

**MP Firefighting:
When do MPs hold government
accountable?**

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accountable?

PhD Dissertation

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgments.....	13
Chapter 1: Project introduction	17
1.1. The project’s overall results.....	20
1.2. Contribution	22
1.3. The dissertation’s road map.....	24
Chapter 2: The institutional context and MP Firefighting.....	27
2.1. The institutional context of parliamentary systems	28
2.2. Delegation and the problems that follow	31
2.3. Ex-post control: Police Patrol or Fire Alarm.....	34
2.4. Institutional Fire Alarms	39
2.5. Central parliamentary control institutions	40
2.6. Decentral parliamentary control institutions	45
2.7. Conclusion and chapter summary	52
Chapter 3: When do MPs engage in Firefighting?.....	55
3.1. The various political actors in parliament	56
3.2. MP goals.....	57
3.3. MPs’ role as ‘partisans’ and ‘parliamentarians’.....	59
3.4. Institutional support and MPs’ roles.....	62
3.5. When do MPs engage in Firefighting?	66
3.6. Conclusion and chapter summery.....	75
Chapter 4: The Faroe Islands country case.....	77
4.1. The Faroe Islands entity.....	78
4.2. Parliamentary system setting	84
4.3. Central parliamentary control institutions	86
4.4. Decentral parliamentary control institutions	96
4.5. The political party system.....	101
4.6. The actors: MPs	106
4.7. Majority constellation system.....	112
4.8. Conclusion and chapter summary.....	114
Chapter 5: Overall research design and design of the quantitative investigation.....	117
5.1. A theory centric research design	118
5.2. The selection of institutional Fire Alarm cases	119
5.3. Mixed method approach	124
5.4. Data collection	125
5.5. Quantitative investigation	135
5.6. Operationalization of project variables	136
5.7. Conclusion and chapter summery	143

Chapter 6: Patterns of MP Firefighting: a quantitative analysis	145
6.1. MP Firefighting.....	146
6.2. Oppositional Firefighting.....	152
6.3. Explosive institutional Fire Alarms	158
6.4. Media coverage.....	165
6.5. Damage control	169
6.6. Multivariate analysis	172
6.7. Institution effect	175
6.8. Conclusion and chapter summery	176
Chapter 7: Design of qualitative investigation	179
7.1. Theory testing case study and typical cases	180
7.2. The case selection	182
7.3. The process-tracing method.....	185
7.4. Additional case specific information.....	186
7.5. Conclusion and chapter summery.....	189
Chapter 8: MP Firefighting and the mechanism	191
8.1. The causal mechanism and the prior confidence	191
8.2. The Transport Company Accounts	194
8.3. The 2012 Mackerel Allocation	221
8.4. Conclusion and chapter summery	245
Chapter 9: Institutionalized MP Firefighting	249
9.1. The institutionalized process.....	250
9.2. Institutionalized MP Firefighting	253
9.3. Investigation of institutionalized MP Firefighting	254
9.4. Conclusion and chapter summary	263
Chapter 10: What we have learned about MP Firefighting	265
10.1. Evaluating the project's results	265
10.2. Effects of a control process related to government	267
10.3. Do the findings travel?	269
References	273
Appendix 1: Case overview	289
Appendix 2: Overview of government constellations 1998-2015.....	297
Appendix 3: Additional tables and figures.....	298
English summary	301
Dansk resumé.....	303
Føroyskur samandráttur.....	305

List of tables and figures

Table 2.1: Main institutional characteristics, parliamentary and presidential systems	28
Table 2.2: Overview of types of parliamentary ex-post control activity.....	38
Table 2.3: Control institutions and third parties as Fire Alarm actors: reporting requirements and incentives.....	40
Table 2.4: Overview of typical control institutions in parliament.....	45
Table 4.1: Overview of central control institutions in the Løgting	87
Table 4.2: Activity for the control committee, investigative committee, Votes of No Confidence, and parliamentary question in the time-period 1998-2016	94
Table 4.3: Effective numbers of party following the elections in 1998, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2011 and 2015	104
Table 4.4: Overview of main compromise axe in government time-periods, ordered by decades since 1950	110
Table 5.1: Overview of the project's data	126
Table 5.2: overview of the search strategy for media data.....	130
Table 5.3: Overview of the project's investigations and use of methods...144	
Table 6.1: Overview of MP activity cases and no-activity cases among the 25 Ombudsman and 27 audit Fire Alarm cases.....	147
Table 6.2: Overview of the use of control institutions in the 10 Ombudsman and 10 MP audit activity cases	148
Table 6.3: The weights for the parliamentary institutions	150
Table 6.4: The Firefighting values in the Ombudsman and audit activity cases	151
Table 6.5: MP Firefighting related to the position of the MP's party	153
Table 6.6: The shares of coalition and opposition activity in mixed activity cases ^{a)}	154
Table 6.7: Overview of the opposition coherence in the 10 Ombudsman and 10 audit ^{a)} activity cases ^{b)}	157
Table 6.8: Explosiveness scores in the 25 Ombudsman Fire Alarm cases	160

Table 6.9: Explosive scores in the 27 audit Fire Alarm cases	161
Table 6.10: Overview of the results for the dichotomous explosive variable and Firefighting outcome	162
Table 6.11: Overview of cases that receive media coverage or no media coverage.....	165
Table 6.12: Overview of the results for the dichotomous media and Firefighting variables for the two institution cases	166
Table 6.13: Overview of damage control values for the Ombudsman and audit institutions.....	170
Table 6.14: Overview of the results for the damage control variable and Firefighting outcome	171
Table 6.15: Overview of the results for the new damage control variable and Firefighting outcome	172
Table 6.16: Multivariate analysis of MP Firefighting.....	174
Table 6.17: Overview of the parliamentary activity for the two institutions, the Ombudsman and audit institution	176
Table 7.1: The result of the case sorting based on the five selection criteria	184
Table 9.1: Overview of the finance committee position in the 11 decision proposals from the audit committee	257
Table 9.2: The number of collected speeches from opposition and government MPs	259
Table 9.3: Overview of codes and the definitions.....	260
Table 9.4: Results of the investigation of “parliamentarian” focus and “partisan” references in MPs speeches related to annual audit reports	262
Table A.1: Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance values (1/VIF)	298
Table A.2: Correlations between independent variables in the multivariate model.....	299
Figure 3.1: Model of the two main roles that MPs face in parliament	59
Figure 3.2: Project model.....	76
Figure 4.1: Illustration of the central administrative system	82
Figure 4.2: Illustration of the total use and the use of different parliamentary questions win the time-period 1998-2016.....	95

Figure 4.3: Number of complaints to the Ombudsman from 2001 to 2015	98
Figure 4.4: Illustration of the Faroese party system	103
Figure 6.1: Ombudsman institution scatterplot, illustrating the correlation between the degree of MP Firefighting and the degree of case explosiveness	163
Figure 6.2: Audit institution scatterplot, illustrating the correlation between the degree of MP Firefighting and the degree of case explosiveness	164
Figure 6.3: Ombudsman institution scatterplot, illustrating the correlation between the degree of MP Firefighting and the degree of media coverage	167
Figure 6.4: Audit institution scatterplot, illustrating the correlation between the degree of MP Firefighting and the degree of media coverage	168
Figure 8.1: Overview of the parliamentary activity in the Transport Company Accounts case	198
Figure 8.2: The media coverage in relation to the parliamentary activity in the Transport Company Account case	208
Figure 8.3: Illustration of the reaction process in the Transport Company Accounts case	220
Figure 8.4: The parliamentary activity in the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case	228
Figure 8.5: The media coverage related to the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case	236
Figure 8.6: The reaction process in the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case ..	245
Figure 9.1: The institutionalized process related to the audit institution ..	251
Figure 9.2: The process related to the Ombudsman institution	252
Figure A.1: Lvr2plot, a leverage versus residual squared plot	298

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It was the reading of Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* when I was a first-year political science student in Copenhagen that woke my interest in theory. I was amazed; it felt like Weber had described for me my grandmother, even though he had never met her. My grandmother lived and worked in the small village of Strendur in the Faroe Islands. I never forgot this experience and I still to a high degree appreciate theories that explain some kind of universal phenomenon.

When I first came to the political science department in Aarhus, I brought with me this fascination of theories. Even though I knew that there was more to research than theories and did care for methods, it was not with the same enthusiasm. Today, I feel a similar fascination with methods. I find it very intriguing how the methodological toolbox opens doors and provides access into this world of new and improved knowledge. I owe this personal development to the "Political Behavior and Institutions" section at the Department of Political Science in Aarhus.

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urges for you to use your skills and to do your best, as you probably have noticed, I have to do my share. Maybe climbing the high fences in life is worth the effort.

Chapter 1: Project introduction

In 2010, the Faroese Ombudsman reported to parliament on a case concerning audit licenses. A group of accountants had received the advanced state-authorized public account license despite not having passed the exam related to the license. The critique was harsh, since the authorizations conflicted with Faroese legislation. The case implicated two ministers and ministerial departments and caused turmoil in parliament. MPs raised parliamentary questions and settled an ad-hoc investigative committee to prepare further investigations. The result of the process was the withdrawal of the allocated audit licenses, though without consequences for any of the implicated decision makers.

This example illustrates the focus of this project. MPs use information from an independent control institution, the Ombudsman, and engage in control of government by activating control institutions within parliament. In this case, the Ombudsman served as a Fire Alarm institution (McCubbins and Schwartz 1984) initiating MP Firefighting within parliament. MPs engage in parliamentary control and hold government accountable.

The project's motivation is the discussions on the importance of accountability for the quality of modern democratic systems (e.g. Schedler et al. 1999, Diamond and Morlino 2005, Olsen 2013). The need for accountability derives from the challenge that “power tends to corrupt”, known from Lord Acton's (1834-1902) famous quotation. In this respect, control of executive power is a central concern.

The job of securing accountability related to elected political representatives is primarily vested with the voters, who we expect will “throw the rascals out” on Election Day. However, the voter has very limited power and knowledge related to government affairs in the time between elections. In addition, when it comes to parliamentary systems, the voter only indirectly elects government, since parliament delegates executive power to government. Therefore, government answers to parliament. Laver and Shepsle state this fact in the following way: “... the essence of parliamentary democracy is the accountability of the government (also called cabinet, executive, or administration) to the legislature” (1999: 279). This project focuses on political representatives' use of institutional control devices in their relationship with government in parliamentary systems.

In parliament, MPs have control institutions at their disposal in order to be able to conduct oversight of government actions. This means that as parliamentarians, MPs are faced by an expectation to engage in control of government. I refer to these expectations as the role of “parliamentarian”. However, political actors do not always find themselves in a position in which engaging in control activity is attractive. On the one hand, MPs from a government party, positioned in office, find control activity less attractive. Control activity might even damage MPs’ goals for government office. On the other hand, opposition MPs find themselves in a position where in fact they have incentives to engage in control of government. In addition to the role of “parliamentarian”, MPs face expectations to pursue party goals, which I refer to the role of “partisan”. Following from this, opposition MPs might be adhering more to the “partisan” than to the “parliamentarian” obligation when they decide to engage in parliamentary control in order to implicate and damage government’s reputation. In this way, opposition MPs improve their party’s position for a future election. Thus, political parties complicate the issue of parliamentary control in parliamentary systems (Müeller 2000, Andeweg and Nijzink 1995).

In addition to the incentive challenge, there is an institutional challenge to consider. Related to parliamentary control, a challenge in parliamentary systems compared to presidential systems, is that once a government is in office, parliament and MPs typically have less sharp teeth in terms of their relationship with government, as a result of comparatively weaker control institutions. Ideal typically, parliamentary systems empower parliaments less in terms of control institutions (ex-post measures) (Strøm 2000, 2003); parliamentary committees in parliamentary systems, for instance, have less capacity (Mattson and Strøm 1995). Overall, the conditions for parliamentary control in parliamentary systems are not optimal, considering the incentive challenge and weaker ex-post measures.

However, parliaments in parliamentary systems still have institutions such as parliamentary questions and standing committees (Sieberer 2011, Garritzmann 2017, Bergman et al. 2003) to utilise for control activity, Yet, institutions are only dispositional (Dowding 1996:3-4) and do not act. Institutions need actors to take them into use. Therefore, we need to know more about the actors that engage in control activity in parliament: the MPs. Although parliamentary control is of great importance to the securing of accountability, we still know very little about when and to what extent MPs in fact do engage in parliamentary control. Do government MPs in parliament, for instance, always lean back in their seats, refraining from engaging in control activity, and do opposition MPs, conversely, use every opportunity to throw

themselves at mistakes made by the government? This project addresses this gap in the literature.

The project builds on the literature following the classical McCubbins and Schwartz article on ex-post control activity from 1984. In this article, the assumption is that MPs prefer reactive Fire Alarm control to the time-consuming continuous Police Patrol activity. Fire Alarm control is MPs making use of and responding to information from various third parties outside parliament that raise Fire Alarms regarding government misconduct. Police Patrol is MPs' continuous activity in parliament, examining government actions for possible mistakes and misconduct. From this, considering that MPs prefer less time-consuming control activity, the project focuses on the Fire Alarm control.

However, the project argues that McCubbins and Schwartz's famous distinction between Police Patrol and Fire Alarm needs refinement. The project argues that there are two different components related to the Fire Alarm category, the decentral Fire Alarm activity from so-called third parties outside of parliament and the reactive MP activity central within parliament. The project therefore introduces the concept of Firefighting. The project distinguishes between the Fire Alarms from third parties and the Firefighting by MPs. This project argues that Fire Alarms outside of parliament call for Firefighting inside of parliament. When an alarm concerning government malpractice goes off, it is important that there is activity directed at extinguishing the fire. Therefore, this project focuses on the interplay between these two components of the Fire Alarm category.

Instead of incentive driven third parties, the project focuses on decentral parliamentary control institutions that raise Fire Alarms. Decentral parliamentary control institutions are independent institutions that oversee government actions and raise institutional Fire Alarms of government misconduct on behalf of parliament. By focusing on control of government from independent parliamentary control institutions in this way, the project addresses the horizontal dimension of the accountability concept (O'Donnell 1999, 2004), though in a parliamentary system context.

In parliament, following Fire Alarms from decentral parliamentary control institutions, MPs decide whether to respond and engage in Firefighting. From this follows the project's research question:

Under what circumstances do MPs engage in Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarms from decentral parliamentary control institutions?

The project's main theoretical argument is that in parliament, MPs are "partisans" pursuing party goals of votes, policy and office (Strøm 1990). Political parties control most of MPs' goals such as, for instance, re-election (Strøm

2012). From this follows that MPs pursue party goals. Related to parliamentary control, this means that MPs engage in parliamentary control if the activity is in the interest of their political party. However, Andeweg and Nijzink's (1995), based on King (1976), refer to the existence of an institutional "non-party" mode of interactions between the legislature and executive, which enables MPs to display a "parliamentarian" type of behavior. This means that MPs face expectations from different roles when they have to decide whether to engage in Firefighting (Searing 1994, Andeweg 2014).

In other words, MPs face expectations from distinct roles, and the project explores the different conditions under which MPs adhere to each role. For opposition MPs, there is no conflict between the two different roles, while the situation is different for government MPs. Rational actors consider potential cost and benefits before engaging in control activity, both of which vary in relation to the institutional context. Primarily, I expect opposition MPs to engage in relation to a Fire Alarm, since the activity is in line with their motivation to gain control of government positions. However, control is costly activity, and therefore MPs will only engage if the Fire Alarm has the potential to implicate government. Overall, I expect Firefighting to be more likely under certain circumstances, such as the importance of the case, the target of the Fire Alarm critique, and the attention the case receives.

However, I expect that an institutionalized process in terms of rules and procedures makes it more challenging for opposition MPs to use parliamentary control for "partisan" purposes, and for government MPs to defend government or abstain from engaging in parliamentary control. I expect that an institutionalized process strengthens the "parliamentarian" role, dampens the "partisan" activity and leads to a higher degree of control activity from government MPs. We still do not know much about how institutions influence MP behavior (Sieberer 2011). This project thereby addresses this empirical gap by investigating whether a higher degree of institutionalization provides additional institutional support for MPs' role as "parliamentarians".

Overall, the project applies a deductive approach. The project develops theoretical expectations, the project hypothesis, for when MPs engage in Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarms from decentral parliamentary control institutions. From this, the project develops a research design to test the project hypothesis. The empirical investigation is conducted in the micro settings of the Faroe Islands country case.

1.1. The project's overall results

The project's overall result is that MP Firefighting is primarily "partisan" activity. MPs engage in Firefighting in order to inflict cost on government and

damage government reputation. However, the project's results also show that additional institutional support in the form of an institutionalized process leads to more Firefighting from government MPs and to more "parliamentarian" Firefighting.

The project selects two cases of control institutions, the Ombudsman and the public audit institution, and conducts a comparative institution case study. The project selects historical institutional Fire Alarm cases representing the two institutions for a medium-N design. The project separates the two institutions in the analysis, since this offers a harder test for the project's theoretical model, namely to see if the two control institutions demonstrate the same patterns of MP Firefighting. However, since the two institutions vary in their degree of institutionalization, it is also possible to investigate effects of the institution on MP Firefighting. The project applies a mixed-method analytical strategy, combining quantitative and qualitative methods in order to investigate and answer the project's hypothesis.

First, the project investigates patterns of MP Firefighting by using quantitative techniques. The focus of the quantitative investigation is on patterns of co-variation between the project's independent variables and the dependent variable.

The results of the quantitative investigation show that MP Firefighting is to a great extent "partisan" activity. MPs from opposition parties dominate the parliamentary control activity, engaging in Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarm cases that have the potential to damage government reputation. MPs engage in Firefighting related to cases that receive media coverage. In addition, MPs engage in Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarm cases where ministers and government make no effort to address the problem. Overall, the quantitative investigation supports the theoretical model. The investigation shows the expected correlations but does not allow for further understandings of how the variables relate to each other. In other words, the investigation does not reveal how the process of Firefighting takes place (see chapter 6).

Therefore, the project continues by selecting specific institutional Fire Alarm cases for a within-case investigation by the method of process-tracing. Focus of the qualitative investigation is to trace the mechanism that links the theorized conditions to the Firefighting outcome.

The investigation of two institutional Fire Alarm cases, one Ombudsman and one audit case, demonstrate similar results. The content of the opposition activity clearly shows that MPs use cases to inflict cost on government and damage government reputation, where the activity is directed at individual ministers, but also government as a whole. The content of the activity demonstrates that MPs focus to a great extent on the ministers' mistakes in the cases

and on policy implications. Moreover, the investigation demonstrates a complex feedback loop relationship between parliamentary activity and media coverage. Related to damage control, both cases also show a complex picture, since the damage control strategy might change during a control process. Nonetheless, the two cases give the impression that MPs only take an interest in a lack of damage control if it strengthens the case against the minister and government. For the question of the mechanism, both cases demonstrate similar reaction processes that link the hypothesized conditions to the Firefighting outcome. Both cases demonstrate a gradual process, in which MPs build up cases by broadening their focus or by utilising parliamentary control institutions (see chapter 8).

Finally, the project investigates effects of an institutionalized process on MP Firefighting. For the audit institution, MPs engage in institutionalized Firefighting as part of the institutionalized process related to the audit institution. The focus of the investigation is on whether MPs display a different type of behavior when it comes to institutionalized Firefighting – where the Firefighting is pre-defined and instructed – compared to optional MP Firefighting, which is based on MPs' own initiative.

The investigation shows that government MPs engage more in institutionalized than optional Firefighting. Moreover, the investigation shows that both government and opposition MPs demonstrate a higher degree of “parliamentarian” Firefighting in cases of institutionalized Firefighting, compared to the dominant pattern of “partisan” optional Firefighting (see chapter 9).

1.2. Contribution

This project's investigation of parliamentary control combines a focus on institutions and political actors, which offers new perspectives on how to investigate accountability issues in modern political systems. Moreover, the project explicitly focuses on accountability and parliamentary control in parliamentary systems that somehow seem to stand in the shadow of accountability research in presidential systems (Pollack 2002). In addition, the project conducts a rare investigation of political institutions in the empirical micro settings of the Faroe Islands. Overall, the project offers theoretical, methodological as well as empirical contributions.

Theoretically, this project's contribution is a modification of the classical ex-post parliamentary control category of Fire Alarm activity. It distinguishes between the decentral Fire Alarm activity outside of parliament and the central MP Firefighting activity inside of parliament. In this sense, the project contributes by expanding the typology for ex-post parliamentary control, leaving an opportunity to investigate the inter-relationship between the Fire

Alarm activity and the MP Firefighting activity. Moreover, this project contributes theoretically by addressing the horizontal dimension of the accountability concept (O'Donnell 1999, 2004) in a parliamentary system setting without conflicting with the single chain of delegation and accountability (Strøm 2000, 2003). The project maintains the horizontal accountability concept's focus on control from independent institutions but changes the enforcement or sanctioning dimension to stay with MPs in parliament. The project's contribution is the development of an ideal-type referred to as decentral parliamentary control institutions.

Methodologically, the project uses a mixed method system design, which makes it possible to compare institutions at the same time as conducting a detailed investigation of processes. Moreover, the project offers a combination of a medium-N design and qualitative process-tracing study. In addition, the project combines this strategy by selecting a typical case for the investigation.

Empirically, the project's results offer new general knowledge on parliamentary control activity. We know that in parliament MPs demonstrate "partisan" behavior, considering the strong position of political parties and parties' control of MPs' goals (Müeller 2000, Strøm 2012). In addition, several empirical investigations focus on control institutions that enable control activity (Sieberer 2011, Garritzmann 2017, Bergman et al. 2003, Andeweg and Nijzink 1995). However, the previous knowledge is limited when it comes to MPs' behavior specifically related to control activity. This project demonstrates that MPs demonstrate "partisan" behavior related to specific control activity to a great extent. In addition to this, the project's investigation demonstrates that additional institutional support in the form of an institutionalized process leads to a higher degree of participation from government MPs and a higher degree of "parliamentarian" MP control activity.

In addition to this, the project provides new knowledge on MPs and Fire Alarm control activity. According to Saalfeld (2000), traditional studies focus almost exclusively on Police Patrol, but neglect or underestimate the effectiveness and low transaction costs associated with Fire Alarm oversight. This means, that this project's focus on Fire Alarm control addresses this shortcoming. In addition, previous knowledge on Fire Alarm control primarily rests on theoretical assumptions (for instance McCubbins and Schwartz 1984, Lupia and McCubbins 2000), while this project conducts an empirical investigation of Fire Alarm and Firefighting control activity. In addition, previous research questions MPs' interest in reporting information (Saalfeld 2000: 371-372, Brandsma and Schillemans 2012: 972, Brandsma 2010).). This project reveals that under certain conditions, MPs do make use of information in reports from control institutions. This means that this project's findings suggest

that one should consider the content of the reports from control institutions before assessing MPs' interest in reporting information.

Finally, the project offers specific empirical contributions related to the Faroe Islands country case. The project offers new knowledge on political behavior and institutions in the Faroe Islands. Overall, the results show that the Faroe Islands case has typical institutional settings related to parliamentary settings and the party system. Related to the Ombudsman and the audit institution, the investigation shows that Ombudsman as well as audit cases receive attention from the media, but that the parliamentary activity related to the Ombudsman institution is more politicized compared to the audit institution. Moreover, the project's confirmation of hypotheses that build on universal theoretical expectations about political behavior means that such general theoretical assumptions also apply for the micro settings of the Faroe Islands case.

1.3. The dissertation's road map

The dissertation starts out by presenting the theoretical framework in the following two chapters (chapter 2 and 3). Following the theoretical framework, the dissertation presents the project's country case, the Faroe Islands (chapter 4), and the overall research design, including the quantitative investigation (chapter 5). Thereafter, the dissertation presents the results of the first investigation, the quantitative investigation (chapter 6). Continuing the investigation, the dissertation presents the design of the qualitative investigation (chapter 7) and the results of the qualitative investigation (chapter 8). Then, the dissertation presents the final investigation of institutionalized MP Firefighting (chapter 9). The dissertation ends by assessing the project's findings (chapter 10). The following sections offer further details for each chapter.

Chapter 2 presents the institutional framework. The chapter presents a description of parliamentary systems and the concept of delegation. It presents McCubbins and Schwartz's (1984) classical typology for ex-post parliamentary control activity. Following this, the chapter presents the project's modification of the Fire Alarm control category; the distinction between decentral institutional Fire Alarms and central Firefighting. Additionally, the chapter presents the project's understanding of central and decentral parliamentary control institutions.

Chapter 3 presents the framework concerning the political actors. It introduces the issue of the political actors in parliament and the issue of MPs' goals and different roles as "partisans" and "parliamentarians". Then, the chapter addresses the issue of institutional support and additional institutional support for MPs role as "parliamentarians". Moreover, the chapter formulates the

project's five hypotheses regarding under what circumstances MPs engage in Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarms.

Chapter 4 focuses on the empirical context – the project's empirical case – the Faroe Islands. The chapter offers information on the Faroe Islands as a political entity. The chapter further addresses the specific institutional parliamentary settings, control institutions and political context in the Faroese political system related to the project's theoretical model, as presented in chapters 2 and 3.

Chapter 5 develops the project's research design and the design of the quantitative investigation. It presents the project's overall deductive approach and the project's theory-centric research design. Moreover, the chapter presents the selection of institutional Fire Alarm cases, the mixed method approach, and the data collection. In addition, the chapter presents the design of the quantitative investigation and the operationalization of the project's variables.

Chapter 6 presents the results of the quantitative investigation of patterns of MP Firefighting. The chapter uses quantitative techniques to investigate patterns of co-variation between the project's dependent and independent variables. The methods applied are descriptive statistics and bi-variate correlation tests and a multivariate analysis by OLS linear regression analysis.

Chapter 7 presents the design of the qualitative investigation. It presents the use of a theory-testing case study and use of typical cases. In addition, the chapter presents criteria for case selection and the selection of cases for the qualitative within-case investigation. In addition, the chapter presents the project's use of the process-tracing method.

Chapter 8 presents the results of the project's qualitative within-case investigation of the two selected cases, the audit Transport Company Accounts case and the Ombudsman 2012 Mackerel Allocation case. The chapter uses the process-tracing method to provide empirical evidence of the causal mechanisms playing out, linking the theoretical conditions to the Firefighting outcome, as indicated in the quantitative investigation in chapter 6.

Chapter 9 returns to the institutional question, first investigated in the multivariate investigation in chapter 6. The chapter investigates the project's fifth and final hypothesis concerning effects on MP Firefighting from an institutionalized process. The chapter presents the results of the investigation of the institutionalized processes related to the audit and Ombudsman institutions, and of institutionalized MP Firefighting related to the audit institution.

Chapter 10 focuses on what we have learned about MP Firefighting. It assesses the project's findings, addresses the question of an effect on government related to a parliamentary control process, and the issue of generalization of the project's findings.

Chapter 2: The institutional context and MP Firefighting

This chapter and the one that follows cover the project's theoretical framework. This chapter concerns the institutional framework, while the following chapter addresses the framework concerning the political actors.

First, the chapter presents an ideal-typical description of parliamentary systems, followed by the concept of delegation and the problems that follow when a principal delegates power to an agent. Second, the chapter presents McCubbins and Schwartz (1984) classical typology for ex post parliamentary control activity and the project's modification of the Fire Alarm control category. This project distinguishes between the Fire Alarm activity outside of parliament and the Firefighting inside parliament. Third, the chapter presents typical control institutions in parliamentary systems inside as well as outside of parliament, including a description of the Ombudsman and the legislative audit institution. The chapter ends by focusing on the difference between institutional Fire Alarms from control institutions outside of parliament and Fire Alarms raised by incentive driven third parties.

Overall, this chapter presents the project's use of the principal-agent framework in the institutional context of parliamentary systems. The project's focus is on parliamentary control activity and the principal-agent framework explicitly addresses this subject. Nevertheless, when it comes to the institutional framework, critics point to weaknesses in the principal-agent framework of the simple dyadic relation understanding (Olsen 2013, Bovens et al. 2014: 14). To this, I respond that the principal-agent framework acknowledges this, by stating, for instance, that parliament is not just one institution. In parliament, political parties complicate the model (Müeller 2000, Strøm 2000), and cases of coalition government systems add to this complication (Strøm 2010). In addition, I also focus on control institutions outside of parliament in this project. This way, I also attempt to avoid too much simplification and instead adhere to the complexity of the parliament-government relationship. First, I present the institutional context of parliamentary systems.

