and beyond leaders. As Byman and Pollack (2001, 146) put it, if we want to understand how international politics works, the “personalities of generals, diplomats, religious authorities, and other shapers and implementers of policy cannot be ignored.”

Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) is, in theory, better equipped to analyze the role of below-leader individuals.¹ FPA has shown that “leaders are not alone” (Breuning 2007, chapter 4) in (foreign) policymaking. Departments, agencies, ministries, etc., are all key actors in decentralized processes that shape the government’s response to foreign policy issues. Graham Allison (1969) has famously identified two models, the organizational and the bureaucratic. The organizational model understands policymaking not in terms of leaders’ decisions but of outputs of state organizations functioning according to standard programs and repertoires. For the bureaucratic model, foreign policy decisions emerge from the pulling and hauling among various government groups with different interests. Over the years, Allison’s models have been criticized (Bendor and Hammond 1992), further developed, and applied to many different cases (e.g., Hartlapp, Metz, and Rauh 2013; Lai

and Kang 2014; Gülen 2022; McHugh 2023). However, both in Allison’s original models and in the subsequent bureaucratic politics literature, the substate units are essentially unitary actors; the officials working for them have little influence over the organization’s mission, interests, and actions. They are considered the faithful representatives of the unit, devoted to, e.g., fighting for greater organizational autonomy or budgets (Halperin and Clapp 2007).

This article intends to explore this gap and show the promises (and limits) of studying individuals outside the role of leaders for international affairs. It does so by analyzing one group of below-leader actors—diplomatic negotiators—and arguing that the individual characteristics of these negotiators help to explain variation in the selection of negotiation tactics. To demonstrate that, two important challenges stand out.

First, we need to identify more precisely when and how below-leader individuals are able to shape decisions. Given all the institutions they operate within, how is it possible to claim that single officials are in a position to take the ultimate decision? This issue is similar to the well-known problem of the aggregation/disaggregation of preferences—i.e., moving from the preferences of the individual to the collective decision-making of the state. The actors examined in this paper (diplomats) “work in teams and are embedded in bureaucracies, both of which can mute the causal link between any single person’s preferences for cooperation and real-world policy outcomes” (Hafner-Burton et al. 2014, 867). A second challenge is to show that international players *act* on the basis of their dispositions. Policymakers might be capable of shaping policies. Nonetheless, when making decisions, they might put their dispositions aside and follow other (e.g., international or domestic) considerations.

This article takes up both challenges. The first part of the paper deals with the issue of preference aggregation. It illustrates how single negotiators have become in many cases the ultimate source of state authority, particularly when delegations choose tactics. In multilateral negotiations, a process of double disaggregation of the state is taking place. Policymaking responsibilities have shifted, firstly, from the political to the bureaucratic level; and secondly, within the latter, from the capital-based administration to the officials involved, often individually, in negotiations. To address the second challenge, the article explores negotiating behavior not in controlled scenarios with undergraduates, MBA graduates, or the general public; but in the context of real-world negotiations. It uses an original dataset of 138 questionnaires (and 17 interviews) compiled by diplomats of 27 states involved in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), and its defense dimension (CSDP), of the European Union (EU). These diplomats are not only highly experienced elites. They are also directly related to the outcome of interest—which increases the external validity of the study (Renshon 2015; Bayram 2017). While the empowerment of individual negotiators might suit particularly well the EU context, the processes identified in this article are likely to apply to other international organizations too. Many of the features that make the EU a dense institutional environment—e.g., high frequency of meetings, repeated games and negotiations, diplomatic *esprit de corps*—are engrained in multilateral diplomacy and affect the activities of national representatives in sites like the United Nations, International Monetary Fund (IMF), or North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (Schia 2013; Pouliot 2015; Forster 2024).

¹Since its inception, FPA has developed a well-established tradition of studying individual decision-makers and their psychological and societal milieu (cf. Hudson 2005). Like the IR literature, even this tradition has, however, predominantly focused on the highest political offices. Over the decades, foreign policy scholars have investigated, e.g., the operational codes, personal traits and belief systems of major leaders (e.g., Larson 1988; Schafer and Walker 2006; Gallagher and Allen 2014).

A series of ordinal logistic regressions was used to test the effects of three individual-level variables (experience, style, and identity) upon six negotiation tactics. The findings reveal that negotiators' style and experience explain variation in tactic selection, although this does not apply to all tactics. They do not appear to matter when negotiators have to commit the state in significant and explicit ways, e.g., when threatening/exercising veto. When this does not happen—e.g., a delegation sending flexible or intransigent signals—the individual negotiator's personal traits can be instead a strong predictor.

Disaggregation of the State and the Individual Level

Making a case for the explanatory role of individual traits requires us to demonstrate that single individuals are *in the position* to make authoritative decisions on behalf of their organization (e.g., a state). We need to show that individuals have the ability to provide the authorization of that organization in a conclusive way. In other words, we need to show that single individuals are the “ultimate decision unit” over one particular issue (Hermann and Hermann 1989, 362). This demonstration is often absent, or left implicit, in the literature on powerful leaders—which is one major reason why many scholars have been skeptical about individual-level explanations. Even if leaders sit at the top echelon of governments, they might not be the ultimate decision unit of the state. In many cases, this unit is composed of groups and multiple autonomous actors, such as cabinets, interagency groups, and coalitions.

Such a demonstration appears even more necessary if the argument is that below-leader actors (diplomatic negotiators, in this paper) influence important aspects of international politics. Below-leader actors are embedded in many and overlapping bureaucratic structures, which risks minimizing individuals' ability to shape outputs. Administrative procedures are often designed to involve multiple (also, rival) departments with the goal of offsetting the cognitive biases or beliefs of individual policymakers. We argue that individual negotiators have become the ultimate decision unit when selecting tactics, through a process of double disaggregation of the state. What follows is an explanation of how this responsibility has moved, firstly, from the political to the bureaucratic level; and secondly, from bureaucratic units to individual negotiators, (largely) in a single capacity.

The Double Disaggregation of the Negotiating State

The first component of the disaggregation process is rather well-known. FPA literature has convincingly shown that many policymaking functions are performed by ministries, departments, and agencies in a relatively autonomous way from the political level.² Governments consist of various organizations, each with primary responsibilities for a particular set of issues. Political leaders are largely unaware of the many activities these organizations undertake. Even when they are, changing them is difficult, even for presidents and prime ministers. Franklin Roosevelt aptly captured this point (in Halperin and Clapp 2007, 260):

The Treasury is so large and far-flung ... that I find it is almost impossible to get the action and results I

²The IR literature on transgovernmentalism reaches the same conclusion. It shows that, to cope with transnational challenges, the state becomes disaggregated. International interactions are sought and conducted by subparts of the state (e.g., regulators, judges, and single ministerial departments), mostly outside the purview of the central government (Slaughter 2005).

want ... But the Treasury is not to be compared with the State Department. You should go through the experience of trying to get any changes in the thinking, policy, and action of the career diplomats, and then you'd know what a real problem was. But the Treasury and the State Department put together are nothing compared with the Na-a-vy ... To change anything in the Na-a-vy is like punching a feather bed. You punch it with your right and you punch it with your left until you are finally exhausted, and then you find the damn bed just as it was before you started punching.