2.1. The institutional context of parliamentary systems

The institutional setting for this project’s investigation of parliamentary control is parliamentary systems, which is the typical model for European political systems (Strøm 2000). Today, democratic political systems are representative systems. This means that voters elect political representatives to act on their behalf. In other words, when it comes to democratic delegation, voters delegate power to political representatives. This applies to parliamentary as well as presidential systems. However, when it comes to the selection of political representatives in government, the difference is clear. In parliamentary systems, parliament delegates power to government, not the voter. Overall, when it comes to delegation, parliamentary systems follow a different logic to presidential systems.

This project focuses on parliamentary control in parliamentary systems, which because of the difference in delegation and accountability, plays out rather differently. Therefore, this chapter starts out with a presentation of the overall institutional setting of parliamentary systems, focusing on themes of importance to accountability and parliamentary control. The themes for this discussion are as follows: the logic of delegation, the question of institutional checks, the overall power relationship between parliament and government, and the main logic of control. For an overview of the differences between parliamentary and presidential systems, see table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Main institutional characteristics, parliamentary and presidential systems

	Delegation and accountability	Institutional checks	Parliament and government	Main logic of control
Parliamentary systems	Single chain	Weak	Fused powers	Ex ante
Presidential systems	Multiple chains	Strong	Separated powers	Ex post

A parliamentary system is known for the so-called single chain of delegation and accountability. There is the single chain of delegation and a corresponding chain of accountability that runs in the reverse direction. Presidential systems have a multiple chain, where the principal typically selects more than one agent. For instance, we have the voter that elects political representatives for the legislature, as well as the president, which means that the principal elects competing agents. In parliamentary systems, the single chain means that a principal delegates to one and only one agent. For instance, the voters only

elect the political representatives in parliament, not the government. A simple single chain of delegation and accountability is a core characteristic of ideal typical parliamentary systems, while presidential systems' multiple competing agents leave a complex mix of delegation and accountability (Strøm 2000, 2003). That an agent in parliamentary systems is accountable to only one principal is called the singularity principle (Strøm 2000, 2003).

The single chain in parliamentary systems contains four links. The chain of delegation starts with the voters, who via elections elect representatives to parliament. Thereafter, the elected representatives continue and delegate power to the executive branch (head of government), who delegates power to the heads of executive departments (ministers), who again delegate to civil servants (Strøm 2000: 267). The democratic chain of delegation leaves the voter as the ultimate principal¹ (Strøm 2000, 2003). In parliamentary systems, when parliament delegate powers to government (PM and ministers), they become the principal in relation to the government. What follows from a single chain of delegation and accountability is the importance of each separate link. Therefore, the challenge for a single chain is a possible weak link: "a singular chain of delegation is only as strong as its weakest link" (Strøm 2000: 277). Following from the previously mentioned singularity principle, oversight of government actions rests on parliament alone. Therefore, the question of parliamentary control in parliamentary systems is a main concern.

This principal – agent relationship of legislature and government does not exist in the same manner in a presidential system, since the voter is the principal according to each of these two competing agents; the political representative in parliament as well as the head of government. The two models most clearly diverge in the relationship between the legislature and the executive (Strøm 2000: 270). In parliamentary systems, the relationship between the legislature and the executive is a principal-agent relationship, while the relationship in a presidential system is a check and balance relationship.

Following from this, another crucial difference between presidential and parliamentary systems is that parliamentary systems lack institutional checks, which are so characteristic for presidential systems. Presidential systems employ the Madison thinking to check ambition by ambition. Institutional checks are employed by positioning agents against each other (Kiewiet and McCubbins 1991: 33-34). Even though in parliamentary systems, parliaments have considerable power to insert and dismiss government by investiture and No Confidence Votes (Strøm 2000, 2003), they are not assisted by other agents

¹ Strøm and Bergman (2011: 5) refer to the citizen as the ultimate stakeholder.

or institutional checks after the insertion of government. The lack of competing agents and veto players in parliamentary systems² has implications such as less available information about agent's actions and weaker institutional checks. In other words, compared to presidential systems, parliamentary systems have weaker control mechanisms once government is inserted. This is also referred to as an ex-post control mechanism.

It is, however, important to stress that scholars also contest the assumption of singularity in principal-agent relations in parliamentary systems because of the role of political parties. Political parties play a crucial role for delegation and accountability in parliamentary systems (Müeller 2000). Political parties mediate and control the delegation process from MPs to the cabinet (Saalfeld 2000: 356; Strøm 2003: 67; Andeweg and Nijzink 1995). On the one hand, they strengthen control in parliamentary systems when it comes to ex-ante control functions. Parliamentary systems depend more on control mechanisms before the delegation power, such as screening and selection mechanisms. Here, political parties play a key role, since parties perform ex-ante screening of candidates for elections as well as for government positions (Müeller 2000). On the other hand, they reduce the incentives of members of parliament to control ministers representing the same party. In addition, Müeller (2000) for example, argues that political parties create multiple and complex agent and principal relations in parliamentary systems. An MP might face the dilemma, that he/she is the agent in relation to the party leader, expected to pursue party goals, but at the same time as a government MP, also the principal in parliament obligated to oversee the party leader, who as the Prime Minister, is the agent. However, these competing principal-agent relations and the role of political parties is not constitutionally defined (Strøm 2000). Overall, in parliamentary systems, the delegation from parliament to government combined by the role of political parties blur the two-body image of government versus parliament. Therefore, powers are fused rather than separated (Andeweg and Nijzink 1995).

The logic in parliamentary systems is that effective ex-ante screening ensures that principals choose agents that share their preferences, thereby minimizing the need for ex post control. Still, preferences might change and unforeseen problems arise. The challenge here is that ex-post control, once government is inserted, parliamentary systems can be weak. The institutional setting of parliamentary systems is characterized by a lack of institutional checks, a lack of information since there are no competing agents, and the blurring of

² Strøm, however, stresses that in presidential systems, agents cannot be competing agents and veto player at the same time. This therefore is a trade-off in institutional design (Strøm 2000).

the relationship between parliament and government inherent in the role of political parties.

This section has described the general ideal-typical institutional setting of parliamentary systems, and to some extent made comparisons with presidential systems. It has demonstrated that the principal-agent relationship of parliament and government in parliamentary systems diverges from presidential systems, since it is parliament and not the voter that delegates power to government. In addition, this section has introduced the theme of institutional checks as well as the two main dimensions of parliamentary control: the ex-ante control before, and the ex-post control after the delegation of power. Following this, this section has stated that ideal-typical parliamentary systems are weak when it comes to ex-post control.

The following section will present the project's understanding of delegation and the agency problems that follow. From this, the project presents and focuses on various ex-ante measures, but in particular on ex-post control measures.

2.2. Delegation and the problems that follow

This section deals with the theme of delegation, the problems that follow, and the control measures to apply. First, the section defines the concept of delegation. Following from this, the section clarifies the problems that follow from delegation, known as agency challenges. Then, the section addresses the question of control measures to handle agency challenges. Related to this, the section presents the understanding of accountability.

The delegation of decision power is an act used in all sorts of contexts. Citizens delegate power to political representatives to govern society, but citizens also delegate different private matters to doctors, lawyers etc. to handle on their behalf. Typical arguments for delegation are that the agent has professional training, but also the time to invest in making well-informed decisions (Lupia and McCubbins 2000, Kiewiet and McCubbins 1991). Delegation is a fundamental requirement in today's democratic representative systems. Although the type of democratic systems in parliamentary and presidential systems vary, the delegation is the same.

In this project, delegation is understood in a principal-agent context and refers to: "an act where one person or group, called a principal, relies on another person or group, called an agent, to act on the principal's behalf" (Lupia 2003:33). However, delegation raises problems worth considering, also referred to as agency challenges. Theoretically, the "perils of delegation" (Lupia 2003) refers to agency challenges defined as the lack of alignment in interests and incentives between the principal and the agent. The problem arises when

the agent acts in contradiction to the principal's interest. The principal may face the challenge of "hidden information", which may give rise to "adverse selection" and the principal may face the challenge of "hidden action", which may give rise to "moral hazard" (Lupia 2003). The challenge of adverse selection leads the principal to select the wrong agent, understood as an agent who will not serve in the principal's interest. The challenge of "moral hazard" refers to agency problems after the principal has delegated power to the agent. These problems encompass challenges such as agents who do not want to do the work (leisure shirking), agents who decide not to serve the principal because of policy disagreement (dissent shirking), or agents that act in direct contradiction to what the principal wants (sabotage) (Lupia and McCubbins 2000).

In other words, delegation entails a transfer of power and this raises the question of whether people receiving delegated power will abuse this power (Lupia 2003: 34). The underlying principle of delegation is that the principal might withdraw and select another agent. However, when it comes to political representatives, these are typically selected for a certain time-period. The voter elects political representatives for a whole election period. Not until the following election might the voter be able to hold representatives to account. This typically also holds for the representatives' selection of government. When it comes to parliament, the actors have the opportunity to replace government during this period, and often have the opportunity to call an early election. However, the political actors also have less drastic measures.

In order to overcome agency problems, Kiewiet and McCubbins list four main measures: 1. Contract design, 2. Screening and selection mechanisms, 3. Monitoring and reporting requirements and 4. Institutional checks (1991: 27-34). The two first are ex-ante measures to use before delegation to overcome problems of adverse selection. For this, the principal and agent draw up a contract specifically addressing decisions or policy in order to secure alignment. In addition, before he selects the agent, the principal conducts different screening procedures in order to reveal the agent's preferences, thus ensuring that the agent shares the principal's preferences.

The two second measures, no. 3 and 4, are ex-post measures for the principal to use to oversee the agent's actions after the actors have entered a principal-agent relationship. The third measure refers to principal activity where the principal investigates agent activity or demands that the agent explains or reports on his actions. The fourth measure is institutional checks, which means that there is at least one other agent with the authority to veto or to block the actions of the agent (1991: 34). As previously stated, parliamentary systems have weak institutional checks. In this project, the focus is on ex-post parliamentary control. This means that for this project, the relevant category of measures is the third category. In parliamentary systems, MPs can use ex-

post measures such as monitoring and reporting activity to control government behavior. Parliament uses this type of ex-post measure in order to hold government to account.³ Overall, the two ex-post control measures are the content of the concept of accountability, which refers to methods of holding agents to account for their actions. Bovens (2007: 453, 2014) argues that accountability is ex post scrutiny or activity.

The principal-agent framework distinguishes between accountability as a “process of control” and as “a type of outcome” (Lupia 2003, Strøm 2003). In the outcome understanding, focus is on whether the agent acts in the principal’s interest. If the principal and agent share preferences, delegation is successful regardless of control or no control (see Lupia 2003 and Lupia and McCubbins 2000 on this). This project uses the *process of control* understanding, which means that agents are accountable if the principal is able to exercise control. Lupia defines the accountability relation in the following way: “An agent is accountable to a principal if the principal can exercise control over the agent and delegation is not accountable if the principal is unable to exercise control” (2003: 35). Following from this, when it comes to the content of the term to exercise control, Strøm (2003: 62) refers to the right to demand information and the capacity to impose sanctions. For this understanding, Strøm (2003), among others, builds on Fearon’s often quoted accountability definition that stresses that the option to sanction follows from delegation: “First, there is an understanding that A is obliged to act in some way on behalf of B. Second, B is empowered by some formal institutional or perhaps informal rules to sanction or reward A for her activities or performance in this capacity” (1999: 55).

Strøm’s (2003) definition of accountability resembles Bovens et al.’s (2014) definition in the Oxford Handbook of “Public Accountability”. The exercise of control is defined by Strøm (2003) as the right to access information and the capacity to impose sanctions, which also resembles Bovens et al.’s (2014) institutional mechanism understanding of accountability. Bovens et al. (2014) stress the agent’s obligation to inform about his conduct, including explanations or justifications, the importance of the principal’s right to ask questions and pass judgement, as well as to impose formal or informal sanctions. Following from this, Bovens et al. (2014:9) argue that the accountability mechanism may or may not have an effect on the behavior of actors, and thereby, the outcome. However, even though a process of control does not ensure an outcome in terms of a demonstrable effect on the actor’s behavior, this project assumes that a process of control makes an effect on the outcome more likely.

³ Dubnick (2014) refers to accountability as to give account and refers to the concept’s origin in bookkeeping.

Lupia's (2003) "exercise control" version is the generic understanding of accountability: "If a principal in situation A exerts more control than a principal in situation B, then accountability is greater in situation A than it is in situation B" (2003: 35). In other words, the more control activity, the higher degree of accountability. The principal-agent framework assumes that a delegation is not accountable if mechanisms for control activity are not present, which was clear from the previously quoted accountability definition. In other words, according to the principal-agent framework, accountability challenges are a question of accountability deficit (I address the challenge of accountability overload in section 2.6.2). The principal-agent framework stresses the importance of information in relation to accountability, that the principal receives information on the agent's activity, and focuses on MPs' different options for accessing information.

To sum up, this section has explained the challenges derived from delegation. It has presented the types of measures that the principal is able to apply to handle ex-ante as well as ex-post agency challenges. The section specifically addresses the ex-post measures in relation to the understanding of accountability as methods by which the principal is able hold their agent to account. It is, however, a typical assumption that delegation leads to abdication, that legislators neglect their obligation to control. The following section addresses the question of legislators' preferences when it comes to types of ex-post parliamentary control activity.

2.3. Ex-post control: Police Patrol or Fire Alarm

This section addresses the question of legislators' interest in control activity. The focus is on the various options available for ex-post control and the type of control legislators tend to prefer.

It is a typical assumption that parliament neglects the obligation to control (Lowi 1979, Weber 1946, in Lupia and McCubbins 2000),⁴ i.e. that delegation leads to abdication. The argument is that legislators lack the time, motivation and knowledge required to engage in parliamentary control. This project builds on theoretical models that question this typical assumption, pointing to the existence of several types of ex-post parliamentary control activity. Although legislators might neglect one type of control activity – the ongoing monitoring activity – this does not mean that MPs in parliament completely refrain from engaging in control of government action (Lupia and McCubbins 2000, McCubbins and Schwartz 1984, Pollack 2002).

⁴ Pollack (2002: 201) refers to the schools of "Congressional dominance", "runaway bureaucracy", and "Congressional abdication".

Lupia and McCubbins (2000) contradict the abdication assumption. There are several ways for MPs to meet the requirement of controlling government. They focus on the presence of several different options for control, and argue that MPs do not necessarily abdicate. However, the extent to which MPs do abdicate from their control obligation or not is an empirical question. Here, focus is on the opportunities for the principal to adjust to agency challenges and engage in parliamentary oversight.

First, the principal can engage in direct control of agency actions, which is the type of monitoring activity mentioned earlier. This type of activity inflicts excessive costs in terms of time consumption for the actor. In addition, it might raise challenges related to complexity and principal's reduced competences in relation to the agent. Second, the principal can demand that the agent explains his actions. Here, the principal risks that the agent is not really revealing what he knows. Yet, when it comes to the relationship between parliament and government, constitutional rules typically require government members to provide adequate and accurate answers to parliament. Still, there might be challenges such as how the government presents or frames the information that makes it difficult for the principal to assess the government activity. Third, the principal can consider information from third parties outside of parliament about agents' actions. Here, the principal has to consider the credibility of the third party and if the third party has preferences that diverge from the principal's preferences (Lupia and McCubbins 2000).

McCubbins and Schwartz (1984) classic article on the typology of ex-post parliamentary control activity as 'Police Patrol and Fire Alarm' argues that MPs do not abdicate from their control obligation. MPs prefer Fire Alarm control activity to Police Patrol activity. McCubbins and Schwartz (1984) define Police Patrol control as centralized continuous activity conducted by MPs inside parliament. In other words, MPs perform Police Patrol control when they – on their own initiative – examine samples of executive activity in parliament in search for violations. Strøm refers to Police Patrol as monitoring control activity (2003: 62-63). The challenge related to Police Patrol activity is the amount of time resources consumed. High costs follow this type of activity. McCubbins and Schwartz (1984) define Fire Alarm control activity as decentral reactive activity. Decentral, outside of parliament, so-called third parties examine executive activity and raise Fire Alarms of government violations, which then might lead MPs to react. Since actors outside of parliament conduct the monitoring activity, Fire Alarm control is not conducted at the expense of MPs time to the same extent. Therefore, low costs relate to this type of activity. In addition, McCubbins and Schwartz (1984) argue that third parties' incentives mean that Fire Alarms also signal voter interests, which means that MPs might also benefit from the Fire Alarm type of control activity.

Therefore, they argue that Fire Alarm control activity is more effective compared to Police Patrol.⁵

However, some scholars oppose McCubbins and Schwartz's (1984) definition of the Police Patrol category. Ogul and Rockman (1990) argue against the validity of the central criteria used for activity inside parliament. They stress that parliamentary committees provide the main control functions in parliament (Weingast and Moran 1983). They argue however that there is – as they put it – no “central headquarter” in parliament. The committee system has no center, and following from this, the activity in committees is decentral (Ogul and Rockman 1990). The implication for the typology is that Police Patrol activity becomes decentral activity. Ogul and Rockman (1990) only recognize special select committees as central activity. In other words, it is central activity in parliament when MPs respond to scandals and settle parliamentary investigative commissions.⁶ An MP response to a scandal, however, is a reactive activity, which leads Ogul and Rockman (1990) to propose a new category of centralized and reactive activity: the special select committee. They conclude that Police Patrol as well as Fire Alarm control is decentral activity, but is distinguished by the active/reactive dimension.

I agree with Ogul and Rockman (1990) that parliaments are complex organizations, considering the committee structure and coordination mechanisms, but I find it difficult to consider committee activity – one of parliament's fundamental institutions – as decentral activity in relation to parliament. In addition, one might also question where this leaves other control institutions such as parliamentary questions. In other words, I still consider Police Patrol activity as central, continuous monitoring control activity. Overall, I maintain McCubbins and Schwartz's distinction between central activities as activity inside parliament and decentral activity as activity outside of parliament. However, I propose a modification of the Fire Alarm control category, since the category consists of two components; two different types of control activity. The following section presents the argument that Fire Alarms call for Firefighting.

⁵ In McCubbins and Schwartz (1994: 111) they make some reservations related to the effects of Fire Alarm control, such as stressing that a precondition is that legislators can learn from the Fire Alarm information.

⁶ Investigative commissions might also be settled as expert committees, but this type of committee consist of experts situated outside of parliament.

2.3.1 Fire Alarms call for Firefighting

This section presents the arguments for a modification of the Fire Alarm category in McCubbins and Schwartz's (1984) typology for ex-post parliamentary control.

As I see it, the problem is that McCubbins and Schwartz are not specific regarding what happens after sounding a Fire Alarm, even though they address the issue further in their 1994 article. In addition, I argue that the Fire Alarm control category entails two different types of activity, the third party, decentral activity outside of parliament and MPs' central activity inside parliament.

The premise for the Fire Alarm type of control is an installation of a procedural system, which links the third parties outside of parliament to the MPs inside parliament. McCubbins and Schwartz define Fire Alarm oversight as "a system of rules, procedures, and informal practices that enable interested third parties to examine administrative decisions and to seek remedies from agencies, courts, and the legislature itself" (1994: 97, revised from 1984: 166).⁷ In other words, the installation of Fire Alarms refers to institutionalized procedures for actors outside of parliament to make use of in order to raise Fire Alarms concerning government violations. In parliament, MPs may react to Fire Alarms from third parties outside of parliament. However, according to the edited definition, MPs may also receive assistance from other actors when it comes to making amends. Still, this project focuses on when the legislators respond, a subject about which McCubbins and Schwartz (1984) say very little.

The Fire Alarm category, as previously described, is defined by the decentral as well as the re-active criteria. The decentral activity refers to the activity of the third parties outside of parliament, while the re-active activity refers to MP activity in parliament. For this reason, I find it difficult to operationalize Fire Alarm control activity as a single decentral, reactive activity. I agree that MPs' response to Fire Alarm is reactive and different from continuous Police Patrol activity. Moreover, I agree that activity performed by actors outside of parliament is decentral activity and different from MP activity inside parliament. However, I consider the MP Fire Alarm activity as central, since the activity takes place inside parliament. In other words, since Fire Alarms are installed outside of parliament (decentral), but are in place in order to make MPs react in parliament (central), the Fire Alarm category has one decentral and one central component. There is one reporting Fire Alarm activity outside of

⁷ In the 1984 version, McCubbins and Schwartz refer to "individual citizens and organized interest groups", while they in the 1994 version refer to "third parties", and while they in the 1984 version refer to "Congress", they in the 1994 version refer to "the legislature".

parliament and one reactive MP activity inside parliament. In other words, the McCubbins and Schwartz’ (1984) Fire Alarm category consists of two different activities conducted by two different actors. I suggest that the solution is to distinguish between these two activities. I suggest that the Fire Alarm reference concerns the activity conducted by third parties outside of parliament. Here, third parties oversee government actions and raise Fire Alarms regarding government violations. Following from this, I argue that Fire Alarms call for Firefighting. Third parties raise Fire Alarms urging MPs to react. In other words, when actors outside of parliament raise Fire Alarms regarding government violations, MPs react by engaging in central Firefighting. In parliament, MPs consider which measures to use in response to the Fire Alarm. I hereby also introduce a control category that combines the central and reactive criteria. However, in contrast with Ogul and Rockman (1990), I do not relate this category exclusively to a specific control institution (the special select committees). I stress that Firefighting is a response to Fire Alarm activity, which utilises an institution inside parliament, but is not a specific control institution in itself. The overall argument is that a Fire Alarm on its own is not effective in extinguishing a fire, i.e. to correct government misconduct, and therefore calls for MP Firefighting.

The Fire Alarm activity is decentral activity conducted by actors outside of parliament. This activity might be continuous and active as well as reactive in relation to government activity or statements. In other words, the actors’ continuously monitor government in order to ensure that it does not violate the interest of the third parties, or the actors react to specific decisions or statements. Therefore, Fire Alarm activity is active as well as reactive. For an overview of the modified and expanded model for ex-post parliamentary control activity, see figure 2.2.

Table 2.2: Overview of types of parliamentary ex-post control activity

Institutions	Activity	
	Active	Reactive
Centralized (inside parliament)	Police Patrol	Firefighting
Decentralized (outside of parliament)	Fire Alarms	

To sum up, MPs are able to make use of several types of control activity, all of which require their time to varying degrees. The classical distinction is between Police Patrol and Fire Alarm control activity. MPs prefer the third party related Fire Alarm control activity, considering the lower costs. However, this

section has argued that the original Fire Alarm category consists of two different activities. For this reason, this project proposes a modification of the original McCubbins and Schwartz (1984) Fire Alarm category. The project distinguishes between the decentral Fire Alarm activity of actors outside of parliament and the central, reactive Firefighting of MPs inside parliament. This project argues that Fire Alarms call for Firefighting. Overall, even though MPs might refrain from engaging in time-consuming Police Patrol activity, MPs do not necessarily abdicate from their control obligation. Instead, MPs might engage in Firefighting related to Fire Alarms raised by third parties outside of parliament. The following section expands the focus on third parties to encompass control institutions outside of parliament. The following section focuses on institutional Fire Alarm variants.

2.4. Institutional Fire Alarms

This section argues that parliamentary control institutions outside of parliament fit the description of actors that raise Fire Alarms. In other words, control institutions constitute an institutional variant of Fire Alarms compared to the original third parties.

In the McCubbins and Schwartz (1984) article, individual citizens and organized interests are the actors that raise Fire Alarms. Scholars usually refer to these actors as “third parties”.⁸ McCubbins and Schwartz (1984) argue that Fire Alarm control activity is effective because it is less time consuming, but also because Fire Alarms raised by third parties regarding government violations provide a signal to elected representatives about voter interests. Third parties represent interests, which means that their incentives decide when they raise Fire Alarms. In Lupia and McCubbins’ (2000) reference to third party Fire Alarms, they stress the importance of third party credibility. In addition, McCubbins and Schwartz (1994) stress that legislators must learn from third party Fire Alarms for the control to be effective. Therefore, this type of incentive-driven Fire Alarm actors might be less credible or less useful, since an MP must always consider if he/she shares the third parties’ preferences.

There are, however, scholars that refer to “institutionalized” forms of Fire Alarms such as, for example, audit and Ombudsman institutions (Saalfeld 2000: 371-372). These types of institutions conduct monitoring activity directed at government agencies. In addition, the institutions do not themselves hold power to sanction powerholders. In other words, these institutions fit the “Fire Alarm” metaphor. A Fire Alarm is effective in registering a fire, yet powerless when it comes to extinguishing a fire. In other words, this type of control

⁸ McCubbins and Schwartz use the phrase “third parties” in the 1994 article.

institution outside of parliament fits the description of actors that raise Fire Alarms.

This type of Fire Alarm institution has a more institutionalized reporting obligation compared to the more ad-hoc Fire Alarms alerted by third parties. In addition, these control institutions diverge from third parties’ interest incentives, since they function based on a professional logic, not pursuit of self-interest. The professional logic of control institutions outside of parliament increases the credibility of the Fire Alarm actor. Yet, simultaneously, this professional logic means that Fire Alarms from control institution do not signal voter interests in the same way as third parties. However, the argument regarding the reduced time use benefit experienced by the MP still holds, since the control institutions conduct the monitoring activity. In addition, as professional institutions, these types of institutions have capacity to handle challenges related to government complexity. For an overview of the differences between third parties and control institutions as Fire Alarm actors, see table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Control institutions and third parties as Fire Alarm actors: reporting requirements and incentives

Actors	Reporting requirements	Incentives
Control institutions outside of parliament	Institutionalized	Professional
Third parties	Ad-hoc	Particularistic

To sum up, in addition to third parties, organized interests and citizens, control institutions outside of parliament fit the description of actors that raise Fire Alarms regarding government violations. This type of institution increases the credibility of Fire Alarms, since their function is based on a professional logic not pursuit of self-interest.

This chapter on institutional settings will now turn its attention from types of control activity and types of Fire Alarms to the parliamentary control institutions that political actors are able to apply to various types of government activity. First, I turn to the central control institutions inside parliament, and then I turn to the decentral control institutions outside of parliament

2.5. Central parliamentary control institutions

This section addresses central control institutions inside parliament that facilitate MP control activity. Parliament’s or MP’s ability to execute control of

government depends on the institutional setting. MPs need control institutions within parliament to engage in Firefighting.

Parliaments need institutions to handle the obligation to control government actions. Although this project only focuses on oversight activity, the issue of the central parliamentary control institution relates to the overall issue of institutions that enable MPs in parliament to act (Cox 2006: 141). In addition to parliamentary oversight of government actions, parliament also conducts scrutiny of the policy process.

Overall, in legislative processes, agenda-setting rules structure the interaction between executives and legislatures (Tsebelis 2002: 92). This has to do with the scheduling of issues and timetable control, the ability to generate, avoid and block proposals, and the ability to sequence or order options on the floor (Rasch 2014: 472). The typical view is that in parliamentary systems, government controls the agenda in parliament, while in presidential systems the legislature is the agenda-setter (Rasch 2014: 469). In addition, as previously addressed, when it comes to parliamentary control, parliamentary systems have weaker ex-post institutional control options compared to presidential systems (Strøm 2000). Moreover, parliamentary committees in parliamentary systems have less capacity (Mattson and Strøm 1995). In other words, it could be argued that parliament plays a less important role compared to government. Some scholars go as far as to suggest that parliaments in parliamentary systems only function as rubber stamps. Legislatures rubberstamp policymaking decisions taken at the cabinet level (Laver and Shepsle 1996, Saalfeld 2000 refers to critics).

However, other scholars argue and demonstrate that legislators do in fact play an important role. Martin and Vanberg (2011) demonstrate MPs influence on the policymaking in parliamentary systems. In addition, Martin and Vanberg (2014) argue that in multiparty systems, coalition parties use legislative institutions for different purposes, such as to conduct joint governance, but also to engage in position taking to demonstrate their separate identity compared to coalition partners. Research also suggests that parliamentary institutional settings facilitate an active role for the opposition (Garrizman 2017).