If many policymaking responsibilities are carried out by state subunits with wide margins of autonomy from the central government, this autonomy fundamentally “belongs to” the unit as a whole. It is the unit as a whole, which competes with other groups to acquire greater resources or accomplish the organization's goals or policy views. There is little space for the individual roles of below-leader officials and their personal characteristics. Let us look more closely at Allison's organizational and bureaucratic models.

One of the key insights of the organizational model is that, in order to make sense of situations and initiate policy processes, bureaucratic units need to establish standard operating procedures (SOPs). SOPs allow organizations to perform (more or less) complex tasks and coordinate a large number of people. The downside is that they limit the flexibility and creativity of the organization (and of the people working within it). When the organizational model is criticized, it is mainly because Allison largely focuses on the constraining effects of rules and procedures—while downplaying their capacity to reach efficient decisions (Bendor and Hammond 1992). Either way, SOPs appear to leave single officials with a negligible part in the policy process.

The bureaucratic model argues that multiple actors shape foreign policy. Decisions emerge from the pulling and hauling among state representatives. Even here, below-leader individuals have a small role to play. First, the bargaining games are played by the key individuals of the government: “[p]olitical leaders at the top of this apparatus plus the men [*sic*] who occupy positions on top of the critical organizations” like the Joint Chiefs of Staff or the directors of state agencies (Allison 1969, 707). Second, the political stances these elite officials take are mainly dictated by their position in the organization: “[w]hat is primarily a budget issue to one participant is an issue of foreign relations to a second and of congressional relations to a third” (Halperin and Clapp 2007, 15). If Allison at times suggests that personal motivations can matter too, this insight has largely remained at the anecdotal level, within a model that is too complex, contradictory, and unfocused (Bendor and Hammond 1992, 318). Overall, it is the position held within the organization that defines key actors' policy stances and makes their actions predictable. As Allison (1969, 711) famously puts it, “[w]here you stand depends on where you sit.”

Over the decades, the literature on bureaucratic politics has expanded significantly. The main thrust has been to identify the mission and interests of different state organizations and show how their competition over resources or power affected foreign policymaking (Halperin and Clapp 2007). These insights have been applied well beyond the US to include experiences as different as Chinese foreign policy, the European Commission's agenda-setting, or turf wars within the Turkish foreign policy bureaucracy (Hartlapp, Metz, and Rauh 2013; Lai and Kang 2014; Gülen 2022). These works have gone a long way toward improving our understanding of the disaggregation of the state and the de-

centralization of foreign policymaking. However, their analytical focus remains at the level of the substate organization: The goals, disputes, autonomy, etc., are of a particular ministry, department, or agency. The subunits are largely considered unitary bodies. Once the disaggregation occurs, the members of the organization are viewed as the bureau's faithful representatives.

Instead, we argue that a second disaggregation takes place, which is internal to the substate units: Policymaking responsibilities have shifted from the unit itself to individual officials, often in single capacity. The second disaggregation is most visible in the intersections between the domestic and the international—e.g., when the state interacts with other international actors on a regular, sustained basis. This is the case, for instance, of diplomats posted to embassies and permanent missions; officers in the field (like Lieutenant Colonel Corson) tasked with operational objectives; and bureaucratic agents participating in trans-governmental networks of global regulatory governance. In its daily activities, the state stretches out, and these officials end up having sizeable leeway in carrying out their duties.

Prominent examples of this phenomenon are negotiations. The image of the negotiating state proposed here is very different from that of a coherent and hierarchically organized actor, where the executive instructs the ministry, which formulates the national policy that is executed by diplomats. It also differs from an FPA reading, which would argue that negotiation instructions are largely produced by administrative units and ministerial departments. In both interpretations, diplomats are seen as playing the script written by the executive or the substate unit in a rather homogeneous way. This article suggests instead that, especially in multilateral forums, opposing trends are at work. The state partially individualizes relevant aspects of its activities, relying on single diplomats to perform policymaking functions (including the choice of tactics) and scarcely monitoring them. Negotiations thus provide diplomats with a relatively new form of power, whereby they often become the ultimate authority of the state (Pouliot and Cornut 2015).

Studies of diplomacy have acknowledged these developments. Diplomatic groups have been considered epistemic communities (Cross 2011); negotiators—meeting frequently and sharing similar professional backgrounds and norms—have acquired leeway from their sovereigns. This allows them to shape decisions, also potentially plotting against their capital (Lewis 1998). Vincent Pouliot (2015) has noticed the proliferation of diplomatic missions to international organizations and their centrality in today's international politics. In these sites, diplomacy has been “quietly” transformed. Diplomats not only represent their governments; they end up producing policies and governing in a relatively autonomous way (Adler-Nissen 2014).

The Sources of the Second Disaggregation

Yet, how does the second disaggregation take place? What are the mechanisms? The empowerment of single diplomats occurs not by design but because of the practical relations that are established between individual negotiators and their national administrative units.³ Practices are pat-

³An alternative way to frame this relationship would be to consider the capital (the political and/or bureaucratic layer) as the principal and the negotiators as its agents. The capital delegates policymaking responsibilities to diplomats in order

terned performances that structure interaction in socially meaningful and recognizable ways (Pouliot 2008). While highly repetitive, practices leave space for innovation and change. The relationship between negotiators and national ministries might be inspired by the general sense that the former follow plans of action designed by the latter while relaying the information gathered in negotiations. However, the exact forms of this relationship depend on the practices that are established between the two in a constant process of recombination, hybridization, and adaptation (Pouliot and Cornut 2015). This recombination process ends up empowering individual negotiators. The reasons are mainly functional: Shifting policymaking responsibilities to single diplomats is highly efficient for the negotiating state. In all likelihood, this process occurred through an accumulation of minute, incremental, and unconscious variations in the negotiators/capital nexus—i.e., a change in practice through practice.

Four functional factors contribute to the second disaggregation. First, international negotiations have a very fast pace. Delegations need to provide quick answers, and constantly calling back on the capital has clear limits. Many capitals are distant, geographically and time zone-wise, from negotiation cities such as New York or Geneva. Working documents are often made available a few days/hours before the meeting. The coordination process within the capital is frequently convoluted and involves several departments and ministries. In these conditions, domestic administrations do not have the time to control the process. Second, circumstances change quickly, and capitals are slow in readjusting national lines. As one director for security and defense affairs indicates, “I let the ambassador manage with a free hand. The meeting can go in a different direction” (Cross 2011, 138). Usually, the best instructions are broad and flexible; and the individual diplomat is best suited to choose the most appropriate instruments for the constantly evolving situation.

Third, modern governments are overloaded with myriad responsibilities. Ensuring that instructions are prepared, transmitted, and monitored places considerable strain on limited institutional resources (Metcalf 1994). This is exacerbated by the often-scarce personnel in the ministries devoted to international affairs, especially in small states. As an official explains, “We have a very small structure in Lisbon ... We are not always motivated to look into technical details here. It's much easier to follow if you are in [negotiation] meetings” (Cross 2011, 139). Fourth, negotiations are like networks: They provide participants with informational advantages and positional power (Goddard 2009). Diplomats know how negotiations are structured, what resources are needed, and what tactical situations can arise—information that headquarters grasp very superficially. Situated at the interstices of domestic and international, negotiators can use their position to choose among different options and influence outputs.

In negotiations, the state is thus constituted not by a single (or few) gatekeeper(s) but by multiple individuals. Arguably, different practical arrangements between the same ministry and diplomats operate at different times. However, if simpler methods can be used with negligible loss (even increase) of efficiency, there is no need to employ more complex ones (Metcalf 1994, 282). Insofar as some measure of

to increase efficiency and save time and resources. While we do not have space to develop this issue further, a principal-agent framework reveals several problems. Inter alia, the principal and the agents are hardly aware of the delegation; fire alarms and police patrol mechanisms have been scarcely set up to monitor diplomats' activities.

coherence is achieved in national positions, relying on individual negotiators is the most economic form for national administrations.

The Partial Individualization of the Negotiating State

If the double disaggregation of the state empowers single individuals in its encounters with the external, nonetheless, the system is not atomized. Interpreting negotiations as pure games among diplomats, with *de facto* no role assigned to capital-based actors, misjudges important aspects of international politics. The individualization of negotiations is partial. The two disaggregations are a matter of degree: As state subunits are *relatively* autonomous from the political center, individual negotiators are *relatively* autonomous from bureaucratic structures.

For the purposes of this article, we make an analytical distinction between negotiation goals and tactics. Most diplomats in multilateral negotiations certainly participate in the formulation of the *goals* and can be very influential—e.g., by indicating what objectives are achievable or what priorities should be pursued. Also, when they do not receive instructions, negotiators themselves might decide whether to prepare a position or with whom to side (Chelotti 2013). However, the national executive/ministry is often instrumental in determining the ultimate goals of the negotiation. The capital is also better aware of the larger picture—i.e., domestic considerations (positions of parliaments, interest groups, and other ministries) and the information coming from the embassies (Pouliot 2015).

The influence of the capital is minimal, instead, when negotiation *tactics* are decided. Once the policy content has been determined, how it is attained is largely left in the hands of negotiators. The individualization of the state is here most clearly visible. Negotiators usually operate under broad instructions with few indications about the plans to employ around the table. Although cross-national variations exist (Kassim and Peters 2001), the partial individualization is a general tendency that applies to most (all?) states. Within the EU, this is valid also for France, arguably one of Europe's most centralized negotiation machineries. To cite one example, a Brussels-based civil servant affirms: "I have been surprised ... by the degree to which our work involves formulating policy with Paris as opposed to simply executing policies formulated in Paris" (Kassim and Peters 2001, 337).

To sum up this whole section, the negotiating state has become disaggregated (twice) and significantly reliant on its delegates, especially in relation to tactic selection. In the words of one deputy ambassador, "the Minister will [frequently] tell me that I am the decision-maker" (Lewis 1998, 491). The individual is back in the picture.

Individual-Level Variables

If single negotiators have acquired the authority to choose tactics, this does not mean that *individual characteristics* explain these relevant aspects of negotiation. The double disaggregation of the state is a precondition for the importance of individual traits. The argument proceeds by generating three testable hypotheses for which the variance in negotiators' attributes leads them to select one tactic over another. The human mind is constituted and regulated by complex connections of experiences, emotional and causal beliefs, heuristics, and neurological traits. Although it is not always easy to associate all these components of the mind with decision-making, the IR "behavioral revolution"

and research in political psychology and FPA have convincingly shown the advantages of using individual heterogeneity for the study of political processes (Hudson 2005; Hafner-Burton et al., 2017).

This paper tests three key individual factors—experience, style, and identity—that are central to the research on negotiation and on multilateral diplomacy specifically. They influence the way negotiators behave at the bargaining table, the kinds of opportunities they identify, and the types of deals they strike (Thompson, Wang, and Gunia 2010). The first variable is the negotiator's experience. The impact of experience has been widely documented in negotiation literature, especially on logrolling skills (e.g., Bazerman, Magliozzi, and Neale 1985; Thompson 1990; Moran and Ritov 2007). Students of multilateral diplomacy single out experience as the key source of competence in negotiation settings. Experience allows diplomats to learn the rules of the game (and how to use them), better recognize their partners' intentions, and understand how to reconcile the capital's demands with the expectations of the negotiation site (Chelotti 2013; Schia 2013; Pouliot 2015). Both in laboratory experiments and among professional negotiators (Herbst and Schwarz 2011), experience is positively associated with cooperation. It facilitates information and argumentative exchanges and is consistently found to be a very powerful predictor of integrative agreements (Bazerman, Magliozzi, and Neale 1985; Moran and Ritov 2007). The first hypothesis states that *more experienced delegates are likely to more frequently adopt consensus-driven tactics, all else constant*. We better explain the meaning of consensus-driven tactics *infra*, when we introduce the six tactics that constitute the outcome variables of the research. We anticipate that if a delegate frequently employs consensus-driven tactics, it means that they make lesser use of (i) veto threats, (ii) rigid positioning, and higher use of (iii) issue-linkages, (iv) side-payments, (v) common goals, and (vi) persuasion.

The other two variables draw on key insights from the literature on cognitive psychology, decision-making, and negotiation. While this literature is divided over the extent to which negotiators' traits matter (Sharma, Bottom, and Elfenbein 2013), it has nonetheless consistently singled out two motivational goals (social and epistemic) as strong determinants of negotiation behavior. A large body of work shows how individuals' social and epistemic motives—in experimental studies and real-life diplomatic cases—are associated with competitive or cooperative behavior (e.g., De Dreu, Weingart, and Kwon 2000; De Dreu et al. 2006; Rathbun 2014; Rathbun, Kertzer, and Paradis 2017). Social motivation indicates that negotiators have different sets of moral foundations. "Prosocial" diplomats care for others and value fairness in process and outcome. "Proselfs" value gains only for themselves and their own circle. In negotiations, prosocials and proselfs adopt different tactics and make offers of considerably different sizes (De Dreu, Weingart, and Kwon 2000). Negotiators vary systematically also in their degree of epistemic motivation—i.e., in how they make sense of the world, process information, and interpret external stimuli. Those with high epistemic motivation develop a fuller understanding of their environments. Low epistemic motivation is linked to cognitive closure and unlikelihood to revisit choices already made (Hermann et al. 2001; De Dreu et al. 2006).

We capture negotiators' social and epistemic motivations in two ways. First, they are important components of their approach to negotiations, i.e., their style. Style is the attitude that diplomats display when negotiating, their personal touch, and their feel for the game. Officials with high so-

cial and epistemic motivation develop a more broad-minded style (Rathbun, Kertzer, and Paradis 2017), which tends to generate greater cooperation. Low scores in both motivations denote a closed-minded approach, which is associated with more diversionary tactics (Hermann et al. 2001). For instance, Anatoly Dobrynin, former Soviet Ambassador to the United States, was said to have—unlike most of his colleagues—an open-minded approach, which cemented cooperation with Western countries on several occasions (Faizullaev 2014). The second hypothesis postulates that *delegates who have a more broad-minded style are likely to more frequently adopt consensus-driven tactics, all else constant.*

Second, social and epistemic motivations influence deeper aspects of an individual's identity. Diplomats with prosocial attitudes and exploring minds develop stronger emotional ties with the international environment; those who are low in social and epistemic motivations produce more nationally oriented identities. As Rathbun (2014, 5) puts it, “[i]n terms of foreign affairs, prosocials think only of their own states, whereas prosocials think also of others.” These (more national or international) proclivities can drive the selection of tactics. Unlike nationally oriented diplomats, policymakers with intense cosmopolitan identities not only exhibit a higher sense of compliance with international norms but also seek joint gains with their negotiation partners (Bayram 2017; Rathbun, Kertzer, and Paradis 2017). This leads to the third hypothesis, which states that *delegates who have a more internationally oriented identity are likely to more frequently adopt consensus-driven tactics, all else constant.*

Negotiating EU Foreign Policy

This article explores negotiation processes in the EU's CFSP and CSDP. The CFSP/CSDP forms a highly institutionalized network of panels based in the Council of the EU (hereafter: Council). Dozens of national diplomats negotiate every day in around thirty-five working groups or more senior bodies like the Political and Security Committee or the Military Committee (Chelotti 2016). Unanimity is still the largely prevailing rule—which means that disputes cannot be settled by voting.