Overall, parliaments in parliamentary systems do have several constitutional oversight devices at their disposal (Saalfeld 2000: 362). Saalfeld (2000) demonstrates a broad variety of opportunities for actors in parliament to execute control of government. When it comes to formal institutions inside parliament, research demonstrates that the strength of these institutions tends to vary across empirical settings. There is empirical variation when it comes to the strength of the Speaker institution in relation to agenda setting, as well as for other parliamentary institutions (e.g. Sieberer 2011, Garrizmann 2017,

Döring 1995, Bergman et al. 2003). Although parliamentary settings vary, scholars still refer to typical parliamentary institutions in parliamentary systems (Bergman et al. 2003; Wiberg 1995). Typical parliamentary institutions include parliamentary questions (Wiberg 1995), standing committees, ad-hoc investigative committees, and the ultimate instrument of the No Confidence Vote (Bergman et al. 2003).

When it comes to parliamentary questions, Wiberg refers to three typical forms of parliamentary questions. The first type is oral questions presented on a regular basis at a fixed Question Time. Wiberg stresses that the oral question type implies an oral answer, since all the questions in the study are available in a written form. The second type is the written question, asked and answered in writing only, not answered or debated in the chambers. The third type is the interpellation. For this type, Wiberg applies three criteria. One criterion is that this option leaves an opportunity to request information or justification from government on matters not already on the agenda. A second criterion is that there is an open debate related to the question within reasonable time under established procedures. The third criteria is that the interpellation might end without further actions, which leaves it as a purely informative exercise, or by raising questions about government responsibility by tabling a motion on which the assembly must decide. In addition to these three types, Wiberg also reports on empirical examples of spontaneous question hours, where the minister receives no advance notice (1995: 185-186).

Standing committees are internal subunits of the legislature, which is a common form of legislative organization (Martin 2014). Legislative committees typically have a party composition that mirrors the parent chamber, and operates on delegated authority (Mattson and Strøm 1995). MPs inhabit the committee positions and enjoy certain delegated authorities. A typical assumption is that committees are more effective controllers than the plenary because of specialization (Mattson and Strøm 1995, Sieberer 2011: 738).

Strong committees are the most effective way for parliamentary actors to influence legislative outputs (Mattson and Strøm 1995). However, as previously stated, committees in parliamentary systems have less capacity than in presidential systems (Mattson and Strøm 1995). Committees seldom have the right to initiate legislation, but still have considerable power to amend or rewrite bills (Rasch 2014: 464). Nevertheless, research demonstrates that committees in parliamentary systems vary in strength (Martin 2011, Sieberer 2011, Garitzmann 2017). Sieberer (2011) stresses the importance of committees when it comes to policy positioning and policy scrutiny, as well as parliamentary oversight. However, scholars also stress that government parties tend to dominate committees, and that committee activity is partisan activity (Cox and McCubbins 1993, Andeweg and Nijzink 1995). Krehbiel (1991) states that

legislators represent their party in the committee topics. Therefore, scholars also question the effect of committees as a tool for parliamentary control (Maor 1999). However, Martin and Vanberg also state that MPs in parliament use committees to shadow ministers, which is also a way to execute control of government (2014: 445).⁹ Supporting this, André et al. (2016) demonstrate that where multiparty government is the norm, legislatures tend to develop stronger committees, structurally equipped for the governing parties to control each other's ministers. However, another important committee characteristic is that often minority views are part of the committee report (Rasch 2014: 464). This means that even though government parties might dominate the work of the committee, there are still institutional opportunities for the opposition to make use of (Garritzmann 2017).

When it comes to the committee strength, Sieberer (2011) stresses committee specialization and hereby the importance of structural factors, such as the number of committees, the size of committees and the correspondence between committees and government departments. Parliaments increase their capacity and expertise through division of labor and specialization (Müller and Sieberer 2014: 314; Martin and Vanberg 2014). In addition, Sieberer focuses on the control rights such as the options available to committees for obtaining information, the rights of committees to compel witnesses, to summon ministers and government officials, and to demand documents (Mattson and Strøm 1995). Garritzmann (2017: 10) includes the same factors when he measures the strength of the committee system. In addition, he focuses explicitly on factors that enable opposition activity, but also stresses the importance of the committees' staff resources.

In addition to the standing committee system, most parliaments have some type of ad hoc committee system. In case of alleged government mismanagement, parliament holds power to settle a committee to investigate the case. In this respect, parliament might settle an expert commission to investigate the case and report to parliament. Parliament can also settle a parliamentary commission or a special select committee. In this last case, MPs themselves do the work and investigate the specific case.

Similar to this, Kreppel (2017: 122) refers to the instrument of special inquiries and hearings, also for parliamentary systems. This type of activity is the same as investigative committees' ad-hoc based investigations of specific topics or issues considered important by some legislators, however, in a more limited format.

⁹ Sieberer and Hohmann's (2017) investigation questions this. Instead, they argue that coalition partners employ the shadowing strategy in order to increase public visibility and counteract issue ownership by the minister's party.

The ultimate parliamentary institution is the Vote of No Confidence (VNC). This institution is also crucial for the definition of a parliamentary system, since the main defining criterion for parliamentary systems is the confidence relationship between parliament and government (Strøm 2000, 2003, Cheibub 2007, Lijphart 1984: 68). Nevertheless, the VNC institution still varies between parliamentary systems. The main distinction is between the ordinary and the constructive VNC. The ordinary VNC directs the vote at the Prime Minister or government as a whole, or at an individual minister. In addition, there exists variation on the VNC voting rules that range from a regular to an absolute majority vote (Bergman et al 2003). If the vote passes, MPs force government or individual members to resign. When it comes to the constructive VNC type, the requirement is that an alternative government is ready to take over. It is, however, important to stress that even though it is possible to investigate the frequency of VNC vote use, it is difficult to explain VNC activity. The reason for this is the challenge of the “anticipated effects”. Government actors will try to make up for mistakes, and ministers might even resign voluntarily in order to escape such a vote. In practice, this procedure is used very infrequently, the effect being more of a potential threat (Rasch 2014: 470). In addition, the direct effect of the instrument is limited, since only 5 % of no-confidence motions in advanced parliamentary democracies result in termination of government (Williams 2011, cited in Rasch 2014).

Overall, these listed institutions reveal that in parliament, MPs have various institutional opportunities available to them for monitoring of activity (Garritzman 2017 uses the term ‘institutional opportunity structure’). Previously, I defined the understanding of accountability as a process of control including the right to demand information and the capacity to impose questions. The institutions listed facilitate control processes in different ways. Some of these institutions are, control mechanisms without an instrument for formal sanctioning. On the one hand, formally, a parliamentary question is a way for MPs to obtain information but without options for any sanctions. Still, this mechanism is a rather visible one, where individual MPs can hold ministers or the whole cabinet publicly accountable as a way of publicly “shaming” the government. Committees also have different tools for requesting information, the activity being more or less public. On the other hand, the VNC vote is formally a sanction instrument, where the effect mostly relates to the “anticipated effect”, since the direct effect is limited. For an overview of typical control institutions in parliament, see table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Overview of typical control institutions in parliament

Typical control institutions inside parliament

Parliamentary questions
Oral questions
Written questions
Interpellation
Standing committees
Ad-hoc investigative committees
Parliamentary commission
Expert commission
Hearings
No Confidence Vote
Ordinary
Constructive

This section has clarified typical central parliamentary control institutions inside parliament. I have previously presented the project focus on control institutions outside of parliament as institutions that raise institutional variants of Fire Alarms. In the following section, I define the project's understanding of these decentral parliamentary control institutions.

2.6. Decentral parliamentary control institutions

This section presents the project's understanding of decentral parliamentary control institutions. Focus is on institutional control in parliamentary systems. Following this section's general introduction, two following sub-sections address the project's two examples of decentral parliamentary control institutions; the Ombudsman and the audit institution.

Overall, this project stresses that the relationship with parliament implies that though situated outside of parliament, these decentral parliamentary control institutions function as a part of the legislative branch. Scholars, however, disagree quite heavily on the position of control institutions according to the three constitutional branches (McMillan 2010, Gay and Winetrobe 2003 and 2008, Giddings 2008, for an overview of this discussion, see Wilkins 2015). McMillan (2010) criticizes examples of control institutions that lack independence from government and therefore figure as a part of the government branch. He argues that such institutions should instead constitute a new, fourth branch. However, since this project focuses on control institutions that

lack sanctioning or veto power, this type of institution lacks formal authority to qualify as a “branch” of power.

As previously stated, parliamentary systems do not have institutional checks to the same extent as presidential systems. Institutional checks refer to actors empowered to veto or sanction decision makers (Strøm 2000, 2003). When it comes to accountability in democratic political systems, scholars in a presidential system context stress the importance of implementing institutional restraint on power (Schedler et al. 1999), also referred to as horizontal accountability (O’Donnell 1999, 2004). This means that independent institutions oversee and sanction government violations. The implication of institutional control means the installation of competing agents, which contradicts the single chain of delegation and accountability in parliamentary systems.

However, parliamentary systems have other control institutions besides parliament to oversee government actions. Institutions such as the Ombudsman and the Audit General that in fact monitor and report on government mal-administration are typical features of parliamentary systems (Saalfeld 2000). Thus, these institutions lack power to sanction powerholders, and are often referred to as parliamentary control institutions.¹⁰

That these institutions relate to parliament raises the question of whether these institutions are independent. The reference to horizontal accountability is to independent institutions that monitor control of government. Therefore, the reference to parliamentary control institutions reflects a dilemma. Giddings (2008) discussion of UK’s adoption of the so-called Scandinavian Ombudsman illustrates this dilemma. Giddings refers to the appointment procedure, in which the appointment responsibility is transferred from Parliament to the Queen – though still on the recommendations from the Prime Minister – in order to ensure the institution’s independence from Whitehall as well as Westminster. This could seem like an attempt to place the institution in the middle of two branches, but the question is where this leaves the institution itself. Although the degree of institutional independence is important for the reference to institutional control, this project stresses the institution’s relationship with parliament and places these institutions in the reign of the legislative branch. In support of this, Saalfeld (2000: 372) too, stresses the relationship with parliament. Wilkins (2015) likewise, stresses the relationship with parliament and refers to these institutions as *Satellites of Parliament*. In addition, scholars argue that too much insulation of institutions in order to

¹⁰ Complaint boards typically have authority to change or overrule government agencies’ decisions, but the project does not consider this type of institution in the same way as control institutions. These institutions operate based on a very specific delegation of power from parliament.

secure independence can have a significant cost in terms of responsiveness (Giddings 2008: 99).

Empirically, these decentral parliamentary control institutions tend to vary. For instance, Gay and Winetrobe's (2003) investigation of "Officers of Parliament" reveals that the institutional settings often lack clarity on whether or not the institutions relate to parliament. However, for decentral parliamentary control institutions these institutions have typical characteristics to consider. In spite of the empirical complexity, scholars seem to agree on the role of these institutions as a kind of a watchdog. McMillan defines watchdog agencies as follows: "Watchdog agencies do not formulate policies, provide service or regulate society, their role is to investigate and hold to account the agencies that discharge those executive functions; and they have statutory independence from other executive agencies and from ministerial direction" (2010: 423). In other words, watchdog institutions are limited to performing monitoring activity. However, in parliamentary systems, watchdog institutions do not hold powers to hold agencies to account. In other words, one defining criteria is that control institutions outside of parliament oversee government actions and report on government mal-administration, though without the power to sanction decision makers.

The relationship with parliament needs to rest on certain functions, such as the appointment procedure related to the head of the institutions. In addition, there must be some defined obligations between the control institutions and parliament in order for the institutions to be deemed parliamentary control institutions. The institutions must have some kind of reporting responsibility in relation to parliament. In other words, in order to qualify as parliamentary control institutions, institutions must provide parliament with information on government actions.

However, at the same time, this project stresses that professionally speaking, the institutions must function independently in order to meet the previous demand of institutional restraint on power. One way of ensuring the institution's professional autonomy is to safeguard the institutions by statute. Other criteria are that the institutions appoint their own staff, and that the institutions have an independent budget or funding arrangements (on criteria, see Gay and Winetrobe 2003).

In this project, the understanding of decentral parliamentary control institutions outside of parliament is that they are parliamentary control institutions. The focus is on parliamentary control of government actions in a parliamentary system. Following from this, the subsequent two sub-sections further describe the project's two cases of control institutions outside of parliament; the Ombudsman and audit institution.

2.6.1. The Ombudsman

This section presents the control institution of the Ombudsman as a case of a decentral parliamentary control institution outside of parliament. Following from the previous section, a decentral parliamentary control institution is defined as one which oversees government actions, has some kind of reporting responsibility to parliament, but at the same time functions independently of parliament.

Empirically, the first Ombudsman's institutional design was rather different from these criteria. The Swedish Ombudsman was the first and dates back to 1809. The Swedish Ombudsman, also implemented in Finland, is referred to as a *Justitia Ombudsman*, and has authority in relation to the courts. This type of Ombudsman has the authority to raise indictment on individual responsibility related to public employees, while the courts decide on the sanction. In addition, the Swedish Ombudsman institution consists of four Ombudsmen (Interview, Gammeltoft-Hansen, May 24 2017; Lane 2000: 145).

However, this type of Ombudsman is rare. The typical Ombudsman par excellence is the Danish Ombudsman from 1955 – *Folketingets Ombudsman* – also referred to as the Danish model (Lane 2000: 143). In the Danish model, the Ombudsman raises critique of institutions, not individuals (Interview, Gammeltoft-Hansen, May 24 2017). The Danish Ombudsman model has been a design that other countries have adopted, in other words an institutional transplant. For example, the former Danish Ombudsman (1987-2012), Hans Gammeltoft-Hansen, helped implement the Danish model in the Baltic countries (Interview, Gammeltoft-Hansen, May 24 2017). In addition, Hertogh (2001: 49) states that Holland implemented the Danish version of the Ombudsman institution.

Regarding different types of Ombudsman institution, Stuhmcke (2012) refers to three models that have developed historically, however, these are based on the nine Australian Federal classical Ombudsmen. The first model is the classical re-active Ombudsman, where the core role is to handle individual complaints. The second model is the mixed reactive and active Ombudsman, where there is a growth in the number as well as the variety of the Ombudsman's tasks. Here, the Ombudsman not only addresses complaints, but also addresses cases by own initiative. The third model is a more pro-active Ombudsman. In this model, the Ombudsman emphasizes to a greater extent, assignments that relate to promoting and fixing systems. While the second model, building on the first, handles complaints, monitors government agencies, and conducts inspections, the third type to some extent resembles an agent with an agenda more than a control institution. Gammeltoft-Hansen uses a somewhat different typology and refers to the Swedish Ombudsman as

the Ombudsman's first historical phase, to Stuhmcke's first and second type within the second phase, and to a third phase, similar to Stuhmcke's third type. The Danish Ombudsman belongs to the second phase. In the third phase, Gammeltoft-Hansen refers to the role of a combined Ombudsman and human rights institution, which functions as a type of political human rights promoting actor, particularly in countries in which human rights conventions have not been incorporated into national legislation (Interview, Gammeltoft-Hansen, May 24 2017).

This project's focus on the Ombudsman as a case of decentral parliamentary control institution implies a focus on the classical-mixed type of Ombudsman institution, or second phase Ombudsman. In other words, focus is on an Ombudsman institution that addresses complaints from citizens and has the power to address cases on their own initiative (monitoring activity). This means that the typical Ombudsman institution has a dual role. The Ombudsman assists parliament in the control of the executive, but also acts as a guardian of citizens' rights. This also leads to different assumptions on the role of the Ombudsman institution. In some cases, it seems to be a common assumption that the Ombudsman is more the citizens' than parliament's Ombudsman (Lane 2000). Still, this project stresses that if the Ombudsman relates to parliament and reports to parliament, then the Ombudsman is also parliament's Ombudsman. In addition, the citizen complaint function also means that the Ombudsman offers parliament information on matters related to third parties, i.e. the citizen.

The typical main institutional characteristic is that the Ombudsman (the Danish) is an investigator, not a prosecutor (the Swedish type). The Ombudsman has a broad mandate to examine agencies, including conducting inspections, which results in recommendations from the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman addresses documents, but does not hear witnesses (Lane 2000). However, importantly, an Ombudsman's decision is not binding on the executive (Trondal, Willie and Stie 2017: 92).

In the typical Ombudsman institution, *Folketingets Ombudsman*, parliament appoints the Ombudsman, and the Ombudsman reports to parliament. In the specific Danish case, the Ombudsman cooperates with the law committee in parliament. In addition, even though there are no formal requirements, parliament arranges a hearing in relation to the annual Ombudsman report where the Ombudsman also participates (Interview, Gammeltoft-Hansen, May 24 2017). However, Lane (2000) argues that even though the Ombudsman institutions are similar across countries, the relationship with parliament may still vary. In other words, even though the Ombudsman reports to parliament, there might still be diverse ways for parliament to address or use the

information from the Ombudsman. Moreover, the typical Ombudsman institution functions independently of government as well as parliament. Typically, the Ombudsman's independence is safeguarded by legal act. Lane quotes in English from the Danish legal text: "the Ombudsman shall be independent of the Folketing in the discharge of his functions" (2000: 147).¹¹ In addition, the requirement is that the Ombudsman is a law graduate.

Overall, the typical Ombudsman institution fits the criteria for decentral parliamentary control institutions. The Ombudsman conducts control of government and government agencies. Parliament appoints the Ombudsman and the Ombudsman reports and provides information to parliament. However, at the same time, typically, a legal act safeguards the Ombudsman's institutional independence.

2.6.2. The audit institution

This section presents audit institutions as a decentral parliamentary control institution situated outside of parliament. From the previous section 2.5, it follows that a decentral parliamentary control institution's function is to oversee government actions, and that it must have some kind of reporting responsibility to parliament, but at the same time function independently of parliament.

Basically, the term accountability refers to the discipline of accounting (Dubnick 2014: 27), which, has developed, however, to an "an ever-expanding concept" (Mulgan 2000). Still, auditing processes are central when it comes to holding governments to account. Thus, it is not only the accountability concept that has expanded; the same applies for auditing processes. Power (1994, 2005) refers to the "the audit explosion" related to the growth of audit and monitoring practices associated with public management reform processes in UK during the 1980s and early 1990s. Power focuses on a new pattern and intensity of auditing and inspections, and on the side effects and unintended consequences for public service (Power 2005: 326). Power stresses a qualitative shift from auditing in relation to different single practices to systems, and a generic rise in a "control of control" type of monitoring (Power 2005: 333). Power (1997) refers to the audit society, which has negative effects on public policy.

Related to this, Halachmi (2014) refers to challenges of "accountability overloads", which is different from "accountability deficits", which refers to

¹¹ In the legal act no. 349 from 22/03/2013 this is stated in § 10: "Ombudsmanden er i udøvelsen af sit hverv uafhængig af Folketinget. Folketinget fastsætter almindelige bestemmelser for ombudsmandens virksomhed".

the absence of political control (Mulgan 2014). The principal-agent framework, as previously stated, defines accountability challenges as absence of mechanisms for political control. However, the principal-agent stresses the importance of the principal receiving information on the government agent's activity. The challenge here is that the reference to accountability overload implies an overload of information on government activity. The project considers audits as institutions that offer information to MPs and parliament on one important aspect of government activity, public spending. The project argues that whether parliament receives either insufficient or an overload of information, the result might be the same, namely the absence in parliament of political control of government and agency activity related to public spending. The question of abdication is, as previously stated, an empirical question. This project focuses on to what extent MPs and parliament use and respond to auditing information on government activity.

This project focuses on information on external and not internal audits. External audits are so-called SAI institutions, which means audit reviews conducted by external, independent actors. Posner and Shahan (2014: 493) distinguish between four types of SAI institutions: a court, a collegium, a government department, or a legislative audit office. This project focuses on parliamentary control institutions and therefore focuses on the legislative audit office type.

The legislative audit type of institution typically has an Audit General as head of the institution. The institution is separate from the executive organ and reports directly to parliament. In general, the constitution or some statutory body defines the role of the audit institution.

Legislative audit institutions conduct three types of audit assignments: compliance audit (auditing compliance in relation to defined legal obligations), financial audit (auditing financial statements), and performance audit (review of policy outcome). The audit institution submits the reports to parliament or to specific committees that use audits to inform their oversight function (Posner and Shahan 2014: 489 and 495). Based on this, it is clear that the SAI-legislative audit type has a clear relationship with parliament.

The other important criteria from the previous section is the question of institutional independence, which is important in relation to the reference of institutional control. In addition to the SAI institution typology, Posner and Shahan (2014) focus on the extent of influence from the external environment on the audit institution, and the SAI staff's level of professional autonomy (499-500). Following this, Posner and Shahan state that when it comes to legislative audit offices, parliament (external environment) influences the institutions. They refer to parliament, for instance, in deciding on the institution's

budget. However, at the same time, they also state that the level of professional autonomy for legislative audit institutions is high.

Legislative SAI institutions report to parliament, typically to a specific audit committee within parliament, and have a close relationship with parliament. Wehner (2014) refers to such parliamentary audit committees as Public Accounts Committees (PACs), known from the Commonwealth countries (McGee 2002; Pelizzo et al. 2006). This type of parliamentary committee specializes in scrutiny of audit reports on government's annual accounts. Following the reports from the Audit General institution, it then is up to the audit committee to examine and act upon the results. The committee reviews the findings and identifies appropriate steps to address any shortcomings. Wehner states the importance of the audit committee in the following way: "The PAC is the ultimate institutional judge in this ex post assurance process" (2003: 24). In addition, Wehner's survey of PACs in the Commonwealth gives an overview of typical audit committee features or settings. The audit committee chair is typically an opposition MP. It is typically not a requirement that the Committee reaches unanimous conclusions. Committee reports are available to the public, and audit committee hearings are typically open to the press and public. The committee's work depends primarily on the Audit General report, and committee reports are debated in the legislature. In addition, the executive typically must respond to committee recommendations (Wehner 2003: table 3).

Overall, the legislative audit institution fits the criteria for decentral parliamentary control institutions. The audit institution conducts control of government and government agencies spending activity. Parliament appoints the head of the institution, the Audit General, and the institution reports and provides information to parliament. Typically, the legislative audit institution has an even closer relationship with parliament, considering the relationship with a specific audit committee in parliament, which examines and addresses the results of the annual auditing processes and informs parliament as a whole. Even though there is a close relationship between the audit institution and parliament, the audit institution has a high degree of professional autonomy.

2.7. Conclusion and chapter summary

To sum up, this project focuses on the accountability relationship between parliament and government in parliamentary systems. Parliament is the agent in relation to the voter, whilst parliament, as the principal, delegates power to government. Therefore, government answers to parliament. Parliament is obligated to control government. However, parliamentary control activity inflicts costs on MPs. Time spent on control activity is less time to spend on other

types of political activity. Therefore, the assumption is that MPs prefer control activity that limits such costs. McCubbins and Schwartz argue that reactive Fire Alarm control is less time consuming compared to monitoring Police Patrol control. Following from this, the project focuses on the Fire Alarm control category. However, the project argues that the Fire Alarm control category consists of two different activities, one decentral reporting activity and one central, reactive activity. Therefore, the Fire Alarm category is divided into two, distinguishing between the Fire Alarm activity which is decentral, outside of parliament and the Firefighting MP activity which is central, inside parliament. This project argues that Fire Alarms call for MP Firefighting. Following from this, the project focuses on institutional Fire Alarms from decentral parliamentary control institutions that increase the credibility of Fire Alarms.

MP Firefighting requires control institutions in parliament to facilitate activity. Although compared with presidential systems, parliamentary systems empower parliaments and have weaker ex-post measures to apply for control, MPs have access to several typical control institutions, also in parliamentary systems. These typical control institutions are: parliamentary questions, standing committees, ad-hoc investigative committees, hearings, and the Vote of No Confidence. In addition to the control institutions, which are central in parliament, parliamentary systems have decentral parliamentary control institutions outside of parliament. These institutions are defined based on their relationship with parliament and in particular by their reporting obligations. In addition, in order to qualify as independent control institutions, the institutions need to have professional autonomy. Typical control institutions outside of parliament that meet the requirements for decentral parliamentary control institutions are the classical mixed Ombudsman type, the typical example within this category is the Danish Ombudsman, and the SAI legislative audit institution type.

Overall, this chapter has focused on the institutional settings and the institutional opportunity for activity in parliament. In other words, parliamentary systems typically empower parliament with control institutions central within parliament and decentral control institutions outside of parliament. However, the effect depends on the actor's incentives to make use of these institutions. The power to act remains within parliament. The following chapter, therefore, focuses on the actors in parliament and their incentives to make use of control institutions for control activity.

Chapter 3: When do MPs engage in Firefighting?

I believe that specific outcomes are the result of both prevailing institutions *and* the preferences of the actors involved. In other words, institutions are like shells and the specific outcomes they produce depend on the actors that occupy them (Tsebelis 2002: 8).

The previous chapter has addressed the question of institutional setting and the central as well as decentral parliamentary control institutions. In addition, the previous chapter argued for a modification of the Fire Alarm ex-post control category. The project distinguishes between the decentral Fire Alarm activity outside of parliament and the central MP Firefighting in parliament. In addition, the project focuses on decentral control institutions outside of parliament raising institutional Fire Alarms regarding government mal-administration. The project thus investigates the interplay between the decentral and the central components of the Fire Alarm control category. The Ombudsman and audit institutions are typical decentral control institutions in parliamentary systems.

This chapter addresses the project's framework concerning the political actors. It discusses the different actors in parliament, but focuses on the individual MP as the individual actor unit. Following this, the chapter addresses the question of MPs' goals and the different roles they play in parliament that explain their behavior. The chapter argues that MPs play two main roles, the role of 'partisan' and the role of 'parliamentarian', but considering the institutional setting and the fact that political parties control most of the MPs' goals, I expect MPs to adhere to a greater degree to the role of 'partisan'. Thus, the main argument is that MPs adhere to the role of 'partisan' and pursue party goals when they decide whether to engage in Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarms from the Ombudsman and the Audit institution. This chapter will argue that the 'parliamentarian' role requires additional institutional support to be effective. I expect MPs to act as 'parliamentarians' to a greater degree when the institutional support is strong. This chapter presents the project's actor framework and from this formulates the project's hypotheses on when MPs engage in Firefighting.

The chapter will continue as follows: First, the chapter addresses the question of the political actors in parliament, MPs' goals and various roles. Then, the chapter addresses the question of institutional support as well as additional institutional support for MPs role as 'parliamentarians'. Third, the

chapter formulates five hypotheses on when MPs engage in Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarms.

3.1. The various political actors in parliament

This section addresses the issue of the political actors in parliament. In the previous chapter, I have argued that institutional Fire Alarms call for Firefighting in parliament. Therefore, the question is who conducts the Firefighting in parliament, i.e. who analytically is the most important actor when it comes to Firefighting.

Parliament consists of different actors, but most importantly, parliament consists of political parties. The typical assumption is that political parties are the most important actors. Saalfeld and Strøm (2014: 391) argue that legislative parties are important for the way legislatures operate and for legislative outputs. In the previous chapter, I stated that political parties play a key role in different ex-ante control activity. However, I also stated that political parties complicate ex-post control activity, which is the focus of this project.

The conventional wisdom is that the design of parliamentary democracy reinforces party cohesion (e.g. Bowler, Farrell, Katz 1999, Cox 2005 in Mer-shon 2014: 418). This means that a political party is to a considerable extent, a unitary actor. The individual MP is a perfect agent for the party. In support of this, Tsebelis' (2002) veto player theory, for instance, assumes that co-partisans in cabinet and parliament have identical preferences (Sieberer 2011).

In parliament, political parties following a government constellation process either figure as government or opposition parties. In multiparty systems, both the government and the opposition consists of more than one political party. However, research demonstrates that both opposition parties and governing parties are highly cohesive (Carey 2009, Depauw and Martin 2009). Moreover, opposition parties tend to vote so consistently against the government, that voting in most parliamentary systems takes on a government-opposition configuration (Hix and Noury 2011, in Kam 2014: 405). This means that one might expect that government and opposition also act to a great extent act as unitary actors.