The core research strategy is quantitative, and it employs an original dataset of 138 questionnaires. The questionnaires were directed to all national officials who were members of the above-mentioned CFSP/CSDP groups/committees⁴ and assigned to the Brussels-based permanent representations of twenty-seven EU member states. The response rate was about 36 percent. The quantitative analysis tests the hypotheses presented in the previous section. The research also uses seventeen in-depth interviews⁵ with CFSP/CSDP diplomats. The purpose of this supplementary qualitative data is twofold. First, it explores a different question—through thematic analysis, it aims to corroborate the empowerment of individual delegates in CFSP/CSDP negotiations. Second, qualitative interviews are used in a selective and illustrative way when discussing the results of the quantitative analysis.

This strategy helps to attenuate two common limitations of IR behavioral and negotiation studies. First, while many such studies rely on experiments with undergraduate students, this research interviews experienced policymakers. Reaching out to this latter group—albeit more difficult and costly—considerably increases the external validity of the study (Hafner-Burton et al. 2014; Bayram 2017). For-

eign policy elites behave differently from students (or members of the public) in many negotiation games and surveys (Hafner-Burton et al. 2017). Second, this research addresses a sample not simply of experienced elites but of policymakers “who are theoretically [and] empirically linked to the outcome of interest” (Renshon 2015, 661). The interviewees are indeed those diplomats directly responsible for the negotiation of CFSP/CSDP agreements. National ministers in the Council deal with only a very small number of items, usually rubber-stamping agreements that are prepared by these delegates (e.g., Lewis 1998; Cross 2011). The goal of this research is to understand how these delegates negotiate in real-life situations—how often they use certain tactics when acting as representatives of their government. This allows us to account for some of the conditions/constraints of real-world negotiations, which are instead difficult to replicate in laboratory studies.

Disaggregation of the State and Tactics: Qualitative Evidence

Before delving into the quantitative analysis, this section introduces evidence coming from the qualitative interviews. The main purpose is to validate the above-made argument that tactics are largely chosen by Brussels-based negotiators and not by the capital, while discussing the reasons why this occurs. We conducted a thematic analysis of the seventeen interviews. In the interviews, we asked about the relationship between negotiators and the capital, their respective roles, and the “division of labor.” Four themes were identified: preparation of the national position, development of the negotiation, choice of tactics, and reasons behind the negotiators' empowerment. Here, we focus on the last two themes as they speak more closely to the paper's arguments. The online appendix provides more information on the thematic analysis and discusses in more detail the four themes and seventeen codes that have been identified.

If interviewees report that they have significant leeway in many activities they perform, they largely agree that their greatest margin of maneuver is when negotiation objectives are made operational and specific courses of action are decided. That is, when tactics are chosen (see online appendix, table 8). The largest single code in the thematic analysis is “Tactic: Main Shaper” (forty-six references; fifteen diplomats). Whether they receive instructions or not, instructions usually provide only the general lines or parameters of the national position (PermRepr#2; PermRepr#5; PermRepr#8). Negotiators then have to “adopt” or “translate” these “basic positions” into specific negotiation approaches (PermRepr#14; PermRepr#15). Negotiators have “leeway” (PermRepr#5; PermRepr#8; PermRepr#11) in deciding “what to say, how to say it, when to say it” (PermRepr#3); “how [to] tactically move in order” to achieve the desired goals (PermRepr#7); “how to negotiate and how far to push, what to give up on issues” (PermRepr#11); “where to target, whom to contact” and “what to focus on the most” (PermRepr#14); whether to say that “this is a good idea, this is a bad idea, we should support this or perhaps oppose that” (PermRepr#15).

Two further quotes nicely illustrate these points:

I know the general parameters [of the national position] ... In very few cases, they will be instructing me what kind of tactics to use. Maybe something like “follow what another particular country does” or ... “never be just one against 27”, but not much more than that (PermRepr#5).

⁴The questionnaires were collected in Spring/Summer 2008.

⁵Interviews were conducted in June 2013 and June–July 2014.

I do not always receive instructions. But when I do, they usually send framework instructions ... not very detailed but maybe saying “we don’t like this, full stop: we don’t care *how you do that* but get rid of this thing from the text’ (PermRepr#12).

In several cases, the situation appears reversed (see online appendix, table 8). It is not the capital that instructs the negotiator on what tactics to use (although this occasionally happens, see code “Tactic: Execution of Policy,” seven references). It is the negotiator who decides whether and to what extent to involve the capital (code “Tactic: Negotiator Contacting the Capital,” nine references, five diplomats): “the capital should be alerted only if the negotiations are not going into the right directions” (PermRepr#2); the capital is contacted “if necessary” (PermRepr#7), “when I want some feedback ... when I don’t think, I just work on my position myself” (PermRepr#6). Liaising with the capital can be beneficial but also risky: the interaction might generate “some sort of random instruction—which is not really what you want” (PermRepr#10).

The freedom to choose tactics appears even greater when a delegation does not have a position (code “Tactic: Freedom when Not a Position,” ten references, five diplomats). In those cases, it is the negotiator who decides “whether I stay quiet or prepare something for myself” (PermRepr#6), or whether ‘I’m going to intervene along this [or that] line’” (PermRepr#17), eventually finding linkages within/across issues.

The second theme we explore in this section is the reasons behind the empowerment of individual negotiators in multilateral negotiations. Previously, we had identified four possible reasons (as sources of the second disaggregation of the state): speed of decision-making, change of circumstances, limited resources, and informational advantage. The thematic analysis provides significant evidence for three of these factors. The speed of decision-making was not mentioned by any representative. The change of circumstances was (five references; four diplomats). Negotiations fluctuate, “and we need to adapt. I am located here [in Brussels] to make sense of the [evolving] situation” (PermRepr#7). Once negotiations start, one “can very well assess what the other states think” or where the “pressure from the chair” is going; diplomats then identify and indicate to the capital “the 1–2 points on which” to concentrate (PermRepr#6).

The limited resources or attention of the capital are frequently mentioned (twelve references; seven diplomats). Especially in the case of small states, the capital lacks resources (PermRepr#2; PermRepr#4; PermRepr#17) and cannot monitor “the full spectrum [of CFSP/CSDP negotiations]. We [in Brussels] can, and we do; well, we have to” (PermRepr#1). The capital is “usually overloaded” (PermRepr#2), “busy with their own things” (PermRepr#6), involved in “other tasks” (PermRepr#15), or not so much interested in the CSDP (PermRepr#10).

On the whole, the major reason why individual negotiators acquire ultimate policymaking responsibility is the informational advantage they acquire by participating in Brussels-based negotiations (twenty-five references; fourteen diplomats). Working in CFSP/CSDP committees allows them to know “more about the mechanics but also about the content than most of the people” in the ministry (PermRepr#15). In terms of the mechanics, the sense is that, once the instructions have been delivered, the capital “did their job, now it is up to you: you know the committee well”. (PermRepr#8), “you are able to identify certain blocs” (PermRepr#14) “and know where to

look for partners” (PermRepr#1); you know “what the positions are in Brussels and what room of manoeuvre we have” in the negotiations (PermRepr#15). All these key dynamics are not “easy to grasp if you are not here” (PermRepr#16). In terms of the content, negotiation issues are quite technical (PermRepr#5; PermRepr#10), and “people like me who are located in Brussels” master them much better (PermRepr#17) than “anybody else in the ministry” (PermRepr#15).

The thematic analysis therefore corroborates the empowerment of negotiators and the double disaggregation of the state. It is not surprising that the overall assessment of a delegate is that “your influence on the final outcome is much more evident than in the MoD [Ministry of Defense], where your work has to be approved by several supervisors. I get instructions, but then I am almost on my own. This work is much more independent than in the MoD” (PermRepr#6).

Quantitative Analysis

The article now turns to quantitative analysis. It conducts an ordinal logistic regression of the effects of the three individual traits identified above (*Experience; Style; Identity*) upon six negotiation tactics (using SPSS, version 29.0). This section introduces the research design, and presents and discusses the results.

Outcome Variables

We make a distinction between negotiation tactics and strategies. Tactics are a set of observable and specific moves actors employ to conduct negotiations. Strategies refer instead to larger categories that contain and aggregate several tactics around distinct and relatively coherent modes of interaction (Dür and Mateo 2010). In this research, we consider the single tactic as the unit of analysis. In other words, the outcome variables are six negotiation tactics. Although tactics are not substance or outcomes, they are connected to negotiation outputs (McKibben 2015). For instance, choosing whether to link issues (and which ones) in package deals affects not only the chances of reaching an agreement but also the compliance of the deal and the prospects of future collaborations (Poast 2012).

We pinpoint six tactics commonly used in negotiations that are key components of the three main strategies identified by the negotiation literature. Although the terms used and the meanings attached sometimes differ (Odell 2010), the literature largely clusters around three negotiating strategies. Traditionally, negotiation scholars have distinguished between distributive (competitive, value-claiming, hard) and integrative (problem-solving, value-creating, soft) strategies (Dür and Mateo 2010; Thompson, Wang, and Gunia 2010; McKibben 2015). Following contributions from psychology and IR researchers, a third category is added: deliberation (arguing, persuasion) (Odell 2010; Thompson 2015). While certainly not exhaustive, the six tactics chosen capture the core, and the defining elements, of these three strategies (see the online appendix for a more detailed discussion of the strategies and tactics selected, and their operationalization).

The first two tactics are associated with distributive bargaining, which occurs when negotiators try to impose their position by pressuring the other parties to make concessions. The first tactic investigates how often diplomats “threaten to use the veto” (*Veto*). The inverted commas are used to report the wording of the outcome variables. The second tactic asks negotiators whether they do (not)

modify their opening stance (i.e., “reaffirm and reintroduce [their] original position as first negotiating response”), after the first rounds of negotiations have begun and parties hold conflicting positions (*Rigidity*). These two tactics recur in almost every definition, and list, of distributive bargaining (Dür and Mateo 2010; Naurin 2010). For instance, the two distributive types of bargaining behavior in McKibben’s study (2013) consist precisely of veto threats and the refusal to offer concessions.

The next two tactics reflect integrative bargaining. The key engine of this strategy is the creation of joint value, which arises when actors attach different priorities to different issues and incorporate these exchanges into negotiated agreements—through mechanisms like logrolling, issue-linkages, and within/across proposals. These package deals are a defining feature of any negotiation (Bazerman, Magliozzi, and Neale 1985; Thompson 1990; McKibben 2013; Thompson 2015) and one of the most-used concepts in the literature on legislative processes (Stratmann 1995; Naurin 2015), the political economy of international organizations (cf. Odell 2010, 626) and negotiations more in general (Dür and Mateo 2010; Thompson, Wang, and Gunia 2010; Poast 2012). The third tactic is *Issue-Linkages*, whereby actors “seek an agreement by combining different issues ... in a single package deal.” The fourth tactic is a variant, where negotiators “seek an agreement by offering some forms of unilateral and one-off compensation” (*Side-Payments*).

Finally, deliberation revolves around the idea of discussing merits—that is, “giving convincing reasons concerning the merits of different options in terms of normative rightness and/or factual validity” (Naurin 2010, 36). The fifth and sixth tactics operationalize the two elements of this process. The fifth tactic explores the normative rightness of reason-giving: Only justifications that refer to standards of legitimacy can be considered an argumentative tactic (Risse and Kleine 2010). In the EU context, this translates into standards of common European objectives and norms (Reinhard 2012). As such, we investigate to what extent diplomats “cast [their] positions by referring to European goals” (*Common Goals*). Another key component of argumentation is that reason-giving should aim to change minds. Deliberation is first and foremost about persuasion: Participants are willing to convince and be convinced through the better—empirical or normative—arguments (Risse and Kleine 2010, 710–11). The sixth tactic assesses how often negotiators attempt “to persuade ... using empirical facts and in-depth arguments” (*Persuasion*).

These tactics are treated as discrete; each of them is considered a separate outcome variable. As anticipated above, in relation to the hypotheses of the research, a more frequent adoption of consensus-driven tactics indicates higher levels of *Issue-Linkages*, *Side-Payments*, *Common Goals* and *Persuasion*; and lower levels of *Veto* and *Rigidity*. The six tactics are assessed through a specific question in the questionnaire. The question asks how often diplomats/delegations employ each tactic in CFSP/CSDP negotiations (four-point scale). As different situations elicit the use of different tactics, this research opted for an average type of negotiation: Interviewees were told to consider a typical (i.e., not exceptionally important or unimportant) situation in which positions were conflicting. As such, the findings of the analysis are hardly generalizable to highly salient issues (Naurin 2015).

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the outcome variables. With different frequencies, all six tactics are present in CFSP/CSDP policymaking. Regarding the first

tactic, *Veto* threats are relatively uncommon for 82.5 percent of negotiators (options 3 + 4 of the four-point scale). *Rigidity* appears to be a highly frequent practice for 21.9 percent of diplomats (option 1). The two integrative tactics are also a recurrent feature of EU foreign policy, according to 65.2 percent (*Issue-Linkages*) and 33.1 percent (*Side-Payments*) of the interviewees (options 1 + 2). Finally, EU negotiators appear to utilize deliberative tactics quite frequently—*Common Goals* for 67.4 percent, and *Persuasion* for 55.6 percent, of policymakers (in both cases, options 1 + 2).