However, the notion of a collective/unitary actor implies, according to Scharpf (1997), that the capacity to act at the higher level depends on internal interactions on the individual actor level (Scharpf 1997:52). In other words, the individual actors interact and influence the party's goals. Thomassen and Andeweg (2004) refer to intra party processes. They stress that intra party processes lead to common positions (2004: 50). Individual MPs are typically policy experts in relation to their seats in certain specialized parliamentary committees and influence the parties' policy position related to the committee

policy area. Still, this type of intra-party interaction is not so visible to the public. Political parties will always try to secure the party label by keeping alignment problems from becoming visible MP activity. Related to this, party cohesion depends on the extent to which party members share preferences or on the party discipline generated and sustained by the party leader (Kam 2014). Nevertheless, it is clear, that political parties consist of individual politicians.

This project focuses on control activity within parliament, not legislative activity and political party alignment in policy positions. In the same way as described for policy activity, there might be intra-party activity related to the parties' position in cases related to control, non-legislative activity such as government mal-administration and the way that this should be handled. What may be of importance here, is Searing's (1994) distinction between different MP positions within the party, and that the difference in positions influences the MPs preferences. A main distinction is between party MPs in ministerial and party leadership positions and the more regular MPs; the backbenchers. This means that the party and the individual MPs' positions and goals are potentially not in perfect alignment. In addition, Saalfeld argues that re-election seeking MPs have incentives to hold government accountable (2010: 354). In other words, there might be certain individual MP incentives to consider to a greater extent when it comes to parliamentary control.

Overall, in parliament, MPs have dual roles. MPs represent parties in legislative processes, but they also conduct control of government on behalf of voters. The question is if it is useful to consider political parties or government-opposition as unitary actors to the same degree, since this excludes for instance, the option to investigate whether government MPs engage in parliamentary control. In order to investigate the interplay between MPs' dual roles, it is important to focus on the individual actor in parliament, the MP.

In support of this, within parliament, the individual MP has power to engage in control activity, such as raising parliamentary questions. In addition, methodological individualism states that it is only individuals, who can act (Scharpf 1997: 51). In short, the project's basic unit of analysis is the individual MP in parliament.

The following two sections address the question of MP goals and their various roles in parliament.

3.2. MP goals

In accordance with the principal-agent framework, I assume that MPs are rational and strategic actors. MPs have their preferences and seek political goals. I understand preferences as actors' exogenously given "tastes" for outcomes (Strøm 2012: 87). Therefore, actor's preferences in general are variable and

changeable over time. In nature, preferences are more variable compared to institutions that are more stable (Tsebelis 2002: 17). Nevertheless, when it comes to MPs, we might still be able to make some assumptions regarding their specific goals.

The classical reference to MPs' goals is Mayhew's (1974) simplifying statement regarding United States Congressmen as "single-minded seekers of reelection" (Mayhew 1974: 5). MPs want re-election. To secure re-election, MPs pass legislation that serves their constituents' interests. Following this, MPs' legislative activity consists of advertising, credit claiming and position taking (Mayhew 1974). Even though, scholars contest the assumption that MPs are single-minded (Fenno 1973, 1978; Cox and McCubbins 1993; Aldrich 1995), there still is broad support for the idea that the goal of re-election is a very important MP goal (Strøm 2012). Fenno (1978) for instance, expands on this, arguing that MPs' legislative goals are re-election, to pursue policy and to secure a good reputation in the legislature. In Strøm (2012), MPs' goal of re-election is central, but MP re-election first requires re-nomination. Still, these goals are instrumental, since they are a means to an end. MPs need nomination and election to achieve other goals. Strøm (2012) focuses on two additional goals related to MPs' legislative service. MPs seek party office, such as becoming party leader, the whip, receiving a position in party leadership, or a front bench position. In addition, MPs seek legislative office, such as becoming the Speaker or committee chair (2012: 90). In other words, MPs have carrier ambition. Yet, in parliamentary systems, MPs influence policy in their party via intra-party processes and through government positions. Strøm (2012) refers to policy outcomes in relation to MPs preferences.

It is, however, important to point out that there are also scholars that raise critique of this simplification of political actors as rational goal seekers (Olsen 2013). To this, I stress that although actors are indeed more complex, I nonetheless expect goals such as re-election and party/legislative office to be highly important in explaining MP behavior. Strøm addresses this critique and stresses that legislators are of course more complex, but at the same time, we need to simplify in order to explain: "We can gain important insights by portraying legislators as if they were purely instrumental in their pursuit of different benefits that legislative institutions afford them" (2012: 99). In addition, Strøm stresses that MPs' goals are important: "Yet, many legislators cannot afford to indulge their less self-interested motivations. Doing so might lead to a shorter and less gratifying political career than they might otherwise enjoy" (2012: 99).

This project focuses on the individual actor in parliament, the MP, as the actor unit. This section has presented the project's understanding of the MP

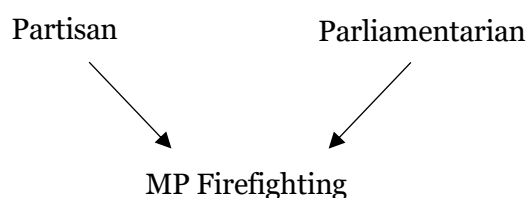
as a rational goal-seeking actor. However, in parliament the MP faces expectations from different roles. MPs are expected as ‘partisan’ to pursue party goals, but also as ‘parliamentarian’ to conduct control of government on behalf of the voter. The following section presents the different roles that MPs play in parliament

3.3. MPs’ role as ‘partisans’ and ‘parliamentarians’

This section addresses the question of the different roles that MPs play in parliament. MPs are expected to pursue party goals and represent political parties in parliament, but they are also expected to engage in control of government. This section focuses on MPs two main roles as ‘partisans’ and ‘parliamentarians’.

Previously, I have argued that this project uses the individual MP as the analytical unit. In addition, I have argued that a central goal for MPs is to be re-elected, but that this goal is instrumental and that MPs therefore have additional goals. These additional goals relate to policy pursuits as well as carrier positions in party and legislative office. In parliament, the individual MP has access to institutions to use for parliamentary control activity. The general feature is that as ‘partisans’, MPs follow the political party when acting in parliament. Still, when it comes to parliamentary control activity, which is the focus of this project, MPs also face expectations based on the additional role of ‘parliamentarian’. MPs delegate power to government and are expected to engage in parliamentary oversight. In other words, MPs in parliament face expectations from different roles, which are expected to influence MP Firefighting. For an illustration of the two main roles of ‘partisan’ and ‘parliamentarian’ that MPs face in parliament, see figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Model of the two main roles that MPs face in parliament



Roles are defined as regularized patterns of behavior; in Strøm’s words as “regularized patterns of behavior that individuals display in different social circumstances” (2012: 85). In addition, Strøm argues that roles are strategies, however, understood in relation to actor’s preferences and institutions: “Yet, strategies only make sense when we understand the preferences that drive

them, as well as the institutions or structures that shape them” (2012: 87). This project focuses on regularized patterns of behavior in parliament, which are based on expectations of a certain kind of behavior from political parties and from the institutional settings in parliament.

The question now is how the two different roles are expected to play out in parliament. The answer to this question relates to MPs’ goals. Recalling MPs’ goals from the previous section, MPs seek re-election, party and legislative office as well as policy results. In parliamentary systems, political parties largely control these MP goals. Political parties control the policy process, anchored in parliament in parliamentary systems (Strøm 2000, Müller 2000), and as previously stated, political parties are coherent in legislative policy processes. Moreover, political parties control the process of re-nomination related to an election as well as appointment for positions in government or within the political party. In addition, political parties control positions such as the Speaker and committee chairs in parliament. In other words, there is very little room for MPs’ individual maneuvers in parliamentary systems, which as previously described, is also the reason for the typical assumption of political parties as unitary actors. Related to this, Scharpf (1997: 61) states that individuals adhere to roles because of membership benefits, such as positions and career opportunities, and because of effective sanctions. Since political parties control MPs’ goals, what follows from this is that MPs adhere to the role of ‘partisan’. This means that individual MPs adhere to the party line and their activity thus reflects their party’s interest.

When MPs act as ‘partisans’, they pursue party goals. Parliaments are forums for the operation of competitive political parties that pursue votes, office and policy (Strøm 1990a). The party competition on votes is instrumental in order to access government office and in order to pursue policy goals. Strøm (1990) conceives of party motives as independent as well as mutually conflicting forms of behavior. In other words, engaging in Firefighting is a way for MPs to promote the party’s goals of votes, policy and office. In relation to this project, we can say that as ‘partisans’, MPs engage in control activity and Firefighting in order to promote party interests.

Even though the ‘partisan’ role is a dominant and general pattern for MP behavior in parliament in parliamentary systems, MPs also conduct oversight of government and adhere to the role of ‘parliamentarian’. In parliament, MPs face various requirements to follow certain procedures when dealing with different issues. MPs deal with policy issues in parliamentary committees and pass legislation that authorizes and defines government’s opportunities for executing policy (discretion). MPs participate in question hours etc. In addition, MPs might engage in different monitoring activity and make requests for gov-

ernment to report on their actions. Moreover, parliaments have control institutions outside of parliament that address different issues and report to parliament. In addition, parliament engages from time to time in procedures such as appointing positions within independent institutions such as the Ombudsman and the Audit General. In other words, MPs participate in all sorts of parliamentary activity defined as oversight activity, where parliament is positioned against government, and not political parties against political parties.

Andeweg relates the role of ‘parliamentarian’ to the legislation process and to parliamentary control as being distinct from the ‘partisan’ role in parliament (Andeweg 1997, 2014). In relation to legislation, although MPs vote in adherence to the party’s policy position, as ‘parliamentarians’, MPs might still engage in committee scrutiny. Empirical investigations demonstrate that in relation to control activity in parliament, MPs adhere to the role of ‘parliamentarian’ to a greater degree, such as in case of parliamentary inquiry committees and government failure (the Dutch case, Andeweg 2014: 280).

Nevertheless, overall, I expect the ‘partisan’ role to be stronger compared to the ‘parliamentarian’ role. Political parties control most of MPs individual goals that figure as benefits linked to party membership. In addition, political parties can use formal as well as informal sanctions in order to make sure that MPs follow the party line. A MP that challenges the party line risks foregoing advancement opportunities or even to being expelled. Parliament on the other hand is an institution and has neither benefits nor sanctions to enforce MPs’ adherence to the role of ‘parliamentarian’. The political parties even control parliamentary benefits such as nomination for committee positions. Parliament has no power to sanction MPs that neglect their ‘legislative duties’, since parliament cannot expel MPs. In other words, the mechanism to ensure that MPs adhere to the ‘parliamentarian’ role are rather weak, compared to the ‘partisan’ role. In addition, historically the role of the ‘parliamentarian’ principal has declined (Saalfeld 2000, see also chapter 2, section 2.6). Overall, I expect MPs to adhere to a greater extent to the role of ‘partisan’ than the role of ‘parliamentarian’.

There are, however, some important modifications to consider. Although political parties are able to sanction MPs that refuse to adhere to the party line, they cannot expel MPs from parliament. MPs also hold individual powers in parliament. In addition, there is the role of the voter. Although parliament cannot sanction MPs that refuse to adhere to the role of ‘parliamentarian’ and engage in parliamentary control activity, the voter still might do so. In addition, the typical characteristic in most election systems is that political parties only partly control MPs’ goal of re-election. This means that re-election seeking MPs might find themselves in positions where they have to try to ride on two horses. They need to adhere to the party line in order to be re-nominated,

but at the same time need to pay attention to voter attitudes when it comes to parliamentary control. Supporting this, Saalfeld (2005: 345) states that the relationship of government backbenchers and ministers from the same party is usually characterized by a more complex mix of cooperative and competitive incentives. In other words, the role of ‘parliamentarian’ might be supported if MPs expect control activity to pay off on Election Day. Supporting this, Saalfeld argues that re-election seeking MPs have incentives to hold government to account (2010: 354). Attention from the voter might cause MPs to behave in a more ‘parliamentarian’ manner. Although, the “partisan” role hereby has been modified, I still expect that an effect of the ‘parliamentarian’ role requires more support in order to be effective.

A challenge, however, of applying the concept of ‘roles’ for analyses is that individuals often take on several roles and might switch roles. The challenge is to separate this in the analysis (Scharpf 1997: 61, Andeweg 2014). Related to this section’s focus on the role of ‘parliamentarian’ and ‘partisan’, there is no conflict between these roles for opposition MPs, since behaving in a ‘parliamentarian’ manner and engaging in control of government serves their party’s interest. For government MPs the situation is different, since the role of ‘parliamentarian’ to oversee government conflicts with the role of ‘partisan’ to pursue party goals, and not to endanger or damage their party’s position in government by engaging in control of government.

To sum up, in parliament, MPs face expectations from different roles. MPs are ‘partisans’ that pursue party goals, and MPs are ‘parliamentarians’ that engage in control of government. I expect that MPs adhere to the role of ‘partisan’ to a greater extent than ‘parliamentarian’, since the institutional setting and role of political parties in parliamentary systems supports the ‘partisan’ role in terms of offering benefits as well as implementing sanctions related to MPs’ goals. In other words, when decentral control institutions outside of parliament raise Fire Alarms regarding government mal-administration, MPs consider if engaging in Firefighting offers some partisan benefits. I expect that the effect of the ‘parliamentarian’ role depends on the institutional parliamentary setting, and whether these settings offer institutional support to the ‘parliamentarian’ role.

3.4. Institutional support and MPs’ roles

The previous section stated that in parliament, MPs face the two main roles of ‘partisan’ and ‘parliamentarian’, but that the role of ‘partisan’ is more supported. This section considers if this applies for all types of MP activity, or if the institutional setting supports MPs’ distinct types of activity in diverse

ways. The question is if institutions create incentives for activity that might support MPs' role as 'parliamentarians'.

This project's focus is on parliamentary oversight, specifically on MP Fire-fighting in relation to institutional Fire Alarms from the Ombudsman and audit institution. This means that this project offers an opportunity to see how far the partisan logic in parliament travels. Still, from the previous section on MPs roles, the expectation is that MPs adhere to the role of 'partisan' and respond to institutional Fire Alarm cases if it serves partisan purposes. However, it is important to stress that this type of Ombudsman and audit case is very different from the classical policy related activity in parliament. Moreover, the question is if the institutional setting distinguishes between different types of parliamentary activity.

When it comes to the executive-legislative relationship in parliamentary systems, the traditional power theory perceives of government and parliament as two separate powers that balance each other and would imply the dominance of MPs' role as 'parliamentarians'. However, as previously argued, this is hardly the case in parliamentary systems. Andeweg and Nijzink (1995) among others problematize this general 'two-body image'. Instead, Andeweg and Nijzink's (1995) – based on King (1976) – develop a typology for different relation modes in parliamentary systems. Of importance to the previously mentioned roles, Andeweg and Nijzink's (1995) refer to an 'inter-party' mode and a 'non-party' mode. The 'inter-party mode' refers to parliament as an arena for ideological struggles, where members of one party interact with members from another party, a concept which supports the competing 'partisan' role. The 'non-party' mode is a dual parliamentary and government relationship; a two-body system in which members of government interact with members of parliament, a concept that supports the 'parliamentarian' role.¹² Based on their investigation of 18 Western European parliaments, their conclusion is that the general picture of Western European parliaments is a mix of modes, but that the specific functioning of parliamentary control in general shows signs of the 'non-party mode'. Overall, this indication of a non-party mode in parliament means that the 'partisan' role is less strong when it comes to parliamentary control and provides more room for the MPs role as 'parliamentarian'. The effectiveness of parliamentary oversight depends crucially on the institutional opportunities available in a non-party mode in which MPs from government parties as well as opposition parties can engage in oversight (Saalfeld 2005).

¹² In addition, Andeweg and Nijzink (1995) refer to a 'cross party mode' in parliament, as a kind of marketplace for sectorial and social interest.

The indicators for a non-party mode according to Andeweg and Nijzink are, for instance, parliamentary agenda control and individual MP initiative rights. Other indicators of a non-party mode for control functions are the registration of individual MP voting, the right to ask questions without party approval, and the right to settle ad-hoc committees. In addition, Andeweg and Nijzink (1995) argue that parliamentary control activity might indicate the strength of the 'non-party', such as if parliamentary investigation leads a minister to resign. In other words, Andeweg and Nijzink (1995) point to some institutional and some behavioral trends in their reference to a non-party mode for control activity in parliament, but the relationship between control institutions and behavior remains unclear. Institutions that enable activity still raise the question of the actor's incentives. I therefore continue and consider the possibility of additional institutional support for this more general institutional 'non-party' mode in parliament to support MPs role as 'parliamentarian' at the expense of the 'partisan' role.

3.4.1. Additional institutional support

This section addresses the question of additional institutional support that can assist the MP role of 'parliamentarian'. Focus is on institutional support, which obligates MPs to conduct oversight of government actions.

The previous chapter focused on the parliamentary system setting as well as parliamentary control institutions that facilitate MP control activity. This chapter's previous section has argued that the outcome of these institutions depends on the actor's incentives (Tsebelis 2002). Moreover, since political parties control most of MPs goals, I expect the role of 'partisan' to dominate MPs' behavior. I do not expect a general 'non-party' mode to be enough to strengthen MPs' role as 'parliamentarian' at expense of MPs' role as 'partisan'. For this, parliamentary systems need to offer additional institutional support.

An institution is a multifaceted concept. Institutions are dispositions enabling activity, as argued in chapter 2. However, institutions also create expectations for a certain kind of behavior, as the previous section argued in relation to MPs' distinct roles. Institutions offer opportunities for rewards as well as sanctions in order to incentivise actors adhere to certain roles. Therefore, institutions might support and thereby favor certain roles at the expense of others. In parliament, the assumption is that the institutional setting and the role of political parties supports MPs' role as 'partisan' at the expense of MPs' role as 'parliamentarian'.

Institutions might also offer structure and procedures that institutionalize activity to a greater extent. This is the case if the institutional setting offers detailed processes and guidance on parliamentary activity to such an extent

that it might be difficult for the MP to escape the role of ‘parliamentarian’. To ignore or refuse to adhere to institutional obligations increases the electoral cost, since the public as well as the media expect that MPs to engage in and conduct ‘parliamentarian’ control activity.

This project’s understanding of institutions is as a system of rules that structure the course of actions (Scharpf 1997: 38). Rules and procedures provide information on how to act. Actors knowing how to act in certain situations reduces uncertainty in interactions among actors. However in order to function, these rules have to be known and recognized by members (Knight 1992). Rules and procedures have to be recognized and accepted in order to be effective. When rules are clear, formal and accepted, we can talk of institutionalized rules, which in practice function as routines that actors follow without too many questions or considerations. These types of rules are different from rules that have the character of being norms of behavior rather than a description of actual organization and behavior, such as certain constitutional rules (Olsen 2014). Another category of rules is informal rules, however when referring to institutions, I stress that rules are formal. Related to this, Müller and Sieberer argue that the truly important rules are formalized, and in a parliamentary context, they include parliamentary standing orders and rules of procedure (2014: 311).

Rules without procedures do not give specific information on how to act and therefore still might imply a high degree of uncertainty in interaction among actors. In other words, institutions may have defined purposes that induce a specific kind of behavior and seek to restrict alternative kinds of behavior, but without specific procedures for action, the effect might be limited. This means, that in order to be effective, institutions (rules) need procedures for activity. MPs will more easily adhere to the ‘parliamentarian’ role if parliamentary control procedures are defined and clear-cut. Following this, additional institutional support means that there are defined parliamentary processes that guide MP activity, which makes the control activity more visible and strengthens the expectation that MPs take government conduct seriously.

To sum up, institutions are multifaceted. Institutions enable activity without enforcing it; they create incentives, but also function as systems of rules and procedures that structure the courses of actions. Institutions followed by procedures and established routines strengthen expectations for a certain kind of behavior. When MPs decide how to act in a given situation, they pay attention to their preferences, but at the same time, will consider parliamentary institutions that call for MP actions. However, the effect of institutions depends on the institutions themselves, the incentives, but also procedures and routines that follow the institution; the institutionalization of expectations of a certain kind of behavior.

3.5. When do MPs engage in Firefighting?

Having stated the importance of MPs' goals, the distinct roles that MPs face in parliament, and the importance of institutional support, this section formulates the project's specific expectations for when MPs engage in Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarms. In other words, this section formulates the project hypothesis.

The overall argument is that the general institutional context and role of political parties in parliamentary systems means that MPs adhere to the role of 'partisan'. This means that MPs pursue party goals. Even though, the role of 'partisan' is stronger when it comes to MPs behavior in policy positions, I still expect the 'partisan' role to influence MPs' control activity the most. Following from this, I expect that effects of the 'parliamentarian' role to require additional institutional support.

The following five sub-sections formulate the project's five hypotheses regarding when MPs engage in Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarms. Following from MPs' 'partisan' role, I expect that opposition MPs primarily engage in Firefighting (Hypothesis 1). Moreover, I only expect MPs to engage in Firefighting if the case has the potential to inflict cost on government. Therefore, I only expect MPs to engage in Firefighting if the institutional Fire Alarm case has an explosive potential (Hypothesis 2). I also expect MPs to pay attention to the media interest in the cases. I expect that the greater the degree of media coverage related to the cases, the greater the degree of Firefighting that occurs (Hypothesis 3). However, I also expect the actions of the government agency receiving critique from control institutions to influence MP Firefighting. The more government agencies demonstrate a damage control strategy, the less MPs will engage in Firefighting (Hypothesis 4). The final hypothesis states that in case of additional institutional support in the form of institutionalized processes related to the Fire Alarm institutions, government MPs will respond to institutional Fire Alarms to a greater extent (Hypothesis 5). The following five sub-sections will present the project hypothesis in more detail.

3.5.1. Oppositional Firefighting

The first project hypothesis is the opposition position hypothesis. In parliament, MPs adhere to the role of 'partisan' and pursue party goals. When it comes to parliamentary control, the party's interest in engaging depends on the party's position in government or opposition.

The general situation in parliament is of competing political parties. Following an election, the political party either enters government and becomes

a government party or becomes an opposition party. The position of the government versus the opposition is – from a game theoretical point of view – a pure conflict “zero-sum” game (Scharpf 1997: 73). The logic is “if it is good for them, it must be bad for us” (Scharpf 1997: 166). What government loses, the opposition wins. In other words, systems of government constellations create a zero-sum logic incentive for political behavior.

Opposition parties’ aspiration is to access government office in order to pursue policy goals. Therefore, opposition parties have an interest in damaging the government’s reputation or if possible, to getting rid of government. Saalfeld formulates this in the following way: “Parties not represented in the government may have incentives to use parliament as one of several public arenas, in which they expose and criticize governments in a continuous attempt to become government parties themselves (either through elections or a change of government during the constitutional interelection period)” (2005: 345). Following from this, I expect opposition parties to take an interest in engaging in parliamentary control in order to highlight government mistakes. This way, the opposition can use control activity to damage the government’s reputation and present themselves as a better alternative. In addition, by increased oversight, opposition parties inflict transaction costs on the incumbent party. Maor (1999: 376) states how in relation to the policy process, control activity increases the time and effort incumbents must use to pass legislation, but also calls the value of policy into question and creates policy uncertainty for constituents. In the same way, by engaging in Firefighting, the opposition parties may inflict transaction costs on the government parties, since ministers in government parties have to spend time adhering to oppositional control activity instead of pursuing the government’s policy goals.

In addition, the literature demonstrates an association between parliamentary control and opposition activity. Herzog and Benoit (2015) argue that the floor in parliament is a privileged arena for opposition parties, since the government has other channels. There seems to be a clear association when it comes to parliamentary questions, which is very much an opposition activity (Dandoy 2011, Martin and Vanberg 2014, Green-Pedersen 2010, Mattson 1994; Rasch 1994; Helander and Isaksson 1994; Damgaard 1994; Maor 1999). Rasch formulates the background for the opposition’s incentive to engage in oversight in the following way: “In a parliamentary system it would come as no surprise if opposition groups utilize instruments of control more actively than groups constituting the parliamentary foundation of the government. The opposition has a self-interest in revealing faults that cabinet ministers can be blamed for, whereas government parties would prefer to disregard or even cover up blamable weaknesses. The incentives of the opposition and government supporters clearly differ with regard to control of executive political

leaders (ministers)(...) Thus, the opposition has stronger incentives to engage in oversight” (1994: 266-267, also quoted in Maor 1999: 374). Moreover, Williams (2011) argues that opposition parties raise no confidence motions for partisan purposes in order to signal policy priorities and to gain vote share.

In other words, when MPs adhere to the role of ‘partisans’ in relation to control activity they use institutional Fire Alarm cases to highlight the government’s mistakes and inflict cost on government parties, since it will challenge the government parties’ position in government and present themselves as a better alternative in relation to the voter.

However, in coalition government systems, the government typically consists of two or more distinct political parties. In a coalition government, parties make policy jointly, yet they are held separately accountable by voters (Martin and Vanberg 2014; Strøm et al. 2010). The functioning of coalition governments depends on the success in aligning the different political parties’ preferences. The greater the preference diversity between parties, the more fragile the coalition. The more fragile the coalition, the greater the need for coalition parties to monitor and control each other’s behavior (Strøm et al. 2010). This means that to some extent, MPs from government parties still might consider engaging in Firefighting. Problems of alignment challenges in government might urge MPs from coalition parties to use parliamentary control institutions to control other government parties. In other words, MPs from one government party might join the opposition and engage in control activity related to government matters controlled by another government party.

MPs have no incentives to engage in public control of government areas controlled by their own party, and thereby to challenge a minister from their own party. Political parties use internal procedures to handle intra party disagreement. Although MPs might voice their intra-party disagreement, I do not expect MPs to engage in formal parliamentary activity criticizing their own party.

To sum up, MP Firefighting depends primarily on the MP party’s position in government or opposition. MPs adhere to the role of ‘partisan’ and behave in the interest of their party. Opposition MPs have incentives to engage in Firefighting in order to damage government reputation and inflict cost on government. However, since alignment between different parties’ interests is a challenge for coalition governments, I expect some Firefighting from coalition MPs.

H1a: Members of parliament belonging to parties in opposition are more likely to engage in Firefighting than members of parliament belonging to parties in government.

H1b: Members of parliament belonging to the government coalition but not to the party of the minister under critique are more likely to engage in Firefighting than members of parliament belonging to the same party as the minister under critique.

3.5.2. Firefighting in explosive institutional Fire Alarm cases

The second project hypothesis is the explosive potential hypothesis. The previous hypothesis stated that Firefighting is primarily opposition activity. Opposition MPs have the incentives to engage in Firefighting, for example to utilize such cases to highlight government mistakes in order to damage government reputation and inflict cost on government. Opposition parties want more votes and to access government office in order to pursue policy goals. However, when MPs consider whether to engage in Firefighting – as for all other activity – they consider the cost in relation to benefits from the activity.¹³ The time spent on Firefighting means less time for pursuing other MP goals. Therefore, MPs consider the payoff related to the activity before they engage in Firefighting.

This project focuses on Fire Alarm cases from control institutions outside of parliament. In the original McCubbins and Schwartz (1984) Fire Alarm control, third parties raised Fire Alarms that led to MP Firefighting. Third parties are different organized interests and individual citizens that signal voter interests. Fire Alarms from control institutions do not signal voter interests in the same way. In addition, scholars state a limited interest among MPs as well as the public for reporting information from control institutions, or available information in general (Saalfeld 2000: 371-372, Brandsma and Schillemans (2012: 972, Brandsma 2010). Following from this, if voters lack an interest in the cases, then the cases might also be less useful for damaging government reputation. Therefore, one might expect that MPs will pay less attention to the institutional variant of Fire Alarms. However, I do expect that MPs will pay attention if these institutional Fire Alarm cases have the potential to damage government. In other words, if the case is ‘bad’ enough for government it is ‘good’ for the opposition. I expect the case to be bad enough if the case has an ‘explosive’ potential. The explosive potential relates to how important the case is for maximizing the interests of the MPs in relation to votes, office and policy.