Measuring the Individual Variables

The analysis tests the effect of individual characteristics upon these six tactics. The three individual variables are: (i) *Experience*, (ii) *Style*, and (iii) *Identity*. The online appendix provides more information about the operationalization of these variables, further justifies their measurements, and tests their robustness. We approximate *Experience* using time spent on the job in Brussels.⁶ The more time officials have spent working in the Council, the more experienced they will be. We measure *Experience* in this way because, as students of diplomacy have amply shown, knowledge is context-specific (Pouliot 2015). The rules and codes of a negotiation site are local. For instance, delegates to the UN “are normally skilled diplomats presumably familiar with the necessary metis in diplomacy,” yet the formal structure of the UN Security Council makes “the internal dynamics in th[is] body unique” (Schia 2013, 149). The same applies to the EU Council. We use the logarithm of time to account for decreasing marginal learning rates—e.g., more learning takes place in the first six months than in any subsequent six-month period.

The negotiator’s *Style* is assessed through three Likert-type questions, which aim to capture the diplomat’s degree of openness to the external context; their association with problem solving; their sense of fairness. The values of the three questions—all having six possible responses—are averaged into a scale, which is tested and validated through factor analysis (cf. the online appendix). Lower values of the scale indicate a more broad-minded style, and higher values indicate a more confrontational style.

The third explanatory variable is the diplomat’s affinity for national versus international *Identity*. In this context, “international” is equated with “European” and with the officials’ personal evaluation of EU foreign policy. Pro-European representatives will likely be more cooperative as they see negotiations as part of a larger project designed to strengthen EU external relations. We approximate *Identity* through two six-point questions, which gauge the negotiators’ opinion towards a stronger and more independent EU foreign policy. The two questions produce a scale whereby larger values of *Identity* correspond to stronger international/European identities.

Control Variables

We include additional variables to control for other factors that may influence a delegation’s negotiating behavior. These controls consist of three state-level variables that are commonly used in the negotiation literature as standard explanations of tactic selection (Dür and Mateo 2010; Naurin 2015). The first is *Power*. Powerful countries have better ne-

⁶In the online appendix, we operationalize (and test) *Experience* in another way—by using the amount of time a diplomat has spent in diplomatic positions abroad during their career.

Table 1. Negotiation tactics in EU foreign policy (percentage)

	<i>Hard bargaining</i>		<i>Integrative bargaining</i>		<i>Deliberation</i>	
	<i>Veto</i>	<i>Rigidity</i>	<i>Issue-linkages</i>	<i>Side-payments</i>	<i>Common goals</i>	<i>Persuasion</i>
1. <i>Very often</i>	6.6	21.9	15.9	7.4	26.5	16.3
2. <i>Fairly often</i>	10.9	58.4	49.3	25.7	40.9	39.3
3. <i>Sometimes</i>	48.2	16.8	28.3	51.5	28.0	39.3
4. <i>(Almost) Never</i>	34.3	2.9	6.5	15.4	4.5	5.2
<i>N</i>	137	137	138	136	132	135

gotiating alternatives and are more likely to resort to hard-line tactics. The second control variable is the degree of Euroscepticism present in the country of the negotiator, which is associated with less consensus-driven tactics (*Europeanism*). Finally, we control for the constitutional culture of the delegates' country. Less accustomed to the politics and practices of compromise, majoritarian countries are expected to adopt more adversarial tactics (*Democracy*). The online appendix provides more information on the measurement of these control variables and runs additional tests with more controls (election proximity, form of government, government ideology) to demonstrate the robustness of the findings.

Model Specification

We examine the effects of *Experience*, *Style* and *Identity* on negotiation tactics using ordinal regressions (cumulative odds ordinal logistic regression with proportional odds) with robust standard errors, while controlling for *Power*, *Europeanism*, *Democracy*. Given the relatively small size of the nationality groups (twenty-seven groups with the median *N* being four) and their unbalanced nature (one nationality group with twelve respondents, three groups with one interviewee), in the main model we use the three state-level variables also to account for the nationality of diplomats. Clustering with small and unbalanced group sizes can produce convergence and estimation bias and reduce statistical significance (Moineddin, Matheson, and Glazier 2007; Cameron and Miller 2015). In the online appendix, we nevertheless model and control for nationality in three further ways—by clustering standard errors by country; by adding country fixed effects; and in a multilevel ordinal logistic regression.

Analysis

Results

The analysis reveals that individual traits do explain delegations' choice of tactics in CFSP/CSDP negotiations. However, this is the case for some tactics (*Rigidity* and *Persuasion*) and not for others (*Veto*, *Issue-Linkages*, *Side-Payments*, *Common Goals*). More specifically, *Style* is a significant predictor of both *Rigidity* and *Persuasion*. The coefficients displayed in table 2 are in log-odds units, which means that one unit increase in the *Style* score is associated with a 0.613 unit decrease in the ordered log-odds of falling in a higher category of *Rigidity*, and with a 0.827 increase in the likelihood of being in a higher level of *Persuasion*—holding all the other variables constant.

As log-odds coefficients are quite difficult to interpret, we convert them into odds ratios through exponential transformation (the odds ratios of the significant variables are

reported in the online appendix). For each point increase on the *Style* scale (i.e., having a more closed-minded approach), the odds of less frequently using persuasion (i.e., of the higher versus the lower categories of *Persuasion*) are 2.28 times greater and the odds of more frequently adopting rigid positioning are 1.85 times greater—with all the other variables of the model constant. *Experience* is a significant predictor of *Persuasion*: For each additional log year of experience in CFSP/CSDP decision-making, the odds of relying on persuasion as a negotiation tactic increase by a factor of 2.35. In the online appendix, we run goodness-of-fit tests, and we show that the models that produced these results (regarding *Persuasion* and *Rigidity*) fit the data well and that the proportional odds assumption is met in both cases.⁷ Also, these results are confirmed when tested against three additional controls, a different measurement of *Experience* and alternative specifications of nationality (cf. the online appendix)—which corroborates the robustness of these findings.

Identity does not explain any of the negotiation tactics in the main regression model. It becomes statistically significant in one alternative model of *Side-Payments*.⁸ Here, a strong European identity is associated with a greater use of side payments. However, the relationship between *Identity* and *Side-Payments* is unstable and sensitive to different model specifications.

In terms of control variables, *Power* is a significant predictor of one tactic, *Veto*—which means that powerful states threaten to use veto more often. *Europeanism* is statistically significant in the case of *Issue-Linkages*: Delegations from pro-European states are more inclined to create negotiating packages that combine multiple issues. *Democracy* is not significant regarding any of the six outcome variables.

We also tested possible interaction effects between state-level (*Power*, *Europeanism*) and individual-level variables (*Experience*, *Style*, *Identity*). Most interactions were insignificant and did not improve the fit and performance of the models. The exception—described in more detail in the online appendix—was the interaction between *Europeanism* and *Identity*, regarding *Issue-Linkages*. Here, the interaction is significant and moderates the effect of *Europeanism* upon *Issue-Linkages*: As the identity of the diplomat becomes increasingly pro-European, belonging to a pro-European polity becomes slightly less important in explaining the adoption of logrolling practices.

Discussion

In discussing the results, we also use a few extracts from the interviews conducted with CFSP/CSDP diplomats. These extracts are not analyzed in a comprehensive way; they are

⁷The assumption tests and model fitting statistics reveal instead a mixed picture in the case of *Veto* and *Issue-Linkages*.

⁸Cf. the online appendix for more information.