¹³ Behn criticizes McCubbins’ and Swartz’s (1984) assumption of low cost Fire Alarms compared to police patrol (2001: 76). It seems plausible to assume that MPs’ Firefighting is costly, as is all activity, but it also seems plausible to assume that Firefighting is less costly compared to constant police patrolling.

Recalling a point made earlier, MPs pursue party goals of votes, policy and office (Strøm 1990a), and the explosive potential of institutional Fire Alarm cases relates to these party goals. The project's institutional Fire Alarm cases concern a broad range of procedural issues, from employee cases, to administrative decisions. From this, I suggest three criteria to constitute such an explosive case potential. The first criteria links to the goal of office and is if the institutional Fire Alarm case relates to public, high-ranking positions in society. In general, political actors take an interest in powerful political as well as administrative top positions. The second criteria links to the policy goal and is if the case relates to a controversial policy area. This means that if the case relates to a policy area defined by a high degree of ideological conflict between political parties. The third criteria links to the votes' goal and is if the case relates to third party interest.

To sum up, I expect that opposition MPs as 'partisans' consider if the institutional Fire Alarm case has the potential to damage government reputation or if the case relates to voter interest. If the case relates to the office and policy criteria, by highlighting government mistakes on office as well as policy conduct, MPs present themselves as a better alternative than government parties. In addition, if the case relates to voter interests there are direct voter interests at stake. In other words, I expect that opposition MPs will engage in Firefighting if the institutional Fire Alarm case has an 'explosive' potential. MPs will leave non-explosive cases to the bureaucracy to deal with.

H2: Members of parliament are more likely to engage in Firefighting if the institutional Fire Alarm has higher, as opposed to lower, explosive potential

3.5.3. Media Firefighting

The third project hypothesis is the media hypothesis. The previous first hypothesis has argued that opposition MPs have incentives to engage in Firefighting, and therefore that MP Firefighting is primarily opposition Firefighting. However, the second hypotheses argues that opposition MPs will not pay attention to all types of institutional Fire Alarm cases. Cases need to have an explosive potential in order to be useful for the goal of opposition control activity; to damage government reputation or to serve voter interests. These two hypotheses build on the assumption that MPs adhere to the role of 'partisan' pursuing party goals. The media hypothesis partly continues the focus on the 'partisan' role, but also focuses on the media coverage as strengthening the 'parliamentarian' role. Nevertheless, the argument is that regardless of

whether MPs expect partisan benefits from media coverage or feel more obligated to act as parliamentarians, I expect media coverage to increase the likelihood of MP Firefighting.

Both political parties and individual MPs pay attention to media coverage, since media coverage influences voters' attitudes. Arceneaux states that: "News coverage influences which issues the public views as important and shapes aggregate opinion on how those issues should be handled" (Iyenger and Kinder 1987, in Arceneaux 2015: 5). Moreover, Green-Pedersen et al. (2015: 131) state that being covered in the news is a central concern for politicians. However, their investigation of the so-called incumbency bonus when it comes to media coverage shows that when competition intensifies – when coverage is related to salient issues for example – the media tends to offer more room to the challenger. This means that media coverage of government violations is a good opportunity for the opposition to appear in the media. In addition, scholars refer to a development from a more cleavage centered, to more media and issue-oriented politics (Binderkrantz 2003, Green-Pedersen 2007, Rometvedt et al. 2012 – in Binderkrantz 2014). In addition, Pelizzo et al. (2006: 788) argue that media coverage and the salience of the issue is important for control activity, or specifically for the success of financial scrutiny (audit cases).

In other words, the media offers information to the voter on political parties, on government policy as well as opposition activity. On the one side, government parties' have an interest in the media covering government's policy pursuits rather than government mal-administration. On the other side, opposition parties' have an interest in the media covering government mal-administration as well as less fortunate angles on government's policy pursuits. However, when it comes to the media coverage, there is also the individual MP to consider, who might not always represent their party once media coverage is at stake. This chapter has previously stated that while political parties control the goal of MP re-nomination, the party does not entirely control the MP goal of re-election. MPs seek re-election (Mayhew 1974, Strøm 1997, 2012), and therefore media coverage makes individual MPs consider if Firefighting is useful for vote-seeking behavior. Supporting this, scholars find not only control activity in parliamentary questions or question hours activity, but also an electoral constituency focus (Rasch 2009; Alemán et al. 2017). Following from this, media coverage of institutional Fire Alarm cases means that actors expect that their response will receive media coverage, and therefore that MPs exploit media coverage to pursue their cause and influence voters' attitudes. In general, according to Wiberg (1995: 195), the media report now and then on parliamentary questions, but that the heavier political interpellation and

debates attract more attention from the media. Martin (2011: 259) argues that parliamentary questions often generate significant media attention.

Another scenario is that MPs worry about what voters think, i.e. their attitudes in relation to parliamentary control activity. It is difficult, however, to assess voters' attitudes towards institutional Fire Alarms regarding government mal-administration, but also MPs' assessment of these attitudes in relation to the goal of re-election. Strøm (1997a) refers to the voter's Janus face. Voters elect representatives based on future expectations as well as on achievements. This trade-off is difficult to measure. Nevertheless, we can assume that voters care about policy, but also about corruption and bad administration. Voters care about 'tax-payers money' and demand assurance of legitimate spending of 'their' money. The extent to which voters can sanction MPs for not engaging in Firefighting depends on the voter's knowledge of examples of bad administration, i.e. on public information regarding the institutional Fire Alarm cases. However, even though institutional Fire Alarm cases are public, it is still time-consuming for citizens to search for this information on their own initiative. I therefore expect that the extent to which voters' knowledge and attitudes are influenced by these institutional Fire Alarm cases depends on the media coverage of the cases. In other words, if MPs expect that the voter will take an interest in these cases, the role of 'parliamentarian' that feels obligated to engage in oversight of government actions may come into play. Following this, I expect that it is not only opposition MPs that worry about voter attitudes in case of media coverage. Government MPs might want to engage in Firefighting to control the damage to government reputation.

To sum up, media coverage of institutional Fire Alarm cases heightens the alarm and leads to Firefighting. This is regardless of the cause. Political parties or individual MPs exploit the media interest in the cases to pursue their goals, but MPs might also worry about voter's attitudes on Election Day and feel more obligated to adhere to the role of 'parliamentarian'. Overall, I expect Firefighting if the media covers institutional Fire Alarm cases, and additionally, I expect that more media coverage means more Firefighting.

H3: The level of Firefighting in parliament is higher the more media attention the institutional Fire Alarm attracts

3.5.4. Damage control

The fourth project hypothesis is the damage control hypothesis. The previous hypotheses have considered the importance of various MPs' incentives and

media coverage for MP Firefighting. There is, however, the behavior of another actor that might affect MP Firefighting, and that is the agency that receives the critique. The institutional Fire Alarm cases of mal-administration relate to certain agencies. The agency that receives critique might decide to adhere to the critique and demonstrate a damage control activity and thereby avoid MPs taking an interest in the case. However, if the agency refuses and refrains from demonstrating a damage control activity, this will cause MPs to pay attention to the case and engage in Firefighting.

One way to argue for this is that as ‘parliamentarians’, MPs support parliamentary control institutions. If agencies adhere, then there is no need for MPs to get involved, but if agencies do not adhere, then MPs need to engage to secure adherence to conclusions from control institutions outside of parliament. However, another way of arguing relates to the project’s main argument that MPs adhere to the role of ‘partisans’ and engage in Firefighting in order to damage government reputation or pay attention to voter interests. According to this logic, MPs consider a lack of damage control activity as an opportunity to blame government for the lack of damage control activity. Nevertheless, one way or the other, the assumption is that in case of a lack of damage control activity, MPs pay more attention to institutional Fire Alarm cases and engage in Firefighting. However, if MPs use the lack of damage control to inflict cost on government as ‘partisans’, the responsible agency has to be within reach of a minister in the government.

In parliamentary systems, according to the single chain of delegation, ministers delegate power to bureaucracy. However, as Pollack (2002) addresses, parliaments in parliamentary systems also delegate powers to agencies other than ministers and governments, such as municipalities but also independent agencies such as complaint boards. If MPs act as ‘parliamentarians’, they will not distinguish between these distinct types of delegation, or in other words on the distance to the minister. However, if MPs act as ‘partisans’, I only expect the lack of damage control to have an effect if the agency is close to the minister. If the agency is within reach of the minister, the opposition is more able to blame the minister for the lack of damage control.

To sum up, I expect that a lack of damage control will lead to MP Firefighting. As ‘parliamentarians’, MPs engage in order to support control institutions if the agency refuses to adhere to the critique. If this is the case, I expect an effect of damage control regardless of the type of delegation. However, as ‘partisans’, MPs only engage in Firefighting due to a lack of damage control if the agency is within the reach of a minister in government. If this is the case, the MP can blame the government for failing to engage in damage control

H4: Members of parliament are less likely to engage in Firefighting the more an agency demonstrates damage control

3.5.5. Institutionalized Firefighting

The fifth project hypothesis is the institutionalization hypothesis. The main argument for the previous four hypotheses is that MPs adhere to the role of ‘partisan’ when they engage in Firefighting. This chapter has previously argued that the institutional settings and the role of political parties in parliamentary systems support MPs ‘partisan’ role to a greater extent than MPs ‘parliamentarian’ role in parliament. Following from this, the chapter argues that the role of ‘parliamentarian’ requires additional institutional support. While MPs from opposition parties face no conflict or trade-off related to the role of ‘partisan’ or ‘parliamentarian’, government MPs do. Opposition MPs that engage in control activity may adhere to the role of ‘partisan’ as well as ‘parliamentarian’ at the same time. MPs from government parties on the other hand face conflicting expectations from the role of ‘partisan’ and ‘parliamentarian’. Therefore, for government MPs to participate in Firefighting, additional institutional support to engage in ‘parliamentarian’ Firefighting is required.

Recalling the understanding of institutions, institutions are a system of rules that structure the courses of actions, the effects, however, depend on the degree of procedures and routines following the institution. In other words, the more clearly the link between rules and procedures and the more accepted the institution, the stronger the expectation of a certain kind of behavior. Experiences of use develop into routines that actors tend to follow without too many questions. Thus, a combination of clear-cut rules, procedures for activity and routine implies a higher degree of institutionalization of expectations for a certain kind of behavior.

The higher the degree of institutionalization of expectations, the less room for ‘partisan’ considerations. MPs refusing to adhere to highly institutionalized expectations, risk public demands for explanations. Therefore, government MP Firefighting requires rules and procedures to guide MP activity and to create institutionalized processes that strengthen the expectation for ‘parliamentarian’ Firefighting and make ‘partisan’ Firefighting less rewarding. In other words, institutions that are clearly followed by procedures for activity and established routines support the ‘parliamentarian role’ at the expense of the ‘partisan’ role. The ‘parliamentarian’ activity is directed at supporting the control institutions. The higher the institutionalization of the expectations of the ‘parliamentarian’ role, the more challenged the ‘partisan’ role will be in

situations of role conflict. Government MPs, as previously mentioned, experience such a role conflict. An institutionalized process will make it more likely that government MPs also engage in Firefighting.

To sum up, institutionalized processes strengthen MPs' role as 'parliamentarians'. The higher degree of institutionalized expectations, the more likely it is that MPs will engage in 'parliamentarian' Firefighting.

H5: Institutionalized processes lead to more Firefighting from government MPs

3.6. Conclusion and chapter summery

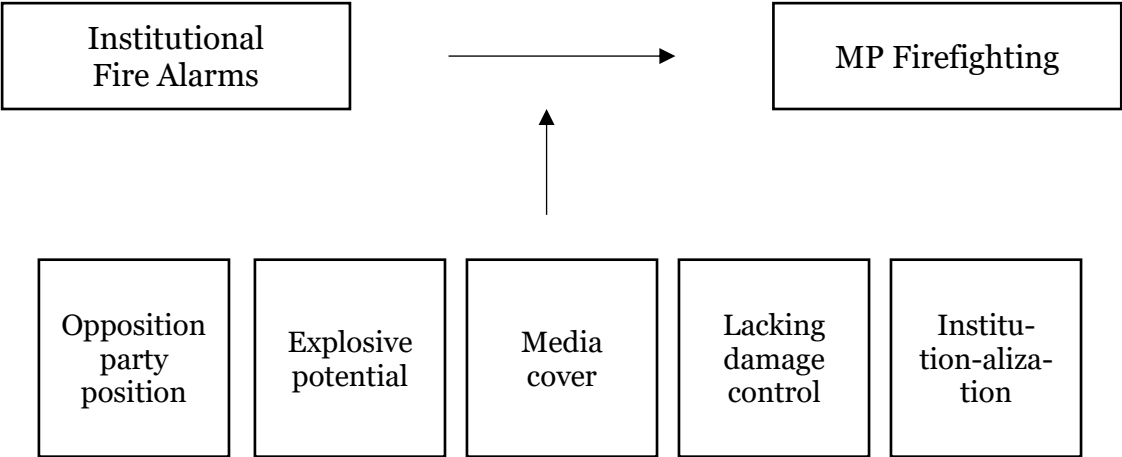
This chapter has presented the project's theoretical framework related to the political actors. In parliament, various political actors are to be considered. The project focuses on the individual MP as the actor unit in parliament. However, in parliament, MPs face expectations from different roles. MPs two main roles are the role of 'partisan'; pursuing political party goals, and the role of 'parliamentarian'; supporting control institutions by engaging in Firefighting. The chapter has argued that political parties very much control MPs goals, and therefore the main argument is that MP Firefighting is 'partisan' Firefighting. MP 'partisan' Firefighting refers to opposition MPs using control activity in order to inflict cost on government and in order to damage government reputation. There is no conflict between the two different roles for opposition parties, while the situation is different for government MPs.

The institutional 'non-party' mode supports parliamentary control activity, but only to some extent, and not enough to challenge the 'partisan' role. Therefore, the chapter argues that 'Parliamentary' Firefighting requires additional institutional support in the form of institutionalized processes. In particular, government MPs need additional institutional support in order to engage in Firefighting, since their 'partisan' incentives tell them to refrain from engaging.

Based on these theoretical assumptions, this chapter has formulated five hypotheses on when MPs engage in Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarms. Following from MPs 'partisan' role, I expect MP Firefighting to be primarily opposition activity. However, since the assumption is that MPs' interest in procedural reports is limited, I only expect opposition MPs to engage in Firefighting if the case has the potential to damage government reputation. In other words, I only expect opposition MP Firefighting if the institutional Fire Alarm case has explosive potential. Following from this, I expect MPs to pay attention to media coverage of institutional Fire Alarm cases. I expect that the higher degree of case related media coverage, the higher the degree of Fire-

fighting. However, I also expect that the actions of the government agency receiving critique from control institutions to influence MP Firefighting. If government agencies lack a damage control strategy, MPs will either engage in ‘parliamentarian’ Firefighting in order to support control institutions, or will engage in ‘partisan’ Firefighting by only engaging if agencies close to the minister lack a damage control strategy. The final hypothesis states that in case of additional institutional support in form of institutionalized processes related to the Fire Alarm institutions, even government MPs will engage in ‘parliamentarian’ Firefighting in support of control institutions. For a view of the project model, see figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: Project model



In the following chapters, the project continues by presenting the project’s country case and overall research design. Chapter 5 presents the project’s country case, the Faroe Islands. Chapter 6 presents the project’s overall research design.

Chapter 4: The Faroe Islands country case

The previous two chapters have presented the project's theoretical framework regarding institutional settings, control institutions and political actors.

This chapter focuses on the empirical context – the case of Faroe Islands – for the project's investigation of under what circumstances MPs engage in Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarms. The purpose of this chapter is to address the specific institutional parliamentary settings, control institutions and political context in the Faroese political system in relation to the project's theoretical model, as presented in chapter 2 and 3. The chapter focuses on settings and systems of importance to MP Firefighting, such as government, parliament, media and party systems. In other words, the chapter offers an assessment of the Faroese case in relation to typical institutional settings in order to assess if or to what extent the choice of country case might influence the results of the investigation of the project hypotheses. It is important to assess these factors in order to be able to make judgements regarding the external validity of the project's results. This chapter will argue that the Faroe Islands is a typical case related to this project's investigation.

The Faroe Islands is not a sovereign state. Instead, the Faroe Islands figure as a part of the Danish realm. However, the empirical reality is that the Faroe Islands have a very high degree of autonomy (Aldrich and Connell 1998: 46, Adler Nielsen 2014: 58) and a fully-fledged political system (Hoff and West 2008). In addition, the Home Rule engagement was constructed so that independent policy areas are completely controlled by the Faroese political systems, without control or requirement of approval of political decisions from Danish authorities. Today, most policy areas are independent policy areas. In addition, the project argues that research in political institutions in the Faroe Islands is important. These institutions influence society and the lives and future prospects of its people.

The chapter will proceed as follows: it starts out by presenting the Faroe Islands entity, including the Home-Rule system. The chapter presents the traditions for parliament, government, and the media. From this, the chapter directs focus to the parliamentary system settings, including the central and decentral parliamentary control institutions. Thereafter, the chapter focuses on the political actors and the political context of importance. The chapter ends by addressing the fact that the Faroe Islands is a case of majority constellation systems.

4.1. The Faroe Islands entity

Faroe Islands is not a state, but a country with partial qualities of a state
(E. Mitens 1950/51)¹⁴

Today, the Faroe Islands is a part of Denmark and approximately 50,000 people inhabit 17 of the 18 small islands, which together make up 1,396 km² of landmass surrounded by a relatively large sea area of 274,000 km². The islanders have their own language, history, and culture.

The Faroe Islands is a self-governing entity within the kingdom of Denmark. Scholars refer to the Home Rule Arrangement from 1948 as one of the most advanced self-governing arrangements for overseas regions today (Aldrich and Connell 1998: 46, Adler Nielsen 2014: 58).

The legal act on the Home Rule arrangement (legal act no. 11 from 1948) states that the Faroese Home rule, which consists of a democratically elected Løgting (parliament) and a Landsstýrið (government), take over power in Faroese relations. Together with the implementation of the Home Rule system, parliament restored its former status as legislative power, while a newly established Landsstýrið gained administrative power over Faroese policy areas (Sølvará 2002: 292) (For more information on the parliamentary and government traditions, see accordingly section 4.1.1 and 4.1.2).

The Home Rule act builds on a positive list that defines the potential Home Rule policy areas. In 2005, the so-called “Takeover Act” was implemented, which redefined the Home Rule policy system to a negative list, only stating those five jurisdictions that cannot become Faroese Home Rule jurisdictions. These jurisdictions are the constitution, citizenship, the Supreme Court, currency, and foreign-, security- and defense policy (§1,2 in the “Takeover Act” no. 79 from 2005). Today, the Home Rule handles most jurisdictions (Jákupsstovu 2013, Adler Nielsen 2014), such as education, healthcare, hospitals, social policy, institutions for the handicapped and elderly, unemployment and other transfer payments, industry policy and finance policy. However, in some policy areas, there is a status of joint responsibility. To cover the expenses on these areas, the Home Rule receives an annual block grant from Denmark. The size of the block grant together with the financing of Danish

¹⁴ Original quote is in Danish: “Færøerne er ikke en stat, men et land med delvis statskvalitet”, in Mitens (1950: 89).

institutions in the Faroe Islands is about 5 % of GDP or 10 % of the Faroese national expenses.¹⁵

In addition to the 'Takeover Act' in 2005, the 'Foreign Policy Authority Act' (no. 80 from 2005)¹⁶ was also implemented. This act defines how, in spite of the limitations on foreign policy, the Faroe Islands is still able to act in the international arena. The Faroe Islands can negotiate and enter agreements relating to Home Rule jurisdictions (§ 1). The Faroe Islands enters agreements as the Kingdom of Denmark, concerning the Faroe Islands (§ 2). It participates in international trade and fishery negotiations. The fact that Denmark is a member of the EU, while the Faroe Islands is not, also means that the Faroe Islands perform their own negotiations when dealing with the EU. Moreover, the Faroe Islands is represented in different international councils.

Historically, the Home Rule Arrangement was a result of negotiations between representatives of the Faroese political system and the Danish political systems following the controversial referendum in 1946, in which a narrow majority in the Faroe Islands voted yes to independence (Skála 1992; West and Heinesen 2004: ch. 6; Sølvará 2002: volume 1). The Danish King dissolved parliament and called an election (on the historic events West and Heinesen 2004: ch. 6). After the election, a new parliamentary majority engaged in negotiations, which led to the implementation of the Home Rule Act in 1948 (Sølvará 2002: volume 1).

Overall, regarding the Faroe Islands as a political entity, the project stresses that although the Faroe Islands is a part of the Danish realm, the islands at the same time function as an independent political unit on Home Rule policy jurisdictions. The Home Rule arrangement is constructed in such a way that independent parts of the system are under total control by the Faroese political system. Overall, the Home Rule system re-introduced a legislatively empowered parliament, but also laid the foundation of a new political system, consisting of a parliament as well as a government. The Faroese government tradition started as late as in 1948, while the Faroese parliament is among the oldest parliaments in the world.

¹⁵ The annual block grant together with the financing of Danish institutions (for instance the police and court) is assessed to about 900 mill. DKK. (Faroese Economic council report, spring 2015: 76). The size of the Faroese economy is about 18-19 bill. DKK. and the national expenses (land and municipalities) about 9 bill. DKK.

¹⁶ Also a Folketing legal act: no. 579 from 2005.

4.1.1. Parliamentary traditions

The Faroe Islands were inhabited in early 800, and stayed independent for a few hundred years. The islands came under the Norwegian king in the 11th century, but in reality not until the 13th century (Sølvará, bind 1:19). The Faroe Islands have very old parliamentary traditions, since the Faroese parliament, Løgtingið, dates back to before 900. Historians believe that from about 800-1200, the islands governed themselves by the use of governing institutions that had legislative and judicial powers (Sølvará 2002: volume 1: 37). However, various chiefs dominated the society on the islands, but their power was, at least to some extent, limited by an “Alting”. In the Alting, all “free men” met, decided on cases and solved disagreements (Sølvará 2002: volume 1: 27-28).

Around 1300, a representative Løgting was established, which became to a greater extent a judicial institution, leaving legislative and executive power to first the Norwegian and later to the Danish king. However, in addition to the judicial assignment, the Løgting also initiated legislation, took care of the country’s joint relations, represented the islands outside the Danish-Norwegian Kingdom, and executed control of the King’s officials in the Faroe Islands (Sølvará 2002: volume 1: 50-51, 115). The Løgting had 36 members. Later, the number increased to 48 (Sølvará 2002: volume 1:31, 42, 43, 45, 52).

Following the implementation of absolutism in the Danish-Norwegian Kingdom in 1660, the Faroe Islands were defined as a county in 1720. Yet, the position of High Commissioner Officer (Amtmand) was first implemented in 1816. Despite having the status of county, the islands’ constitutional status was not clearly defined. As a general rule, Danish legal acts did not apply to the Faroe Islands, unless specified (Thorsteinsson 1994: 30).

In 1816, parliament was abolished (Sølvará 2002: 68-70). In 1850, the Danish constitution was unilaterally implemented in the Faroe Islands (Sølvará 2002: 94; Thorsteinsson 1994: 33), and in 1852 the Løgting was reestablished as an extended council with the power to propose and comment on new bills, but without legislative power (Sølvará 2002: 99-100). The Løgting’s status as a legislative power was formally restored in 1948 with the implementation of the Home Rule Arrangement.

Overall, regardless of the Løgting’s historically different parliamentary status, the policy implementation in the Faroe Islands has been adjusted to Faroese conditions. Today, this also applies for Danish responsibility areas. In other words, the central Danish state has refrained from applying a legal framework to the whole kingdom (Jákupsstovu 2006: 30, 40; Sølvará 2002: 73). For the more specific typical parliamentary settings, see section 4.2. and 4.3.

4.1.2. Government and administration

Traditions for government as well as administration in the Faroe Islands are relatively young, not nearly as old as the parliamentary traditions.

Following the Home Rule Act, a new government institution, Landsstýrið, was established. As previously explained, executive power had historically been vested in Norwegian and Danish kings. Today, the position of “Løgmaður” refers to the leader of Landsstýrið. Løgmaður is the Faroese Prime Minister. However, historically, Løgmaður was the leader of parliament (Sølvará 2002: 300).

Historically, administration in the Faroe Islands primarily was taken care of by Danish institutions in the Faroe Islands. The Faroese administrative tradition can be traced back to the National (Faroese) committee of 1928, which administrated some of the county’s functions. In 1935, the administrative office of the Løgting was established, and from 1939, an office head led the office. Following, the Home Rule system and establishment of a Faroese government – Landsstýrið – a central administration was also established. The central administration took over parliament’s administrative functions (Jákupsstovu 2006: 53, Thorsteinsson 1994, Thorsteinsson and Rasmussen 1999: 495). From 1948 to 1987, the central administration also encompassed the administration of parliament (Ísaksson 2002: 161). Since 1987, parliament again had its own administration.

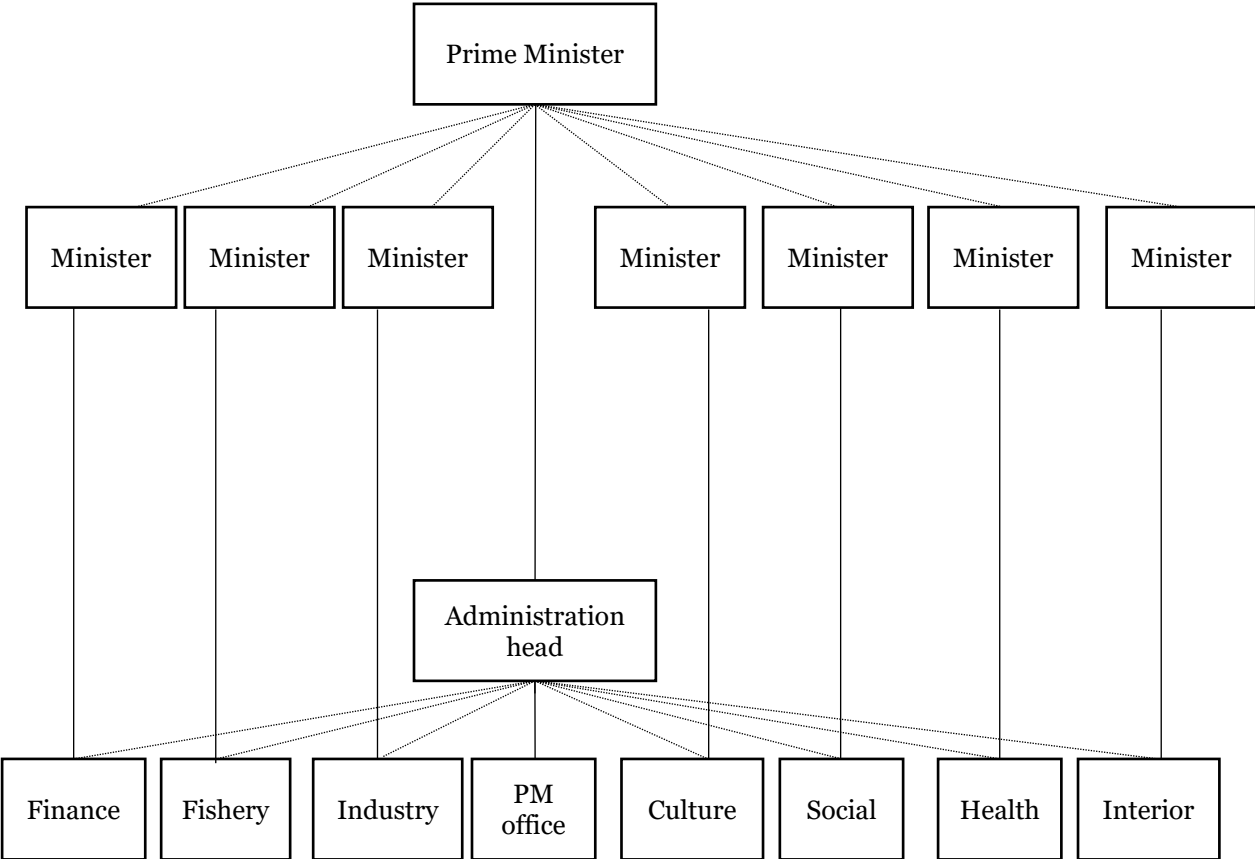
In 1996, the central administrative system was reorganized, based on the Faroese government act no. 103 from 1994 and an administrative reform from 1996 (“Bygnaðarbroytingar í landsfyrisingini” 1996). The implementation of a new governing rule and comprehensive administrative reform was a response to the harsh critique of the political system related to the severe economic crises in the early 1990s that resulted in recession and unemployment. Around 10 % of the population emigrated.