Table 2. Results of the ordinal logistic regressions

	<i>Veto</i>	<i>Rigidity</i>	<i>Issue-linkages</i>	<i>Side-payments</i>	<i>Common goals</i>	<i>Persuasion</i>
<i>Experience</i>	-0.314 (0.323)	-0.541 (0.446)	-0.270 (0.288)	0.621 (0.353)	-0.249 (0.317)	-0.854* (0.386)
<i>Style</i>	-0.153 (0.187)	-0.613*** (0.178)	-0.057 (0.176)	-0.006 (0.195)	0.088 (0.199)	0.827*** (0.185)
<i>Identity</i>	0.162 (0.189)	-0.050 (0.209)	-0.171 (0.191)	-0.341 (0.197)	-0.010 (0.183)	-0.272 (0.214)
<i>Power</i>	-16.605* (8.352)	8.173 (7.888)	-7.198 (7.577)	15.054 (10.068)	4.997 (7.892)	-2.851 (8.002)
<i>Europeanism</i>	0.008 (0.017)	0.032 (0.020)	-0.050* (0.020)	0.014 (0.025)	-0.005 (0.018)	0.021 (0.017)
<i>Democracy</i>	0.266 (0.149)	0.023 (0.139)	0.023 (0.137)	-0.071 (0.168)	0.132 (0.129)	-0.078 (0.138)
Nagelkerke Pseudo-R	0.066	0.149	0.094	0.068	0.037	0.260
N	121	121	122	120	118	121

Robust standard errors in parentheses; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

used to illustrate the quantitative findings in selected cases. What can we say about the impact of individual-level factors upon the choice of tactics? The strength of the impact depends on the tactic considered. More specifically, it would seem that diplomats' individual characteristics are less likely to come into play when negotiators have to commit the state in significant and explicit ways—either regarding relatively high-stake and well-defined positions (i.e., *Veto*) or in terms of resources (e.g., *Side-Payments*). When veto is threatened or an integrative deal is finalized (especially when budgetary lines are concerned), the consent of several individuals in the national administration might be required. In these situations, the influence of the negotiator's personal traits is tenuous or unsupported. Let's take *Veto*. *Veto* is not threatened imprudently; it is a "weapon of last resort" (diplomat's quote in Pouliot 2015, 104). When delegates threaten to block a negotiation, "you need to have the coverage of the highest levels [of your ministry] because ... you lose your face if all of a sudden your minister says, 'Oh but let it go'" (PermRepr#13). Without the full backing of the capital, "you are not going to say 'I'm going to veto' ... not on your own" (PermRepr#11).

The relationship between the two integrative tactics (*Issue-Linkages*, *Side-Payments*) and individual factors is interesting. On the one hand, package deals are often sought and reached by single negotiators outside the purview of the national administration. Brussels-based officials offer and exchange negotiating items on a daily basis. This trade often depends on "the imaginal invention of the [representatives]" and not on the instructions of the capital (PermRepr#6). Discussing in CFSP/CSDP committees, negotiators "see ... [what] other delegations really want" (PermRepr#12): "once you get a holistic view of all the issues, and you know where to press and what to leave" (PermRepr#14), you have the possibility to strike constructive deals. Sometimes, "you tell your capital, 'on this particular issue you only get 75 percent, but in return on that other issue which is very important for you, I manage to get 120 percent instead of 100 percent.' That's how you handle it, a real businessman ... Finding these linkages is my role" (PermRepr#13).

These logrolling activities performed by single negotiators do not, however, find confirmation in the quantitative analysis. There is not much to support the individual-level thesis—just a moderating effect of pro-European identities

upon pro-European politics in the case of *Issue-Linkages*; and modest associations in one alternative specification between *Experience* and *Side-Payments*; and *Identity* and *Side-Payments* (in the online appendix). The reason might be that package deals sometimes involve, or are pursued by, the national capital. In integrative bargaining, resources of the state might be used (with side-payments more clearly) or different state interests have to be prioritized or can be traded (with issue-linkages more clearly). The capital might have a say in these circumstances. On highly sensitive issues, the integrative agreement is supervised by national ministries, or occurs directly between them. As operationalized in this research, *Issue-Linkages* and *Side-Payments* might lump together integrative tactics initiated by single negotiators and by the capital. Future research could develop more fine-grained formulations of integrative bargaining and better differentiate between ministry-led and diplomat-led logrolling (and test the effect of individual-level variables upon them).

The influence of personal traits is instead strong when the tactic is less likely to elicit a tangible commitment from the state in/for the current negotiation. State variables are here nonsignificant. Not only have diplomats leeway to choose how to approach other parties, it is their personal attributes that explain the frequency of tactic selection. In particular, the decision to repropose the same position as the first negotiating response (*Rigidity*) is associated with the personal *Style* of the negotiator. Those with low social and epistemic motivations are more likely to push harder and be hardline at the beginning of the exchanges. A delegation's assertiveness in a negotiation appears thus to be contingent not so much on some general features of the state but on the personal attitude of the single negotiator. The result is that across different negotiations and different (CFSP/CSDP) committees, the same state might appear more or less uncompromising, more or less accommodating—depending on which diplomat is leading the negotiation.

The individual features of the negotiator also help explain how often a delegation attempts to persuade the other parties (*Persuasion*). *Experience* is connected to this tactic. In order to meaningfully engage with this mode, negotiators need to build knowledge of the substance of the policy under consideration as well as of the context surrounding the negotiations. Also, a negotiator with a broad-minded *Style* is more likely to make continuous efforts to persuade. Reflecting on these issues, a diplomat emphasized that he prefers to

have “a swaying attitude” and be “always extremely prepared and detailed ... I put pressure on the others in this way” (#PermRepr2). The success of the negotiations “depends also on the personal approach, on how [negotiators] want to present themselves. It happens that [some officials] act tougher than their ministers” or ambassadors—which creates stalemates in the committee (#PermRepr9). As another negotiator points out (#PermRepr10):

I have realised here that the personality of the national delegate is more than 50% of the output in the working group, because you might have the most brilliant position but if you fail to deliver it properly then you might get nowhere ... you need to be able to empathize with people. Whereas you might have a small point, but you handle in a certain way, with facts, [being] open-minded, the right attitude, and you know how to put it to the group ... then you might [get much] more that way.

Perhaps surprisingly, constructing the national position around *Common Goals* is not associated with any of the individual-level variables (nor with state factors). This is certainly a frequent practice in CFSP/CSDP negotiations (see table 1). It is often advisable, in multilateral settings, to cast your position referring to common objectives and avoiding purely selfish (i.e., national) arguments. CFSP/CSDP negotiators often behave in this way—maybe not because they truly believe in common pan-European interests; rather, they might use it strategically to carry more weight.

The strategic aspect behind this tactic is suggested by the fact that a pro-European *Identity* is not correlated with a higher use of *Common Goals*. More generally, *Identity* is not a significant factor regarding any of the six outcome variables. It seems that a diplomat’s national/European orientation does not translate into behavioral consequences regarding the tactics and situations here considered. They might remain in the negotiators’ personal sphere or influence other aspects of their working lives. To explore this latter possibility, we move beyond tactics and test the model against another diplomatic activity of CFSP/CSDP delegates. We consider how much national officials value cooperating with the European Commission for their jobs. In the EU system, the Commission is highly valuable in terms of information-gathering, institutional position, and agenda setting. The results of the ordinal logistic regression reveal that both *Experience* and *Identity* are significantly and positively associated with a greater appreciation of the Commission. As diplomats spend more time in the Council and their identities become more pro-European, the relevance of the Commission to their working practices increases. Neither *Style* nor state-level variables are significant in the models. The online appendix contains more information about this outcome variable and analysis.