The government system was changed from a collegium system to an individual minister responsibility system. In addition, a more clear-cut distinction between the legislative and the executive power was enforced. These changes laid the foundation of a more modern administrative system (Dosenrode and Djurhuus 1998). The changes related to the administrative system and government were implemented before this project’s time-period of 2000-2015 (on the time-period, see chapter 5 on the research design).

According to the Faroese governing rule (§ 27), the minimum requirements for government are two ministers together with the Prime Minister (Løgmaður). The number can vary, though typically ranges from seven to nine ministers, including the PM (Kjakupplegg 2014: 15).

The administrative system resembles the typical “department-directorate” model (Dosenrode and Djurhuus 1998¹⁷). This means that individual case management belongs in the directorates, which figure under the respective departments. For an illustration of the central administrative system, see figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Illustration of the central administrative system



Source: Dosenrode and Djurhuus (1998: 267), based on government period 2011-2015.

In addition to the central administrative system, there is also a municipality structure. The municipalities are subjects of the Faroese government. The first municipality council was established in Tórshavn in 1866, and six years later, municipal councils were established in the rest of the country (Jákupsstovu 2006: 54). Their main tasks have been to provide local facilities such as water and sewerage, roads and public buildings, and recently, certain welfare services. As the central Faroese authorities wish to extend the decentralization of welfare services, they push for municipal amalgamation, so far resulting in a

¹⁷ They refer to the report on the new administrative reform: “Bygnaðarbroytingar í landsfyriritingini” (1996).

reduction from 51 in 1967-1976 to 34 in 2005-2008 (Jákupsstovu 2008: 33) to the present state of 29 municipalities.¹⁸

To sum up, today's administrative system is an individual minister responsibility system, organized as a typical "department-directorate" model. In addition, the administrative system consists of central as well as decentral authorities.

4.1.3. The news media system

Today's news media system consists of newspapers, a broadcasting network, TV and radio, and internet platforms.

The oldest news producing media is the newspaper. In the late 19th century, several newspapers were established. These newspapers reflected new dividing lines in society, also found in the formation of political parties. In the early 20th century, the period of party organ newspaper began (Jákupsstovu 2006: 59-60). This period lasted well into the 1990s. Since then the number of newspapers has rapidly decreased and existing newspapers are no longer linked to political parties. Today, there are three newspapers left: two traditional newspapers, 'Dimmalætting' and 'Sosialurin', previously linked to the previous newspapers for Unionist Party and the Social Democratic Party respectively, and one older local newspaper, 'Norðlýsið', not previously attached to a political party (Jákupsstovu, report 2008a).

The Faroese radio network started broadcasting in 1957, following a parliamentary decision to establish a Faroese public radio network in 1956. In the beginning, the daily broadcasting time was limited. Around 1980, television broadcasting began; first from different broadcasting networks, however in 1983, as a result of a political decision, a Faroese public broadcasting television network was established. The public broadcasting television was first broadcast in 1984. Until 2005, the public radio and the public television were two different institutions. In 2005, the two institutions were fused into one institution named Kringvarp Føroya, KvF.¹⁹

The radio channel (ÚF) has news broadcasts several times during the day. There are two main transmissions during weekdays – today they are at 12:20 and 18:00 – and last for 20-25 minutes. Radio news broadcasting also consists of several smaller transmissions before, between and after the two main transmissions (one repeat broadcast in the evening). The TV news broadcasting is less frequent, today consisting of four broadcasts per week at 19:00 (though also some repeat broadcasts) and last for 20-30 minutes. Typically, once a

¹⁸ According to the municipality association, Føroya Kommunufelag, www.kf.fo, visited on June 13 2018.

¹⁹ Information from www.kvf.fo, "søgan hjá KvF", visited June 13 2018.

week the TV news broadcast is followed by a discussion feature in the studio related to an ongoing case or issue.

There is still only one Faroese TV channel. However, today several additional Faroese radio channels exist, some of which also produce news features. In addition, several internet platforms produce news or provide information on events.

Overall, today, the main news media system consists of one large independent public service media institution, and one relatively large private media institution. The public media institution, KvF, has one TV and one radio channel, and to some extent uses an internet platform (the website www.kvf.fo) as a supplement. The private media institution, Miðlahúsið, uses various platforms. It is responsible for the newspaper, Sosialurin, which has two weekly and one weekend publication, the radio channel ‘Rás2’, and an internet news platform, in.fo. In addition to these larger media institutions, there is the previously mentioned newspaper, Dimmalætting, which has one weekend publication, the local newspaper, Norðlýsið, a relatively new news radio channel, R7, and various internet platforms.

In this sense, the Faroese media system resembles the Democratic Corporatist Model (Hallin and Mancini 2004) that we know from the North/Central European countries. This section has introduced – in broad terms – the development of mass media tied to political and civil groups. In addition, political media and journalistic professionalism have co-existed, and a liberal free press has existed together with a strong intervention from the state (Hallin and Mancini 2004: 195-196).²⁰

This section has presented an overall understanding of the Faroe Islands entity, the Home Rule system, the Faroese parliamentary as well as government traditions. In addition, this sub-section has offered a general, short presentation of the media system in the Faroe Islands. The chapter continues by addressing the institutional parliamentary settings in the Faroe Islands.

4.2. Parliamentary system setting

This section and the two that follow focus on institutional settings in the Faroe Islands parliamentary system. This section offers an overall presentation of the parliamentary system setting in the Faroese country case. The purpose is to create a picture of the overall parliamentary system in the Faroese case. The listed settings are some of the typical parliamentary settings used in Bergman

²⁰ In the categorization, Hallin and Mancini (2004) also relate this type of media system to the welfare state and strong civil society. The Faroese case also adheres to these characteristics (Hoff and West 2008).

et al. (2003). The presentation is primarily based on the overall framework according to the governing rule from 1994. It is important to stress, however, that a new expanded governing rule that more resembles a constitution has been in the planning stages for about 20 years, but due to political conflict, has not been implemented. In addition to the governing rule, Parliament's standing orders offer additional rules and definitions.²¹

Overall, the Faroese political system meets the criteria of a democratic parliamentary system according to Strøm's (2000, 2003) definition. Voters elect political representatives to parliament. Thereafter, parliament delegates power to the Prime Minister, which delegates power to ministers. From here, ministers delegate power to departments and institutions.

The Faroese parliamentary system is a mono-cameral system consisting of 33 MPs. Regarding parliament, the most typical system in the world is unicameral (Tsebelis and Rasch 1995; Tsebelis and Money 1997, in Rasch 2014: 466). Today, for example, all Nordic parliaments are unicameral (Rasch 2011: 42).

Parliament formally votes on the insertion of the Prime Minister (G: §28), however, the appointment of ministers is left in the hands of the Prime Minister. Government's function rests on a confidence relationship with parliament (G: §§29, 30). Parliament, as well as the Prime Minister, have the power to dissolve parliament and to force an election (G: §6,2). As previously explained, in the Faroese system, ministers have, individual ministerial responsibility (G: §37).

Today, the institutional settings formally facilitate minority government constellations. The implementation of the negative formation rule came together with the governing rule from 1994 (§28,3). However, despite the existence of the negative formation rule, the Faroese government constellation system is still a dominant case of a majority government system (section 4.7 addresses the question of government constellation systems).

In the old governing rule, the overall principle of parliamentarism was rather unclear. It was not a formal requirement for government to resign in case of a stated majority against the government (Álit um stýrisskipanarviðurskifti Føroya 1994: 140). However, the tradition of parliamentarism developed during the 1980s (Sølvará 2002, I: 306).

Other institutional characteristics are that MPs leave their seat in parliament if they receive a government position (G: §32), thereby making room for a substitute MP to enter parliament. Strictly, ideal typically speaking, this feature is a non-parliamentary system characteristic, but is empirically a rather

²¹ References to G: Governing rule, Legal act no. 103 from 1994. References to S: Standing orders, parliament.

common feature, found for instance in the Netherlands. In addition, there is no option for referendum on passed acts, and no possibility of referendum on changes to the governing rule; however, there is a protection rule for amending the governing rule.²²

Regarding the general institutional settings in parliament, the Faroese case also resembles typical parliamentary settings. Formally, the Speaker controls the parliamentary agenda (G: §13) and the committee chair controls the committee agenda (S: §30,1). However, these formal positions figure in the coalition bargaining process following an election, and their importance should therefore not be overrated. Regarding legislation activity, the minister, Prime Minister as well as the individual MP have power to present proposals (G: §15). However, in practice the government drafts most of the legislation proposals. A legal act proposal receives three readings (G: §15,2) and committee discussion between first and second reading. Committees as well as the individual MP in the assembly have powers to suggest amendments (S: §43,2, §41,4). The voting principle is the standard majority rule, 50 % + 1 of present MPs. However, a parliamentary decision requires the presence of more than half of the MPs (G: § 18). The important budget proposal is processed in the same way as other bills (G: §43,1). In addition, all voting is recorded. The voting records offer information on how the individual MP voted.

To sum up, overall, the Faroese political system settings resemble a typical parliamentary system, consisting of a single chain of delegation and accountability, a confidence relationship between parliament and government, a negative formation rule, formal institutional independence for parliament, and typical settings of relevance for the legislative process. The following sections continue the focus on institutional settings by addressing the control institutions, first the central control institutions in parliament and then the decentral control institutions outside of parliament.

4.3. Central parliamentary control institutions

This section presents the central control institutions inside the Faroese parliament, the Løgting. The following sub-sections in turn present the various central parliamentary control institutions. In addition to the focus on control institutions, this section addresses parliament's administrative resources and the level of activity in parliament.

The specific parliamentary control institutions in the Faroese case resemble typical parliamentary control institutions (Bergman et al. 2003). In the

²² In the planned new expanded governing rule, there will be referendum requirements, but still no minority protection rule.

Løgting, MPs have access to several types of parliamentary questions, a specialized committee system, including a control committee, investigative committees, and the Vote of No Confidence. Table 4.1 presents an overview of the central control institutions in the Løgting.

Table 4.1: Overview of central control institutions in the Løgting^{a)}

Central parliamentary control institutions	Sub-categories and characteristics
Specialized standing committee structure	Members elected proportionally (G§ 20) ^{b)} Control committee, three members (G §38, S §24) Specialized committees Six policy area specific committees, seven members each (S §24)
Parliamentary questions	Oral Q (including PQA similar institution), without approval (S §52,2) Written Q, without approval (S §52a) Interpellation, parliament votes (2/5 protection rule) (G §21, S §53) Unprepared questions (S §52,5) Committee Q, consultations (S §24,5)
Investigative commissions	Parliamentary commission (G§19) Expert investigative committees (G §38,2-4) Ad hoc committees (S §25, different purposes)
No Confidence Vote	Ordinary type (G §29,1; §30) Single minister or Prime Minister Qualified majority principle – Voting principle 50 % + 1 (total)

a. References to G: Governing rule, Legal act no. 103 from 1994. References to S: Standing orders, parliament.

b. Special selection rule for the audit committee, more details offered in chapter 9.

4.3.1. Parliamentary questions

The Faroese parliament has several different types of questions for individual MPs to utilize. Overall, the different question types fit well to Wiberg's (1995) classification, see section 2.5. There are two types of oral questions: the typical oral question at a fixed question time on a regular basis, but also the more

unusual type of spontaneous questions for which the minister has no time to prepare. There is also a written question type without a debate. In addition, there is the interpellation type, where a debate follows, however, without formally addressing questions of responsibility. Regarding the interpellation question type, parliament votes to approve the question. A minimum protection rule applies, 2/5 of the total number of MPs must vote in favor of the question. In addition to these question types, the standing committees can ask questions. Five committee members can decide to ask questions, but also to order their minister to meet and provide explanation in closed committee meetings.

To sum up, a broad range of options exist for MPs to use questions, as is the case in other parliamentary systems. All the typical parliamentary question types are present in the Faroese case.

4.3.2. Committee system

In the Faroese case, following an election, committee seats (and chairs) are selected proportionally in relation to party size (or coalition). The number of parliament's standing committees is fixed, while the numbers as well as the portfolio areas in government departments are variable.

Parliament's standing committee system consists of seven committees, including one control committee and one foreign affairs committee. The committees have seven members, except the control committee that has three members. In addition to the committee system, there is the audit committee (four members), which has special selection requirements, regulated according to the legal act no. 25 on auditing processes from 1999.

Overall, the committees mirror the ministries; the government departments. Still, some committees cover more than one ministry, and there are examples in which two committees cover the same ministry. However, this does not mean that policy fields are double-covered, which inflicts coordination costs (Garritzman 2017: online appendix). The principle as far as possible is one policy area to one committee.

Although the committees mirror government departments, the question is if the committees are specialized and effective. The question of an efficient size relates to the MPs' workload. Still, the assessment of an efficient committee size lacks a plausible a priori threshold. Therefore, scholars define the efficient size empirically (Schnapp and Harfst 2005: 353, 355, Mattson and Strøm 1995:268, Damgaard and Mattson 2004: 117, in Garritzmann 2017: online appendix). According to Garritzman's (2017) empirical threshold for efficient size, the Faroese committees fit into the "sub-optimal" lower category of less than 12 committees and less than 13 committee members. However, even

though the number of committees in the Faroese case is comparatively low, I still consider the committee system specialized, considering the small scale of the polity. The seven parliamentary committees together with the audit committee have 49 seats in total. In total, there are 33 MPs, and from these numbers one might expect a rather high degree of specialization among the MPs. If one considers the small-scale of the Faroe Islands, the lower numbers seem natural and suitable. In other words, I consider the committee system to be specialized and efficient in relation to number and size.

Another factor to consider is the committee powers. The committees address cases assigned to the committee by the parliamentary assembly. In practice, the committees address proposals by inviting actors outside of the political system to meet and inform the case. In addition, the committees usually demand documents and ask ministers to meet in order to answer related questions. Formally, the committee can ask questions and summon ministers for consultations, as presented in the previous section on parliamentary questions. In addition, the committee also has the power to make amendments to the minister's proposal. The power to make amendments is, however, limited, since committees are not able to rewrite legislation. Overall, considering various criteria, the committees in the Løgting seem rather strong (Sieberer 2011 and Garritzman 2017).

The control committee, however, is of a different type. The committee conducts oversight of government actions. To meet this end, on its own initiative, the committee addresses cases or complaints from MPs or actors outside of parliament. In addition, the committee can summon ministers and the Prime Minister to meet and explain themselves (S: § 24,1, no.3). The committee also has the power to settle an investigative commission (kanningarstjóri), however, this requires a majority in the committee. The selection of committee seats is conducted in the same way as the overall proportional committee selection system. This means, that the committee members represent opposition as well as government parties.

Overall, the standing committee system in the Løgting resembles typical characteristics such as committee policy specialization, strong control rights and proportional allocation of seats.

4.3.3. Investigative commissions and the Vote of No Confidence

In the Faroese case, there are various routes for MPs to settle investigative committees. Regarding the Vote of No Confidence, an ordinary version of the vote is present in the Faroese case.

The previous section stated that a majority of the control committee is empowered to settle an investigative commission (kanningarstjóri). The same right or option applies if 2/5 of the total number of MPs are in favor. In other words, the parliamentary assembly has the power to settle an investigative commission. However, to propose to settle an investigative committee requires just a single MP. In addition to this type of commission, which is an expert commission, parliament also has the option to settle an ad hoc parliamentary commission of MPs to investigate a case. Parliament settles a parliamentary commission by an ordinary majority vote. In addition, parliament can settle ad-hoc committees for various purposes. There is, however, no option for either the standing committees or the parliamentary assembly to make use of hearings in parliament.

The Vote of No Confidence is an example of the ordinary type, not the constructive type. There are no requirements for MPs to specify an alternative government in case that they wish to propose a Vote of No Confidence. MPs have the opportunity to direct the ultimate weapon of the Vote of No Confidence at the Prime Minister or an individual minister, hereby forcing them to resign (Bergman et al. 2003: 152-153). To propose a Vote of No Confidence requires just a single MP. However, the VNC procedure is an example of a somewhat more restricted type, since it requires an absolute majority, i.e. a majority of all MPs in order to pass (Bergman et al. 2003: 156). In case of a VNC proposal, the Speaker clears the parliamentary agenda and puts the proposal forward for reading followed by a vote.

To sum up, there are various routes for parliament to settle investigative committees, and there is a Vote of No Confidence routine for MPs to apply in cases of confidence issues. Having described the typical parliamentary control institutions in parliament, the following section will discuss if these institutions support oppositional activity in parliament.

4.3.4. Opportunities for the opposition

The previous section has presented the institutional characteristics for the Løgting's central control institutions in relation to the description of typical control institutions in chapter 2. Overall, the section demonstrated that the Løgting has a broad range of control institutions that institutionally enable MPs to act and to engage in firefighting. However, I have stated in chapter 3 that in terms of actors' incentives to engage in parliamentary control, we primarily have to consider opposition MPs. For this reason, in addition to the investigation of the Løgting's control institutions, I investigate institutional opportunities for the opposition to engage in control of government (Garritzman 2017 uses the term "opportunity structure").

The opposition's focus in parliament rests on two main types of activity, to present alternatives to government and to engage in control of government activity (Garritzman 2017). However, in terms of institutions, for these two types of activity, MPs make use of the same central parliamentary institutions.

For the committee system, Garritzman focuses on four factors. The first factor is the selection of committee chairs. A proportional allocation rule is in favor of the opposition, compared to an allocation to governing parties. In the Faroese case, as previously explained, parliament proportionally allocates the committee chairs. This means that there is a potential opportunity for the opposition to achieve committee chair positions. The second factor is whether committee members are able to publish minority reports to committee reports. In the Faroese case, committee members do have the option to publish minority reports (S: §34,3). The third factor is whether committee members meet publicly or behind closed doors. In the Faroese case, the committees meet behind closed doors. Garritzman (2017) argues that in the case of closed committee meetings, governing parties are more willing to share information with the opposition.²³ The fourth factor is the committees' information rights. Garritzman (2017) stresses the same items that constitute strong committees (see section 4.3.2), since strong committee rights are especially useful for opposition MPs. Government MPs, by contrast, are able to access information through more informal channels.

For parliamentary questions, Garritzman (2017) stresses that such questions are an important institution for the opposition. Regarding written questions, it is the time limit for the government to provide a reply that is of importance (Russo and Wiberg 2010: 229). In the Faroese case, the 10 day (written §52 a question) and 14 day (interpellation §53) limits fall in the middle category, which is more than one week but less than 42 days. Regarding oral questions, the possibility of a debate on oral questions and spontaneous questions strengthens the opposition's position. The Faroese case meets all of these conditions. However, in the case of spontaneous questions, there are time limits for each question (10 minutes). Garritzman (2017) also stresses the importance of the institution referred to as "parliamentary question time" (PQT), where the prime minister (or cabinet) must face the opposition's questions in an inquisition-like trial. In the Faroese case, the regular spontaneous question is the closest to this type, but the set-up is not particularly trial-like. Nevertheless, the institution adheres to the criteria of how often PQT takes place and how many speeches are held per hour.

In addition to the listed opportunities for the opposition related to the committee system and parliamentary questions, the institutional settings for

²³ Garritzman (2017) refers to (Strøm 1998) on this.

investigative committees and Vote of No Confidence to some extent support the opposition's opportunity to engage. For investigative committees, only one MP is required to propose a committee. In addition, there is a minority protection rule for the expert committee type, since it only requires 2/5 MPs to settle an investigative committee. For the Vote of No Confidence, the opposition has the opportunity to utilise the instrument, since it only requires one MP to raise a confidence issue.

To sum up, the institutional settings in parliament facilitate opposition control activity in the same way as in other countries. In general, the Løgting is empowered by a broad variety of relatively strong control institutions that offer opportunities for opposition MPs to engage in control of government. In the following sub-section, focus is directed at parliament's administrative resources, activity level and tendencies in the Løgting.

4.3.5. The activity level

The previous sections have demonstrated strong institutional opportunities for MP activity. The question, however, is to what extent MPs make use of these institutional opportunities to conduct parliamentary activity. In addition, another factor is left to consider and that is the degree of administrative resources, which might influence the activity level in parliament. First, this section takes a closer look at parliament's administrative resources, and second, presents some behavioral records in order to give an impression of the general level of activity in the Løgting.

Overviews of the total number of parliamentary staff in the time-period from 2000-2015 reveal that the number is rather constant. The total number of fulltime employment positions ranges between 11 and 13.²⁴ Following from this, the total staff number is about a third in relation to the 33 MPs in the Løgting. In other words, the administrative resources in relation to the number of parliamentary staff figure around the value of 0.3. In a comparative perspective, this seems to be a low number, since the numbers of parliamentary staff per MP in other Nordic countries are considerably higher. In Denmark, the parliamentary administrative resources for 2017 were 2.2 for each MP²⁵ and in Iceland 1.7 for each MP.²⁶

²⁴ Information source: the annual budget legislation for 2004-2015 (information on 2000-2003 included).

²⁵ Information source: Administration in Folketinget, e-mail July 4 2018. In addition, the Folketing parliamentary groups had 1.5 employee for each MP.

²⁶ Information source: Administration in Althingi, e-mail July 4 2018. In addition, the political parties employed six full time positions.

Another way to measure the administrative resources is in relation to the committees. Garritzmann's (2017) investigation reveals values between 0.03 and 0.43 staff per committee member. In the Faroese case, three professional staff and five secretaries assist the seven Faroese committees. However, the same staff offer support related to the Nordic Council and the West Nordic Council.²⁷ Eight staff members across nine committees and councils equals an average of 0.9 staff pr. committee/council. Continuing, if one calculates a 0.9 staff in relation to the committee members of seven in the typical committees and three in the control committee, the values that come out are 0.13 and 0.3. These numbers seem to figure somewhere in the middle compared to the countries in Garritzman's investigation. However, considering the overall staff number in the Faroese case, this means that there are very few resources left to support the individual MP in the Løgting.

Low administrative resources to support the individual MP might influence the level of other activity in parliament. Although as demonstrated, MPs have a broad range of institutions of which to make use, the question is if the limited resources mean that MPs refrain from engaging in costly formal activity.

In spite of the low administrative resources, there is still a broad range of MP activity in parliament. Table 4.2 presents activity records for the previously presented central parliamentary control institutions in the time-period 1998-2016. The records show that activity fluctuates between parliamentary years. For the control committee, investigative committees and Votes of No Confidence, there is no increase in the level of activity over time. For parliamentary questions, the number of questions varies from year to year, but here there is a tendency towards an increase in the activity level over time. To table 4.2, I can add that the figures indicate that a higher degree of activity in one institution relates to higher activity in another, since the correlation test between parliamentary questions and the control committee is strong, and significant on the 0.05 level (the numbers for investigative committees and NC votes are too small for such a test).

²⁷ Information source: head of parliament's administration, e-mail, June 6 2018.

Table 4.2: Activity for the control committee, investigative committee, Votes of No Confidence, and parliamentary question in the time-period 1998-2016^{a)}

	Control committee^{b)} (number of cases)	Investigative committees (number of committees)	Votes of No Confidence (number of votes)	Parliamentary Questions (number of questions)
1998	0	1	0	123
1999	8	0	0	94
2000	3	2	0	117
2001	6	1	0	142
2002	2	0	1	184
2003	0	0	0	153
2004	7	0	1	180
2005	5	0	0	229
2006	4	0	1	214
2007	11	0	1	202
2008	11	0	1	260
2009	12	0	2	387
2010	12	2	0	276
2011	4	0	0	189
2012	1	0	0	238
2013	5	1	2	239
2014	2	1	1	253
2015	1	0	1	140
2016	7	0	1	229

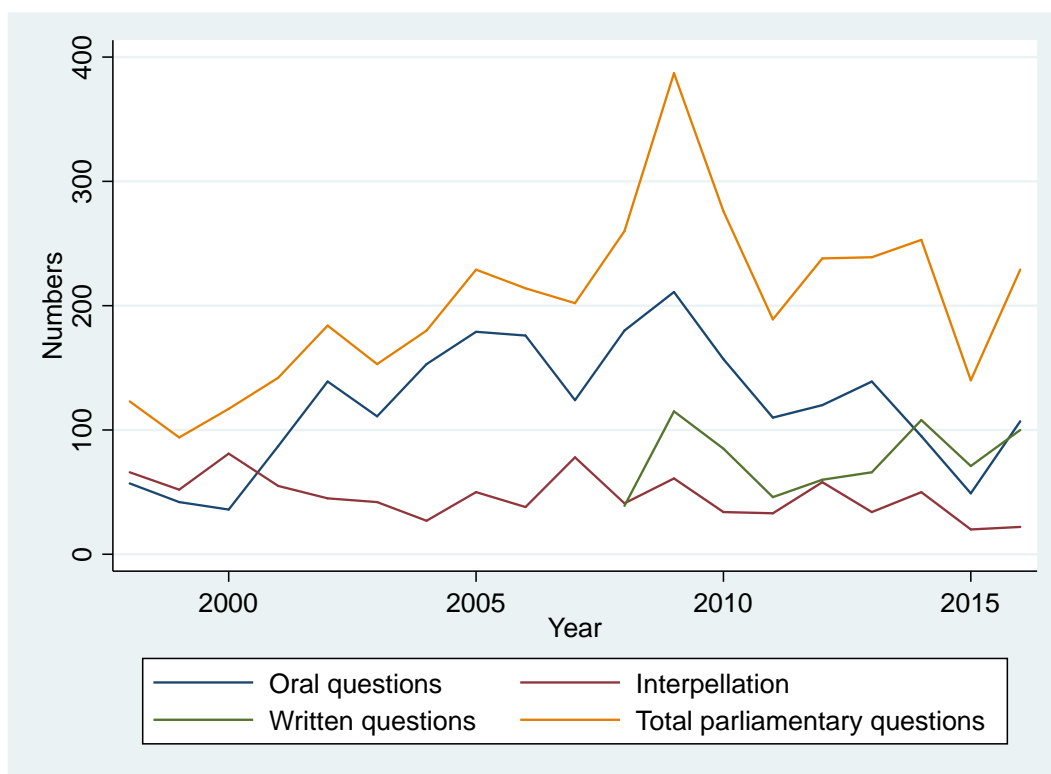
a. For the table, I have used indexes for the different institutions to calculate the activity numbers. For the parliamentary questions, see note to figure 4.2. Source: www.logting.fo.

b. If cases are still active when the parliamentary year changes, the cases are re-registered. Therefore, some of the cases count as more than one case.

* Correlation between control committee and question activity: Pearson's $r = 0.52$ (* $p < 0.05$).

In addition to table 4.2, figure 4.2 illustrates the development in the use of different types of parliamentary questions over time, including the development in the total number of parliamentary questions over time. The figure shows that the new question type adds to the number of questions, and that there seems to be an increase in the oral questions, while the interpellation type is more constant.

Figure 4.2: Illustration of the total use and the use of different parliamentary questions in the time-period 1998-2016^{a)}



a. For the figure, I have used the indexes for parliamentary questions. For the oral questions, I did a manual count of the questions for each year. Source: www.logting.fo. For a rather short period, Kári á Rógvi, a highly active MP, seated in parliament. His office period was from 2008 to 2011 and is a possible explanation for the substantial higher degree of activity around 2009.

For the parliamentary question, the increasing number of questions over time mean that we see the same tendency here in the Faroese parliament – the Løgting – as in other parliaments in Western Europe. Investigations demonstrate a general trend towards questions and non-legislative activities in parliament becoming more frequent (Wiberg 1995: 213, Bergman et al. 2003: 173, Green-Pedersen and Mortensen 2010). However, regarding parliamentary questions, the level of activity in the Faroese case seems to be lower. For instance, reports on the questioning activity in the Norwegian Stortinget and the Danish Folketinget show a higher level of questioning activity.²⁸ This means that on average, the individual MP in the Faroese case asks fewer questions.

²⁸ Information source: Beretninger om Folketingsåret, www.folketinget.dk, visited July 2 2018; Stortingets arbeid – i tall, Stortingsåret 2016-2017 (a historic overview is presented), last updated November 2 2017, www.stortinget.no, visited July 2 2018).

One possible explanation for this is the lower level of administrative resources attached to the individual MP.

4.3.6. Overall on central parliamentary institutions

Overall, this presentation of central parliamentary control institutions in the Faroese case demonstrates relatively strong and typical parliamentary institutions. The parliamentary settings offer a broad range of institutional options for MPs to apply for parliamentary activity.

For parliamentary questions, there are two types of written and two types of oral question types. There are specialized standing committees empowered to control government. In addition, there is a specific control committee as well as several ways for parliament to settle investigative committees. Moreover, there is an ordinary version of the Vote of No Confidence institution, though this involves qualified majority requirements in order to pass. In addition, the presentation has demonstrated opportunities for the opposition to engage in control activity.

Overall, the indicators in the Faroese case point in the direction of a rather strong but also typical parliament measured by institutional design (Sieberer 2011, Garritzman 2017). However, the section also demonstrated a low degree of administrative resources available for the individual MP and a lower level of non-legislative activity in terms of questioning activity. Although, the behavioral records demonstrate a broad range of activity and an increasingly activity tendency over time in terms of parliamentary questions.

4.4. Decentral parliamentary control institutions

The previous sections have investigated general parliamentary settings as well as the central parliamentary control institutions in the Faroese case. This section directs focus towards decentral parliamentary control institutions, the Ombudsman and the audit institution.

Firstly, it is important to stress that the institutions of the Ombudsman and the Audit General institution in the Faroese case function independently of the Danish Ombudsman and Audit General, and are not subjected to control from Danish authorities. The Faroese Audit General and the Ombudsman institutions only address cases related to Home Rule policy areas.

Related to the audit institution, it is important to stress that the Faroe Islands is responsible for the overall financial policy and have their own tax system. Following from this, the Faroe Islands also have their own audit processing system. This is also clear in Christensen's (1998) discussion of the Danish state's audit system. Christensen states the independence of the Faroese auditing system and refers to it as a home rule area over which the Danish

state has no control. The Danish Audit General Institution scrutinizes the Danish state's institutions in the Faroe Islands, the High Commissioner's office, the court, defense etc., in which the Faroese Audit General institution has no role (Christensen 1998:263, 267). In other words, the two Audit General Institutions function independently of each other, even though they still cooperate (1998: 268).

For the Ombudsman institution, the Faroese legal act no. 60 from 2000, on the Ombudsman states that the Ombudsman only attends to cases related to Home Rule areas (§ 4, 1). In addition, the Danish legal act no. 349 from 2013 on the Ombudsman states the typical reservation found in all Danish legislation, that the legal act on the Danish Ombudsman does not apply for the Faroe Islands (§ 33). In other words, the Danish Ombudsman has no power regarding Faroese Home Rule policy areas.

Having stated the independence of the Faroese decentral parliamentary control institutions in relation to Danish authorities, I now turn to the question of the institution's institutional characteristics. The previous section 2.6 presented an ideal-typical description of decentral parliamentary control institutions. The most important characteristics are that the institutions function as 'watchdog' institutions that oversee government. Moreover, in order to be parliamentary control institutions, they must function as a part of the legislature and report to parliament. Although it is important that the institutions relate to parliament, at the same time it is important that their function is independent. In other words, that decentral parliamentary control institutions have professional autonomy.

The two following sub-sections address the specific institutional settings for the Ombudsman and audit institution in the Faroese case.

4.4.1. The Ombudsman

Overall, the Faroese Ombudsman institution is a case of the Danish Ombudsman model (Rógvi and Larsen 2012: 227).

Historically, the Faroese Ombudsman arrived rather late, being established in 2001 (though including cases from 2000). The intention to implement the Danish version of the Ombudsman is clear, and other alternatives were never discussed (Interview, Ombudsman: Sólja í Ólavsstovu, January 18 2018).

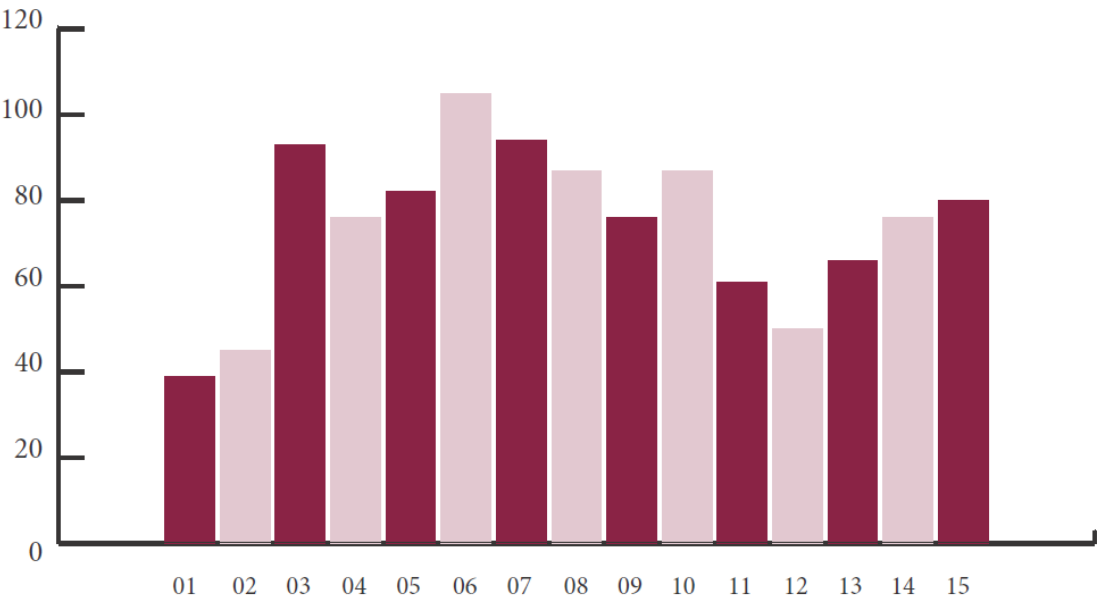
Parliament elects the Ombudsman for a five-year period (§ 1). The legal act states parliament's preference for a legally educated person (§ 2). A legal act safeguards the Ombudsman's professional autonomy. The Ombudsman

employs his/her own staff (§ 16), and the budget is part of parliament’s appropriation, not the governments (§ 17). The institution’s resources range between three and five fulltime positions in the time-period 2001-2015.²⁹

The Ombudsman has a broad mandate to pursue cases related to a broad range of public agencies, from ministries to municipalities and independent complaint boards. The Ombudsman has the same dual roles as the Danish Ombudsman. The Ombudsman addresses complaints from citizens or other third parties and the Ombudsman reports to parliament. In addition, the Ombudsman is empowered to investigate cases on his/her own initiative and to conduct inspections (§ 6). The Ombudsman formulates critique and recommendations directed at agencies.

In order to provide an impression of the level of activity, figure 4.3 presents an overview of the number of complaints during the time-period of 2001 to 2015. In addition to the complaints, the Ombudsman assigns cases by her own initiative and conducts inspections. The numbers for this type of activity were as follows: three cases in 2013, four cases in 2014, and eight cases in 2015 (Ombudsman, annual report 2015: 23).

Figure 4.3: Number of complaints to the Ombudsman from 2001 to 2015



Source: Ombudsman, annual report (2015: 19).

The Ombudsman delivers an annual report to parliament (§ 11), but in cases of serious critique, the Ombudsman is instructed to make a direct report on the case to parliament as well as the PM and ministers (§ 10). In parliament, the report on critical cases is directed to the institution of the Speaker. The

²⁹ Information source: annual appropriation acts.

Ombudsman is also instructed to notify breaches in legislation (§12), and is empowered to offer citizens free legal process. Overall, the Ombudsman institution investigates cases of government mal-administration on behalf of parliament.

The previous chapter stated that although Ombudsman institutions are similar across political systems, their relationship with parliament might still vary. This is also clear in the Faroese case. In the Faroese case, the relationship with parliament is somewhat different. The Ombudsman in the Faroese case has similar reporting obligations related to parliament, but is not related to a parliamentary committee to the same extent, which is a common characteristic elsewhere (Interview, Ombudsman: Sólja í Ólavstovu, January 18 2018). Overall, there are no institutional requirements for parliament regarding responding to and addressing Ombudsman cases. There are no formal requirements for parliament to respond, only to receive reports. Parliament might leave the cases to agencies to deal with; to the courts to decide, or to parliament/MPs who might use the information and engage in parliamentary control activity. In the Faroese case, therefore, regarding the relationship between decentral parliamentary control institutions and parliament, the Ombudsman institution has a low level of institutionalized process.

4.4.2. The Audit General

Overall, the Faroese audit institution consists of a SAI Audit General institution and an audit committee (Public Account Committee, PAC) in parliament, the Løgting. An SAI institution means an external independent audit institution (see section 2.6.2).

The Faroese audit institution is similar to other Nordic audit institutions. Korff (2015) conducts an investigation of the parliamentary auditing systems in the Nordic countries, including the Faroe Islands. For the investigation, she uses an ideal-typical model from Stapenhurst (2014) based on 33 Commonwealth countries (Korff 2015: 123). The overall conclusion is that the Faroe Islands, along with the other Nordic countries, do adhere to the model.

Historically, the audit institution has existed since the Home Rule arrangement from 1948 (Korff 2015: 125). First, the institution operated as a governmental internal audit institution. However, this was also the case in the other Nordic countries, where the audit institutions did not become independent of government until the 1990s, starting operating under the legislatures (Johnsen et al. 2017: 213). Today's Faroese Audit General institution was established according to the new legal act no. 25 from 1999 and is a part of the legislative branch.

In the Faroese case, the Speaker appoints the Audit General after recommendation from the audit committee. There is no time limit for the position of Audit General.³⁰ The legal act safeguards the independence of the audit institution. The act states that the audit general is independent in the auditing work. The audit general hires staff and the budget is included as a part of the legislature's appropriation, and is thus not included in the government's administration budget (§ 5).

The Audit General institution handles cases concerning all public accounts related to the central authorities, leaving out municipality accounts and various funds. The audit institution in the Faroese case conducts all three types of audit assignments mentioned in chapter 2: compliance audit (auditing compliance in relation to defined legal obligations), financial audit (auditing financial statements), and performance audit (review of policy outcome) (Interview, Audit General: Beinta Dam, additional question: June 14 2018). In addition, the audit committee in parliament has the power to direct requests to the Audit General institution for specific investigations.³¹

The Audit General institution's resources consist of nine to ten fulltime positions during the time-period of 2008 to 2015.³² The audit institution has no statistics for the auditing activity, but the Audit General assesses that the weight is on the financial audit assignments (Interview, Audit General: Beinta Dam, additional question: June 14 2018). In the other Nordic countries, the institutions' resources used for financial audit range between 40 to 70 % (Johnsen et al. 2017: 214).

Following an election, parliament selects the audit committee. Parliament proportionally elects four MPs to the audit committee. This means that the audit committee consists of opposition as well as government MPs. The largest party receives the position as audit chair (§ 1, 2), and this is not necessarily a member of the opposition.³³

³⁰ In the other Nordic countries there is a limit, ranging between 4 and 7 years (Korff 2015: 147).

³¹ Only the Danish and Faroese committee has this power. The Nordic countries disagree on this issue, because it risks the audit institution's independence. However, Commonwealth researchers disagree on this, and counter argue that the notion of independence primarily concerns the government and power to audit committee secures political relevance of auditing processes (McGee 2002: 21-22, in Korff 2015: 131).

³² Source: the annual appropriation act.

³³ In the other Nordic countries, the audit committees self-select the audit committee chair. The Stapenhurst (2014) best practice model is that the audit chair is an experienced MP and often an opposition MP (Korff 2015: 135).

In the Faroese case, the Audit general institution reports to the audit committee in parliament and the audit committee informs parliament. The Audit general functions as the secretary for the audit committee in parliament. In all of the other Nordic countries, the audit committee has its own secretary (Korff 2015: 143).

The audit committee informs parliament on the auditing process. Before 2015,³⁴ the deadlines related to the process were as follows. Within six months from the closing of the financial year, the minister reports the account figures to parliament and Audit General (§ 11). Then, the Audit General institution addresses the accounts, hears agencies, and within 10 months reports the result of the auditing process to the audit committee (§ 12, 2). Then, within 14 months, the audit committee informs parliament of the results of the auditing process together with the audit committee's comments by presenting a decision proposal (§ 19). According to parliament's (Løgting) standing orders, a decision proposal receives two floor readings (§ 49), and as other parliamentary matters committee discussion between the parliamentary readings (§ 24, 2). The finance committee addresses the audit report.

Overall, the audit institution in the Faroese Islands is a case of a high level of institutionalization regarding the relationship between decentral parliamentary control institutions and parliament.

This section, including the two sub-sections, has presented the Ombudsman and audit institutions in the Faroese case. It has demonstrated that the Ombudsman and audit institutions in the Faroese case fit the ideal-typical description from section 2.6. The chapter has now completed the presentation of parliamentary institutional settings in the Faroese case. However, it still needs to address the political institutions and factors of importance to the project's political actor unit, the MP. The following two sections direct focus towards the political party system as well as the political actor unit, the MP.

4.5. The political party system

This section briefly explains the political party system in the Faroese case. Following this, a sub-section introduces the controversial policy areas of importance to the project's explosive variable.

Today, the political system consists of seven political parties. The four larger parties are: the Unionist Party, the Social Democratic Party, the People's Party, and the Republican Party. In addition, there are three smaller parties: the Centre Party, the New Autonomist Party and the Progress Party.

³⁴ In Legal Act no. 33 from 2015, the 6 months in § 11 was changed to 5, the 10 months in § 12 was changed to 8, and the 14 months in § 19 changed to 11.

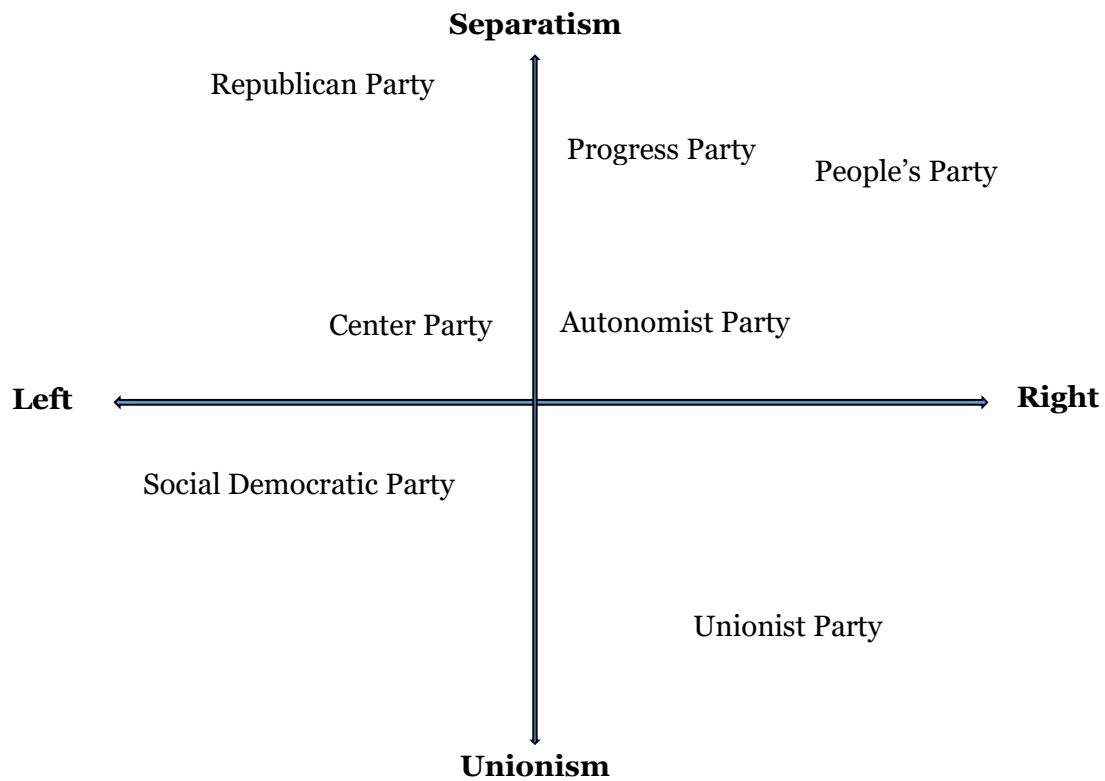
Today, the Faroese population elects 33 political representatives to the Faroese parliament, Løgtingið, in a PR one constituency system. However, before 2008, the election system had seven constituencies (Jákupsstovu 2013: 321 and 333). There are certain historically important events related to election systems. These are: the implementation of secret elections and proportional election system in 1906; all men and women over 25 receiving the right to vote in 1918 (Jákupsstovu 2006: 51), the use of an open list system since 1966.

Despite the homogenous population in terms of religion and ethnicity, several cleavages and political polarizations characterize the political landscape in the Faroe Islands. This is visible in the formation of parties and political conflicts (Jákupsstovu 2013). The dominant cleavages (Lipset and Rokkan 1967) are the divide on the relationship with Denmark and the classic left-right issue that constitutes the two dimensions in the political party system (Mørkøre 1991)

The first two political parties, the Unionist Party and the Autonomist party established in 1906-09, were founded based on conflicts concerning the relationship with Denmark. A foundation of a more or less unionist dimension was thereby established. The left – right dimension became active in the political system when the Social Democratic Party was established in 1925, and was strengthened when the Business Party entered the political arena in 1935 (Reformed into the People’s Party in 1939). In 1948, the Republican Party was established following the referenda in 1946 and Home Rule arrangement in 1948. Separatism thereby became a clear political goal. The Republican Party also represents interests on the left side of the left-right dimension (Sølvará 2002: ch. 4; Thorsteinsson 2014: ch. 14). Historically, the party system links to class conflict, but the two-dimensional space means that the Nordic “five-party” ideal type description (e.g. Demker and Svåsand 2005) does not quite fit the Faroese case (Mørkøre 1991).

The four larger parties constitute the bulwark of the party system by representing the four corners in the two-dimensional party system. For the smaller parties, all seem to cluster in the center of the left-right scale and in varying degrees towards separatism on the Unionism-Separatism dimension. For an illustration of the Faroese party system, see figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4: Illustration of the Faroese party system



Sources: Mørkøre (1991); Hoff and West (2008: 314).

Overall, this presentation has demonstrated a political system consisting of four larger and three smaller parties. However, the question is if these numbers reflect the effective number of parties, or if this number is lower. For this question, I use the election results in the time-period 1998-2015 and calculate the numbers of effective parties. For the results, see table 4.3. The results show a rather high number of effective parties of around 4.5 to 6.5.

Although, the presentation of the party system demonstrated two political dimensions – the left-right and the unionism-separatism dimensions – there are other cleavages to consider. Conflicts on moral issues (van Kersbergen and Lindberg 2015), as well as between center and periphery that characterize the political system are often argued to be more influential than the classical left-right dimension.

Overall, there are several conflictual dimensions in Faroese politics. The following sub-section addresses the question of controversial policy areas in a Faroese context related to the explosive variable from chapter 3.

Table 4.3: Effective numbers of party following the elections in 1998, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2011 and 2015*

Parties	1998		2002		2004		2008		2011		2015	
	Seat	Square	Seat	Square	Seat	Square	Seat	Square	Seat	Square	Seat	Square
A	8	0.06	7	0.05	7	0.05	7	0.04	8	0.06	6	0.03
B	6	0.04	8	0.06	7	0.05	7	0.04	8	0.06	6	0.03
C	7	0.05	7	0.05	7	0.05	6	0.03	6	0.03	7	0.04
D	2	0.004	1	0.001	1	0.001	2	0.004	1	0.001	2	0.004
E	8	0.06	8	0.06	8	0.06	8	0.06	6	0.03	7	0.04
F									2	0.004	2	0.004
H	1	0.001	1	0.001	2	0.004	3	0.01	2	0.004	2	0.004
Ind. candidate											1	0.001
Sum	32	0.215	32	0.222	32	0.215	33	0.184	33	0.189	33	0.153
Effective number of parties	1/0.215 =4.7	1/0.222 =4.5	1/0.215 =4.7	1/0.184 =5.4	1/0.189 =5.3	1/0.153 =6.5						

* The parties' seats are used to calculate the party-seat proportion and the party-seat square. The number of effective parties are calculated by dividing one by the sum of the party-seat squares (Laakso and Taagepera 1979, in Rasch 2011: 55).

4.5.1. Controversial policy areas in the Faroese case

In the previous section 3.5.2, I argued that as ‘partisans’, MPs consider if an institutional Fire Alarm case has the potential to damage government before they engage in Firefighting. I argued that MPs consider the explosive potential of the institutional Fire Alarm case.

One of the explosive criteria relates to policy areas. If the case relates to a controversial policy area, the case is more explosive. This means that if the case relates to a policy area defined by a high degree of ideological conflict between political parties. I define the understanding of controversial as context-related, important policy issues.³⁵

The previous section presented the dominant cleavages in the Faroese party system. The conflicts concerning the relationship with Denmark and conflicts on moral issues do not require additional clarification. If a case relates to the relationship with Denmark or to moral issues, the case is controversial in terms of policy. Regarding conflicts concerning left-right and center-periphery dimensions, these dimensions often link together. Related to this, controversial policy issues relate to center-periphery resource allocation.

In the Faroese case, the dominant industry and export is fishing and aqua culture industry. In addition, the Faroe Islands have a large public sector and a developed welfare system. The standard of welfare services and the education level are comparable to a Nordic standard. Moreover, the GDP per citizen is relatively high.

Regarding public welfare, most political parties tend to argue in favor of welfare services. Nevertheless, a controversial issue is a center-periphery disagreement related to hospitals. Local hospitals are important for feelings of safety, but also for jobs outside of the capital area. Regarding industry resource allocations and jobs outside of the capital area in the private sphere, the controversial policy issue is fishery policy. Although, aqua culture is an important industry, the level of controversy is not comparable to the fishing industry. In addition, the question of infrastructure, public transport, infrastructure investment and location of different public institutions are vital for the areas outside of the capital area. In addition, a newer controversial policy

³⁵ Wlezien (2005) distinguishes between importance and salience related to salient issues. An issue might be important, without being a problem according to citizens. In addition, Wlezien argues that an issue might be important in relation to conditions or in terms of policy. An issue might be an important policy issue, or an issue might be an important problem (conditions). Wlezien also argues that the importance of issues changes over time (2005: 575).

issue is public investments related to providing housing opportunities for Faroese citizens, which also has a central-decentral dimension.³⁶

For the other explosive criteria concerning high-ranking positions and third parties, these criteria are not context related to the same extent. Regarding third parties, the Faroese case has a very broad range of organised interests in the same way as other countries. There are a broad range of unions, industry organised interests, health and handicap organisations etc. These organised interests vary regarding member numbers and some are more visible in the public arena than others. Regarding the reference to high-ranking public office positions, the prior presentation of government and administrative system (section 4.1.2) offers an introduction. Ministers have a central position, considering the minister responsibility system, and the same applies for department managers. In addition, I also consider leading positions in larger public institutions under the jurisdiction of government departments as high-ranking positions. For the overall operationalization of the explosive variable, see section 5.6.3.

This section has focused on the party system. Related to this, this sub-section presented the understanding of controversial policy areas in a Faroese context. From this, the chapter now directs its attention to the project's actor unit, MPs.

4.6. The actors: MPs

The previous section presented the overall political party system and election system. This section focuses on the project's political actor unit – the MPs – in relation to the Faroese case.

Chapter 3 presented the project's main argument that MPs adhere to a great extent to the role of 'Partisan', since political parties control most of MPs' goals. The previous sections have demonstrated that the Faroese case has strong institutional conditions that enable MP activity. In other words, a 'non-party' mode is present which facilitates parliamentary control activity. However, the question remaining is to what extent political parties control MPs

³⁶ Investigation of important and salient policy issues are lacking in a Faroese context. In order to validate the listed controversial policy areas, I raised this question in the interview with the former audit committee chair (Interview, Reimund Langgard, November 22 2017). The interviewee agreed on the selection of controversial policy issues, but stated that the controversial condition might vary from one decentral region to another. For instance, regarding hospitals, the degree of controversy is much higher in the Northern region than in the Southern region.

‘goals in the Faroese case. Therefore, this section investigates institutional factors of importance to political parties in order to clarify the status of political parties in relation to the individual MP in the Faroese case.

In the Faroe Islands, an often-heard claim is that the Faroese political parties are weak. This is, however, a rather general claim, and this section distinguishes between different arenas. The following sub-sections present the institutional settings related to the nomination and election of party candidates, the political parties’ control of office positions, and the control of the policy process. The question of weak or strong political parties might vary across these different dimensions or arenas.

4.6.1. Nomination and election of party candidates

The election system in particular influences the parties’ role in the election of party candidates. The election system might also influence the re-nomination process. The question is to what extent political parties control the nomination and election process, since, as previously stated, these are central goals for MPs.

As previously described, the Faroese election system is a PR one constituency multiparty system. Overall, the election system supports political parties over individual candidates, because of the minimum threshold of 1/33 of the votes, which limits an individual candidate’s election prospects. However, at the same time, the election system supports individual party candidates, because the open list system limits political parties’ control over which of the parties’ candidates get elected.

The nomination procedures relate to the election system before 2008, which had seven constituencies. The old system left significant power in the hands of the local party organizations in the nomination process. Although the system has been changed, the local party organizations still seem to be influential in the nomination as well as re-nomination process. It is often heard, however, that the local party organizations have lost considerable influence because of the change in the election system. However, as previously explained, the center-periphery dimension in Faroese politics is strong, and this indicates that local party organizations are influential when it comes to nomination processes. This means, that the parties are rather weak in the re-nomination process (measured as central control).

However, political parties have other measures available to them in order to modify this weak position. Political parties control the election campaigns to a great extent, for example regarding access to main media events. In addition, individual candidates can make use of campaigns on social media, which are difficult for political parties to control.

Overall, political parties control the award of public funds. The public financial support favors political parties. One support system is for functioning of political parties. Another support system is directed at political party activity in parliament.³⁷ The systems provide one part of the support shared equally between parties, while another part relates to the number of representatives in parliament (or votes at the latest election). Both systems favor political parties, leaving the party in control of the amount available for ‘each candidate’. Yet, both systems provide some support for independent candidates, for instance in case of a candidate’s exit from the party during the parliamentary session. Both support systems make representation in the Løgting a condition to the support. This means that the support system is incremental, favoring established parties. In addition, political parties/individual candidates receive subsidies from Denmark if they stand for the Folketing election, though only if they receive at least 1000 votes.³⁸ The Folketing support is allocated to parties that stand for election, not for the two parties that get a candidate elected only. In 2016, a new support system was implemented that supports the individual MP. Nonetheless, the annual amount is limited to 30,000 DKK, and is not nearly enough to employ staff. Although the parties control most of the public funding, it is important to note that there is no regulation preventing or limiting individual candidates or parties from benefiting from private funding.

Overall, the election system favors political parties as institutions standing for elections. At the same time, the system (and traditions) favor individual party candidates or decentral party organizations’ candidate preferences. Therefore, political parties seem rather weak when it comes to nomination and election processes. The parties control campaigns and funding, which at least to some extent strengthens the central party line in relation to party candidates. However, once elected, apart from getting re-elected, MPs also take interest in policy and office positions (Strøm 2012).

4.6.2. MPs and office

Regarding office positions, there are party office as well as legislative positions to consider. MPs might aspire for at position in the government, a central position in the party organization or an attractive position in the legislature.