Conclusion

This article makes a number of important theoretical and empirical contributions. First, it contributes to the reinvigorated IR literature on individuals. It does so by significantly enlarging the scope of these studies beyond the level of “great (wo)men.” It shows that a specific group of state officials—negotiators in a multilateral setting—can influence relevant aspects of international life. Bringing into the analysis the many individuals that operate, at different levels, in the international arena is important if we want to have a

more accurate picture of international politics (Byman and Pollack 2001, 146).

The findings of this article speak to, and reinforce, the behavioral revolution in IR. Among other things, they deal with the most difficult test for behavioral research—proving that heterogeneity across actors has concrete political consequences (Hafner-Burton et al. 2017, S4). The paper indeed shows that policymakers not only have different traits; (at times) they act on them. A negotiator’s personal style is associated with a greater use of persuasion and flexible positioning, and their experience of EU decision-making is associated with more persuasion-based tactics. These findings strengthen laboratory studies of negotiation with evidence from professional diplomatic negotiators. Moving forward, scholars interested in elite surveys and diplomacy could tap more into the ample psychological literature and test other individual-level variables in negotiation. Negotiation studies have suggested that personal traits such as extraversion, risk propensity, or emotional intelligence might hold promise for studying negotiation behavior (Sharma, Bottom, and Elfenbein 2013).

At the same time, individual traits explain some, but not all, tactics. We have suggested that they are less likely to be a relevant force when negotiators commit the state in significant and explicit ways, such as with *Veto* or *Side-Payments*. These findings remind us that a whole set of factors intervenes in real-life situations—e.g., the role of capital-based structures, in diplomacy. The larger point is that behavioral studies could increase their external validity not only by targeting experienced decision-makers but also by including the constraints individuals face in producing policy outputs.

Second, vis-à-vis Allison’s models and the bureaucratic scholarship in FPA, the article has argued that the state gets disaggregated twice. Not only is foreign policy shaped by a collection of decentralized substate units, each with their own mission and interests. Within these subunits, a second disaggregation takes place. Policymaking responsibilities are acquired by single officials, with often significant margins of maneuver from the units themselves. This is most visible in the regular and sustained encounters of the state with the external—e.g., in the daily activities of diplomatic agents posted to embassies, of military personnel (like Lieutenant Colonel Corson) or other officers in the field tasked with operational objectives. The state becomes more horizontal and opens up space for individuals to influence policies. This paper thus provides new insights and avenues for research on these and other (e.g., transgovernmental bureaucratic actors) below-leader individuals. Similar to the negotiators in this study, they are likely to enjoy relatively significant leeway in performing their tasks. For instance, former US ambassador to Iraq, Zalmay Khalilzad, was “in the business of shaping his own instructions. So when he’s going out and talking with Sunni sheikhs or delaying the constitution to allow compromises to be made, that’s him doing it, not Washington” (Peter Galbraith in Halperin and Clapp 2007, 278).

Third, in terms of negotiation research, the article offers new evidence by associating the choice of tactics with the personal attributes of negotiators, rather than state characteristics or the structure of the bargaining game. In doing so, we have reconceptualized the face of the negotiating state and argued that it has become partially individualized. Far from being at the end of a hierarchical and tightly supervised chain of command, negotiators have instead secured ultimate policymaking functions. They influence the formulation of the national position in general, but their power is most prominent when choosing tactics.

We focused on six negotiation tactics. Future research could include a different set of tactics and/or improve the ones used here. Tactics such as *Common Goals* or *Side-Payments* did not carry great weight in our analysis. *Issue-Linkages*—as formulated in the paper—might lump together integrative attempts coming the capital with those made by Brussels-based diplomats. This possibly obfuscates the effects of individual-level traits upon this variable. If we operationalize tactics in ways that reflect even more specific and fine-grained exchanges (cf. Naurin 2015), the impact of individual characteristics might be even stronger. Tactics that require finding/nurturing alliances, building relations with the chair, or involving the use of certain language or emotions hardly command an explicit or significant commitment of the state. Instead, they appear more related to the diplomats' human individuality. Also, this paper has analyzed tactics as a set of choices taken independently by negotiators. Yet, the use of tactics depends on the behavior of other negotiators too. This interactive side of tactical negotiations could also be subject to further investigation. Experimental survey techniques—with the manipulation of different scenarios—can be used to test the interdependency of tactic selection.

Finally, this research investigated the case of the EU's CFSP/CSDP. The EU could be considered a most likely case for the processes illustrated in this paper and for the empowerment of single individuals. However, there is no reason why the findings of this paper could not travel beyond the EU. Recent research has, for instance, found that the personal experience, social skills, and negotiation skills of national delegates to the IMF Executive Board allowed them to wield outsize influence on the IMF's decisions (Forster 2024).⁹ What is more, EU permanent representations are one instance of the many diplomatic missions that surround UN bodies, regional institutions, or organizations like World Trade Organization (WTO), NATO, and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The growth in numbers and importance of these representations is a remarkable feature of modern diplomacy. Diplomatic missions are in a constant negotiating mode and do much more than represent their state. They govern global commons. By crafting "local compromises, [engaging in] creative policymaking, and horse trading that happen on the ground" (Pouliot 2015, 86), officials based on these representations are said to "often have autonomous causal effects on policy outcomes" (Pouliot 2015, 108).

Negotiators operating in all these multilateral settings are therefore likely to have, or create for themselves, space for autonomous action similar to that enjoyed by CFSP/CSDP diplomats. A manual written for UN delegates advises governments to "refrain from giving explicit directives to their delegations." In line with the findings of this article,

[t]he reason for this is that explicit directives ... can make it much more difficult for the delegation to react appropriately to situations that headquarters has not fully anticipated. In real life, headquarters will never be aware of all the information held by its delegation at any given moment, nor of all the subtleties of tactical situations as they arise. (Walker 2011, 22)

An in-depth study of the Norwegian diplomatic delegation reveals that similar processes appear to be in place also

at the UN Security Council. Norwegian diplomats receive broad instructions, which are often circumvented because of the constant fluctuations of the negotiation and the organizational complexity of the foreign ministry—to the point that the delegation agreed on a resolution without consulting Oslo and despite the general opposition of the ministry to the proposal (Schia 2013). Other UN missions, such as the French and the British, are also known to enjoy significant leeway from the capital (Pouliot 2015, 103). Future research could investigate to what extent the empowerment of single individuals occurs in these and other sites of multilateral diplomacy—and whether it applies to bilateral relationships too. In all these situations, individuals and individual traits may have an important story to tell.

Supplementary Information

Supplementary information is available in the *International Studies Quarterly* data archive.

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⁹Another example comes from UN peacekeeping operations. Oksamytna et al. (2023) argue that the way UN peacekeeping missions respond to norm violations by the host government (i.e., with more confrontation or conciliation) depends also on the individual characteristics (e.g., previous experience and length of service in the host country) of UN officials.

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