³⁷ Regulation: stuðul til flokkarnar á tingi og um lön til floksskrivarar, Speaker meeting January 25 2000, latest changes Februar 18 2016.

³⁸ Regulations: Løgtingslóg nr. 31 frá 6. mars 2003 um fíggjarligan stuðul til politisk virksemsi og politiska upplýsing; Partistøtteloven, jf. Lovbekendtgørelse nr. 1291 af 8. December 2006 med senere ændringer.

MPs aim for a position in government. Government positions offer several benefits for MPs. One advantage is that in parliamentary systems, the respective minister typically represents the party's as well as the government's policy related to the minister's portfolio area. Typically, ministers draft and present policy proposals in parliament. Another type of advantage are the more private 'office' benefits (Strøm 1990a). In the Faroese case, these benefits include a more favorable salary and pension arrangement compared to an MP, but no minister vehicle. Although the Prime Minister formally appoints ministers, in reality the minister positions are completely controlled by the respective political party. Today, the dominant pattern is that parties allocate minister positions to party representatives seated in parliament.

In the legislature, MPs aim in particular for certain committee seats, the position as Speaker, and the position as chair for the parties' parliamentary group. In reality, political parties control all these seats. The Speaker is elected by parliament, but typically, this position is part of the government negotiation following an election. The committee seats, as previously explained, are awarded proportionally following an election. The political parties control the allocation of committee seats to the MPs. Regarding committee seats, the committees high on MPs' preference lists are the finance committee and the industry committee (on the MPs committee preferences: Interview, former audit chair: Reimund Langgaard, November 22 2017).

Overall, political parties exert a high degree of control over MPs' goals for office, both in terms of legislative as well as party office positions.

4.6.3. MPs and policy

MPs not only seek election and office positions. MPs also have policy goals. The previous section has demonstrated that political parties in the Faroese case exert a high degree of control over MPs' goals for office, both in terms of legislative as well as party office positions. The question related to MPs as policy seekers is whether parties control the policy process.

Typically, in parliamentary systems, political parties control the policy process, which is anchored in parliament (Strøm 2000, Muller 2000). However, this requires that parties are coherent. Research demonstrates that opposition parties as well as governing parties are highly cohesive (Carey 2009, Depauw and Martin 2009). It is not possible, however, to present results from research in political party coherence in the Faroese case. Therefore, this section focuses on institutional structure. However, the overall impression is that MPs follow the party line when it comes to voting in parliament.

The Faroe Islands is a case of coalition government. This means that both government and the opposition consist of more than one political party. This

is a typical government variant, since 70 % of governments formed in Europe between 1945 and 2010 have consisted of more than one party (Gallagher, Lava and Mair 2011: 434). In addition, the Faroe Islands is a case of majority government (the following question addresses the question of majority governments).

Recalling the party system (see section 4.5), the two-dimensional system means that the four main corner parties in particular have to make relatively large policy compromises when engaging in coalition governments, at least on one of the dimensions. For an assessment of a main compromise dimension in government constellations since 1950, see table 4.4.³⁹ The overview shows, that parties enter coalitions that require compromises on the left-right as well as the unionism-separatism dimension.⁴⁰

Table 4.4: Overview of main compromise axe in government time-periods, ordered by decades since 1950

Government time-period	Main compromise axe
1950s	Mixed: Left-right Unionism-Separatism
1960s	Left-right
1970s	Mixed: Left-right Unionism-Separatism
1980s	Unionism-Separatism
1990s	Mixed: Unionism-Separatism Left-right
2000s	Mixed: Unionism-Separatism Left-right
2010s	Unionism-Separatism

³⁹ I have made the assessment of a main compromise axe for each decade based on the list of Faroese Governments since 1948. Source: Prime Minister's Office, www.lms.fo, Faroese Governments since 1948, visited June 4 2018.

⁴⁰ A coalition between the Unionist Party and the Republican Party is, however, a rare event. There is only one example, the government coalition from 1989-91.

Following from this, a government in the Faroese political system potentially has relatively large policy alignment challenges. Moreover, this situation could put pressure on political parties that risk a higher degree of preference division within parties. In other words, in government, one might expect relatively weak parties.

However, the political system has implemented some institutional instruments to handle such policy alignment challenges. One instrument is to work out coalition agreements before allocating office positions between parties (*samgonguskjal*). Another instrument is to use parliamentary committee chairs to mirror ministers. It is rather typical that the committee chair comes from a different party than the minister's party. In addition, there is a strong tradition for holding so-called coalition meetings (*samgongufund*) during the coalition period, where all government MPs are included.

Overall, government parties in the Faroese case are potentially challenged in terms of policy alignment. However, the political system has developed some institutional instruments to avoid challenges in terms of lack of policy alignment. It is in the interest of the parties in government to secure government policy, but also to avoid a situation in which a lack of policy alignment leads to intra-party challenges.

In case of such intra-party challenges related to a lack of policy alignment among government parties, one might expect a preference divide between party representatives in government, the ministers, and the party representatives in the legislature; the MPs. In other words, in the case of a lack of policy alignment related to a portfolio area, MPs from coalition parties will have incentives to engage in parliamentary control. The implication of higher government alignment challenges is higher coalition MP engagement in control activity (Strøm et al. 2010).

Opposition parties have limited options to influence policy, considering the tradition of majority governments. Therefore, the opposition's role is more to signal policy alternatives to government and to engage in control of government. Opposition parties are not challenged in the same way as government parties on the two dimensional policy space. However, opposition parties might find themselves in the situation that on one of the policy dimensions, they share more preferences with government parties than with the other opposition party. Still, all opposition parties have the same preference regarding inflicting cost on government and damaging government reputation.

Overall, although political parties are potentially more challenged regarding policy alignment, the parties still control the policy process. In addition, as previously mentioned the subsidies for parliamentary work and for political activity favor political parties over individual candidates.

To sum up, the indicators of party strength reveal a mix of weak and strong factors. Political parties are weak when it comes to nomination and election, but strong regarding control of party and legislative office positions. In addition, political parties control the policy process. Therefore, the Faroese case does not change the project's theoretical expectation that MPs will adhere to a great extent to the role of 'Partisan' when they engage in Firefighting.

4.7. Majority constellation system

The Faroe Islands coalition government system is a case of a majority government constellation.

Although the option for minority government is present, considering the presence of the negative formation rule (Bergman 1993: 57), the Faroese case is a dominant case of majority government. However, the rule that facilitates minority governments was implemented as late as 1995 (see section 4.2). This means that the Faroese tradition for government constellations is rather typical, since around two-thirds of all cabinets control a majority of the seats in parliament (Strøm 1990, Rasch 2011, Rasch 2014: 469). This leaves one-third of the cabinets as minority government systems. However, in a Nordic context, the minority version is more common compared to other parts of the world.

Rasch (2011) draws attention to the frequent occurrence of minority governments in the Nordic region, since Denmark, Sweden and Norway have had minority governments for more than two-thirds of the post-world war period, Denmark for more than four-fifths (Rasch 2011: 41). Yet, this pattern does not apply for other Nordic countries such as Finland and Iceland. Rasch (2011) states that the institutional conditions for these countries are similar, with both Finland and Iceland having strong parliaments. He dismisses, therefore, that competitive elections and institutional opportunities for parliamentary oppositions to achieve influence (Strøm 1990:90) explain this difference, since Iceland and Finland also have influential parliaments.

The Faroese case supports this, considering that the negative formation rule as well as strong opportunities for the opposition co-exist with a majority government tradition. Rasch (2011) conducts an investigation of effective number of parties and by this demonstrates a difference across the Nordic countries' party systems. Minority government systems typically have a lower number of effective parties. However, related to this, Rasch stresses that what can explain the difference in majority or minority constellation systems in the Nordic region is the existence of one large centrally located party: "Minority governments are more likely in systems with one centrally-located, relatively large party" (2011: 57).

The previous presentation of the Faroese party system shows that the bulwark of the party system is four approximately equal sized parties, which makes it clear that the Faroese case lacks the condition of one centrally located, relatively large party. In addition, the calculation of effective parties showed a relatively high number of effective parties. For the calculation of effective parties, see table 4.3.

However, what is more important for this project is to what extent the difference between majority and minority constellations affects parliamentary control. The literature offers no clear answer to this question. There is a clear assumption that minority governments strengthen parliamentary control. Saalfeld (2000) argues that minority governments strengthen the capacity and incentives to engage in on-going oversight, referring to indications from research on the Danish and Norwegian parliaments (Damgaard 1990, Maor 1999, Strøm 1990: 235).

Damgaard (2003: 125, 128) argues that minority governments are weaker in relation to parliament. In addition, Damgaard (1990, Togeby et al. 2004: ch. 7) demonstrates a higher degree of parliamentary control activity. As previously described, however, this is a general trend. However, research shows that the Scandinavian countries have strong parliaments (Sieberer 2011, Garritzmann 2017). In other words, one could question if it really is the minority government situation or the strength of parliamentary institutions that affects parliamentary control. Still, institutions enable activity, but the actor's incentives decide the extent to which actors use them.

Maor (1999) argues that opposition impotence under minority governments contributes to development of oversight institutions. Maor stresses the situation in which there is no realistic short-term alternative to the incumbent minority government (1999: 371-372). However, in response to this, one could ask how this is different to an opposition facing a strong majority government. However, in addition to these references, in relation to legislative effects on the budget, Wehner (2014) argues that under conditions of minority government or divided government, scrutiny of the executive is likely to be more intense. In other words, there are some indications that minority governments strengthen parliamentary control. However, it is less clear if a minority government strengthens the control process, makes the process more intense, affects the outcome or the result of the process, or if it enhances parliamentary control and creates new control measures. Therefore, I conclude that we still know very little about how and to what extent government constellation systems affect parliamentary control. Therefore, although a so-called impotent opposition might be louder in some sense, I do not expect the difference between a majority and a minority system to play a major role in parliamentary control processes.

4.8. Conclusion and chapter summary

This chapter has presented the project's country case, the Faroe Islands. First, it offered some general descriptions of the Faroese entity and historical traditions regarding parliament, government and the media. Then, it focused on the institutional parliamentary settings, including the central and decentral parliamentary control institutions as well as the conditions for the political actors – the MPs – in the Faroese case. The purpose of this was to assess to what extent the Faroese country case fits the theoretical descriptions provided in chapters 2 and 3. Following from this, this chapter has offered a description of the type of case in relation to the project's investigation.

Overall, this chapter's investigation and analysis show that the Faroese case fits descriptions of typical parliamentary systems and parliamentary control institutions rather well. MPs have a variety of institutional options available to them for the purpose of conducting control of government via Fire-fighting. Related to this, the investigation demonstrates opportunities for opposition MPs who have more incentives to engage in parliamentary control, in order to engage in control of government actions. However, this chapter has also demonstrated that there is a comparatively low level of administrative support available for the individual MP and a lower level of non-legislative activity in terms of parliamentary questioning. Yet, the behavioral records demonstrate the same increasing tendency in questioning activity over time as reported for other countries.

The chapter's investigation of decentral parliamentary control institutions, the Ombudsman and the audit institution corresponds well to the ideal-typical descriptions in chapter 2. The Faroese Ombudsman is also an example of the typical Danish model, and the Faroese audit institution corresponds well to the SAI legislative audit institution type. An Audit General heads the audit institution and there is a clearly defined relationship with an audit committee in parliament (PAC). In other words, in the Faroese case, the Ombudsman and audit institutions are typical cases of decentral parliamentary control institutions.

In addition, this chapter has explained that the relationship between the audit institution and parliament is much more institutionalized than to the Ombudsman institution. In other words, in the Faroese case, the audit institution offers additional institutional support to MPs compared to the Ombudsman institution.

Regarding the investigation of political parties and MPs, the election system supports the institution of political parties, but at the same time favors individual party MPs with an open list system. In addition, political parties seem challenged in the nomination process, considering the former tradition

of a decentral nomination process. However, political parties exert a high degree of control over MPs' goals for office positions, both in terms of legislative as well as party positions. Political parties also control the policy process. However, the two-dimensional policy space in the Faroese party system leaves room for policy alignment challenges. For this, the parties have developed institutional instruments to handle this situation in order to avoid intra-party challenges. Nevertheless, overall, the institutional settings of importance to the role of political parties also resemble rather typical institutions. Following from this, the expectation is that MPs in the Faroese case also tend to adhere to the role of 'Partisan' when engaging in Firefighting.

The chapter ended by stating that the Faroese government system is an example of a majority government constellation system. Following this, this last section addressed the question of a possible effect of government constellation systems on parliamentary control. There exists an assumption that minority systems strengthen parliamentary control, but this chapter argues that there is limited research supporting this claim. Instead, I argue that the difference may well not influence the control process as such.

Overall, this chapter has argued that the Faroe Islands is an independent political system despite the lack of formal state status and has the overall political institutional infrastructure (Hoff and West 2008) to facilitate Firefighting. Importantly, it has demonstrated that the Faroese case fits the ideal-typical description of a parliamentary system as described in chapter 2 and 3. This means that the Faroese case is a typical case in relation to this project's investigation.

Chapter 5: Overall research design and design of the quantitative investigation

The previous chapter 2 and 3 have presented the theoretical framework for the project's investigation of MP Firefighting, and the previous chapter 4 has presented the project's country case, the Faroe Islands. The investigation of the Faroe Islands country case demonstrated that the case specific characteristics meet the requirements for a case which is suited to the project's investigation of MP Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarms raised by decentral parliamentary control institutions, the Ombudsman and the audit institution.

This chapter will develop the project's research design. The project's purpose is to investigate and answer the project's research question: "Under what circumstances do MPs engage in Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarms from decentral parliamentary control institutions?" The overall approach is deductive, considering the previous formulations of theoretical expectations; the project hypothesis in chapter 3. This chapter develops a research design in order to test these theoretical expectations. This means that the project applies a theory-centric research design.

The research design consists of a comparative institution case study. The design applies two different cases of decentral parliamentary control institutions: the Ombudsman and the audit institution. In addition, the project multiplies the 'observable implications of theory' by selecting specific institutional Fire Alarm cases representing the two control institutions.

The analytical strategy is to use quantitative as well as qualitative methods in order to answer the research question. Thus, the project uses a mixed method approach. The project initiates the investigation by using quantitative methods to reveal patterns of MP Firefighting. The project uses quantitative investigations to document to what extent Firefighting increases or attenuates in accordance with the theoretical expectations. Then, the project continues by selecting specific institutional Fire Alarm cases for within-case investigations using the process tracing method. This way, the project seeks to demonstrate mechanistic evidence of the mechanism playing out, linking the theorized conditions to the Firefighting itself. In addition, the project exploits the difference in the degree of institutionalized processes between the Ombudsman and the audit institution in the Faroese case and investigates effects of institutionalization on MP Firefighting. Overall, the project uses a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods to document general patterns as well as the essential mechanisms of MP Firefighting.

This chapter consists of two main elements. First, it clarifies and discusses the selection of cases, including the data sources and data selection. Second, it lays out the quantitative research design by discussing the variable operationalization and measurement. Chapter 7 presents the details of the qualitative design.

The chapter will proceed as follows: First, it presents the arguments for at theory-centric research design and the selection of institutional Fire Alarm cases, then it presents the data collections, and finally presents the design of the quantitative investigation followed by the operationalization of the project's variables.

5.1. A theory centric research design

The project uses a theory centric research design. The project builds on a theoretical model and theoretical expectations about conditions expected to trigger MP Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarms from decentral parliamentary control institutions.

The project aims at explaining the phenomenon of MP Firefighting. This means that the project addresses one dimension of a larger theme of MP behavior, though specifically addressing the question of MP behavior in terms of parliamentary control activity. In addition, the project addresses the relationship between institutions that enable activity, and actors' incentives to make use of institutions for activity.

The advantage of using a theory-centric approach is that I thereby take advantage of prior cumulated research on institutions and actors. I build on this knowledge, but create a new theoretical framework in order to investigate the interplay between decentral control activity outside of parliament (institutional Fire Alarms) and central, reactive parliamentary activity within parliament (MP Firefighting).

From the theory-centric research design follows a deductive approach. The aim is to support or dismiss theoretically informed hypotheses. Measurement and data selection is guided by theoretically pre-defined key concepts. A deductive approach, however, does not exclude that information in the data have contributed to a better development of the theoretical framework in order to understand the real life phenomena of Firefighting. Miles, Huberman and Saldana argue for a dialectical rather than mutually exclusive relationship between inductive and deductive research strategies, however, identify the use of theory as start or end result as the defining criteria: "Nevertheless, the deductive researcher *starts* with a preliminary causal network, and the inductive researcher *ends up* with one" (2014: 238). It is rather clear that this project *starts* with a preliminary causal network.

This section has stated the project's overall deductive approach. The following section addresses the question of case selection; the selection of institutional Fire Alarm cases.

5.2. The selection of institutional Fire Alarm cases

This section addresses the overall guidelines for the selection of institutional Fire Alarm cases. The following sub-section presents the project's selection of institutional Fire Alarm cases, representing the two decentral parliamentary control institutions, the Ombudsman and the audit institutions.

Overall, the project uses historical cases. For the selection of historical institutional Fire Alarm cases, I have two overall methodological challenges to consider. One typical challenge in small-n studies is the challenge of "many variables, small number of cases" (Lijphart 1971:685). Considering that in my theoretical model, I have five hypotheses, and only a limited number of available decentral parliamentary control institutions, this could be a problem. However, I intend to select institutional Fire Alarm cases representing the decentral control institutions. I thereby multiply the "observable implications of theory" (Pollack 2002). I select several cases, aiming for a medium-n study in order to solve this challenge.

The second general challenge of relevance for this project's investigation of conditions causing Firefighting is the challenge of "omitted variables" (Przeworski and Teune 1970). The question is how I minimize the extent to which there are case or context specific factors that affect the Firefighting outcome not accounted for in my theoretical expectations.

I adhere to this challenge in two ways. First, I select individual cases – specific institutional Fire Alarm cases – instead of investigating the institutions as a whole. I select specific institutional Fire Alarm cases for a medium-n study, each case providing observations for the dependent as well as the moderating variables. Selecting specific institutional Fire Alarm cases makes it possible to study the theoretically hypothesized relationship at the level where the activity takes place. The understanding of this case level is in line with Beach and Pedersen's (2016:5) understanding of a unit or "an instance" in which a given causal relationship plays out, linking a cause with an outcome. In other words, the selection of specific institutional Fire Alarm cases adheres to Przeworski and Teune's advice to select units for observation at the lowest level (1970: 36). However, they refer to the individual actor level, while I here refer to single case observations instead of studying the Ombudsman and the Audit general institution as a whole.

Second, I also adhere to the challenge of "omitted variables" by ensuring a high degree of case homogeneity in the cases that I intend to compare. I secure

case homogeneity by only focusing on institutional Fire Alarm cases from decentral parliamentary control institutions and by keeping institutional Fire Alarm cases from different institutions separate. A less homogenous institutional Fire Alarm case population would be to select a mix of different Fire Alarm cases, from decentral accountability institutions together with Fire Alarm cases from various Fire Alarm-raising third. I select a homogenous population in order to avoid or minimize subgroup influence with regard to the dependent variable (Przeworski and Teune 1970).

The following sub-section continues to focus on the selection of institutional Fire Alarm cases.

5.2.1. The selection of “loud” institutional Fire Alarm cases

This sub-section presents the selection of “loud” institutional Fire Alarm cases for the project’s investigation of MP Firefighting.

I have previously argued for selecting specific institutional Fire Alarms cases such that the unit of analysis is at the level at which a given causal relationship plays out, thereby linking a cause with an outcome. I have also previously argued that I need several cases in order to avoid the challenge of “many variables, small number of cases” (Lijphart 1971:685). Following from this, I have argued to apply a medium-n design. Although, I still need to address the question of which institutional Fire Alarm cases to select.

A random sampling strategy is one way to select the Ombudsman and audit institutional Fire Alarm cases. This strategy might, however, be unfortunate considering statements from scholars of a limited interest among MPs for control institution reporting or available information in general (Saalfeld 2000: 371-372, Brandsma and Schillemans (2012: 972, Brandsma 2010). Following this, the risk is that a low number of MP activity cases will be present among the selected cases. Since the purpose is to investigate when MPs react and to distil patterns of such reactions, too few MP activity cases would be a disadvantage.

Instead, I select cases, where the Ombudsman and the Audit General are particularly critical of agency mal-administration. I expect that “loud” institutional Fire Alarms of mal-administration are more likely to lead to MP Firefighting. I assume that the label “critical” increases the number of MP activity cases among the selected cases (probabilistic assumption). There are no indications that such cases relate to any pre-defined patterns, such as certain institutions or policy areas, however, I will have to control for this possibility. Thus, for the project’s investigation, I select the institutional Fire Alarms cases in which the Ombudsman and the Audit General are particularly critical of agency mal-administration.

For the Ombudsman institution in the Faroe Islands, the legislation instructs the Ombudsman to report directly to parliament in case of serious critique (§10,1 cases).⁴¹ In addition, the Ombudsman reports on cases in the annual report to parliament. This means that there is a reference of cases, which are more serious than other cases. It is the Ombudsman, who assesses when a case is critical (Interview, Ombudsman: Sólja í Ólavstovu, January 18 2018). This means that the classification of critical Ombudsman cases is independent of the political system. Considering the reporting requirements for the § 10 cases, these cases have an extra institutional dimension, which makes MP Firefighting more likely. This kind of specific institutional reporting is a clear signal to parliament. In addition, the Ombudsman writes newsletters on these § 10 cases.

For the audit institution in the Faroe Islands, the Audit General institution investigates cases, hears agencies and gives annual reports to the audit committee in parliament. Then, the audit committee ranks the cases by allocating comments to specific audit cases, from acknowledging to highly critical comments. From 2013, the ranking is conducted according to a list of ranking grades (note on the Audit Committee's classification of comments and critique, February 18 2013, www.lg.fo). This means that for the audit institution, there are also references to cases ranked as more serious than other cases. In other words, there are also loud audit institutional Fire Alarm cases.

The role of the audit committee in the ranking of the critique leaves the question of if there are factors other than case specific ones that influence the audit committee's ranking of cases, such as partisan interest. The question is if a loud audit institutional Fire Alarm case reflects the degree of government misconduct or some kind of MP partisan incentive. One indication of partisan interests in the ranking of cases is committee divides in the audit committee reports. There are no examples of audit committee divides related to the allocation of critique. In order to secure that the critical audit cases are comparable to critical Ombudsman cases, I conducted interviews with the Audit General as well as a former audit committee chair on this question.

⁴¹ The Faroese Ombudsman is designed after the Danish model where there is an identical reference to critical cases in § 24. However, while the notification in the Faroese case is directed to the speaker's office in the Lagting, the Danish critical cases are reported to the legal committee of the Folketing. The Norwegian and Icelandic Ombudsman legislations have similar, but not as binding instructions concerning critical cases: Norwegian: "... Ombudsmannen *kan gi* Stortinget og vedkommende forvaltningsorgan særskilt melding om han finner det *formålstjenlig*", Icelandic: "Bliver ombudsmanden opmærksom på alvorlige fejl eller forseelser hos en myndighed, *kan han afgive* separat beretning til Altinget eller vedkommende minister om sagen" (emphasis added).

I conducted the interviews with the Audit General on October 6 and November 14 2017. I conducted the interview with the former audit chair on November 22 2017.⁴² The Audit General as well as the former audit chair state that the formulation of critique and ranking of cases rests on the audit reports and no other factors. The former audit chair explains the process as such. First, the audit committee receives the audit report to read, and then they meet again to discuss the formulation of critique. In order to conduct the work properly, five to six annual meetings in the audit committee are required (Interview, former audit chair: Reimund Langgaard, November 22 2017). The number of meetings in the audit committee in the time-period from 2000-2015 vary from four to 14.⁴³ In other words, the number of meetings also indicate serious discussions in the audit committee. Although the audit committee ranks the audit cases, I consider the critical audit cases as comparable to critical Ombudsman cases.

Following this, it means that for both institution cases, it is possible to make a distinction between critical cases and other cases. In other words, both institutions, the Ombudsman and the audit institution, raise loud institutional Fire Alarms. Therefore, I continue and select the Ombudsman and the audit critical cases.

For the Ombudsman institution case, the critical cases are from the time-period 2000 to 2015. The Faroese Ombudsman was established in 2001, yet includes cases from 2000. For this time-period, there are 25 such critical Ombudsman cases.⁴⁴

For the audit institution, I focus on a comparable time-period. There are, however, some challenges related to identifying the critical cases in some of the older audit reports. In the annual 2007 and later reports, the staging of the text was changed so that there is a clear distinction between comments from the Audit General institution and the critique from the audit committee (Interview, Audit General, Beinta Dam, October 6 2017 and November 14 2017). In these newer reports, it is possible to identify all the critical cases. Therefore, I consider the population of critical audit cases in the time-period 2007-2015. Another challenge related to the audit reports is that some of the cases receive

⁴² These interviews are also used for information for chapter 4 on the Faroese case and for the investigation in chapter 9.

⁴³ Information source: Audit general, Beinta Dam, e-mail: June 6 2018. The numbers of meetings are as follows: 2000:14, 2001:9, 2002:4, 2003:11, 2004:9, 2005:6, 2006:7, 2007:12, 2008:8, 2009:9, 2010:6, 2011:6, 2012:12, 2013:10, 2014:11, 2015:7.

⁴⁴ 26 cases are registered, but two of these cases are so closely related that I consider them as one case, reducing the total number to 25 cases.

harsh critique several times. This means that some cases figure in more than one audit report. In order to ensure that cases are independent of each other, I only count these cases once. This leaves a total number of 27 critical audit cases for this time-period.

Before selecting the cases, there is the question of any pre-determined pattern related to the cases to consider. In order to decide on this question, I took a closer look at these Ombudsman and Audit cases in order to control for different policy areas, different agencies, and different types of agency mistakes. In addition, I wanted cases that relate to different levels in the government system, from lower ranking institutions to ministry departments. Although, the “critical case” list shows some signs of specific agency challenges, since some agencies appear more frequently on the list than other agencies, I still find that the cases vary on all of these criteria. This means that it is not very likely that the selection of these critical cases relate to any pre-determined pattern that links to a certain type of agency cases.

Regarding the number of cases for the project’s investigation, I consider the number of cases – 25 Ombudsman and 27 audit cases – as suitable for a medium-n investigation. I therefore select the entire population of critical cases for the stated time-periods for the two institutions.

Overall, the method for the selection of the units of analysis, the institutional Fire Alarm cases, adheres to typical methodological recommendations. Pollack (2002) as well as King, Keohane and Verba (1994) recommend avoiding selecting cases on the values of the dependent variable in order to reduce selection bias. By selecting a population of cases, I avoid this problem. In addition, the selection strategy (the critical cases) increases the probability that there will be enough MP activity cases to distill patterns of MP Firefighting. In addition, I also follow the recommendation to disaggregate the decentral parliamentary control institutions to specific institutional Fire Alarm cases. Pollack’s recommendation is to conduct: “... carefully chosen, comparative case studies featuring variation across the hypothesised independent variables; and that these should be disaggregated in ways that allow us to both multiply the ‘observable implications of theory’ and trace the hypothesised causal mechanisms at work” (2002: 216). In addition, Pollack recommends selecting cases across different policy areas, in order to avoid selecting on a pre-defined pattern of behavior. I also have controlled for this by investigating the cases in relation to several criteria of difference.

To sum up, this section has presented the result of the selection of institutional Fire Alarm cases for the project’s investigation of MP Firefighting. The project has selected 25 Ombudsman and 27 audit institutional Fire Alarm cases. Before I turn to the project’s data sources, the following section presents the overall mixed method approach.

5.3. Mixed method approach

This section presents the project's overall analytical strategy and choice of a mixed method approach.

Overall, the project's research design is to conduct a comparative institution case study. I have selected two different examples of decentral parliamentary control institutions, the Ombudsman and the audit institution. Moreover, the project multiplies the "observable implications of theory" by selecting 52 specific institutional Fire Alarm cases representing the two control institutions; 25 Ombudsman and 27 audit cases. The research design is a medium-n design.

The project's research question is "Under what circumstances do MPs engage in Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarms from decentral parliamentary control institutions?" From the research question, it is clear that the project seeks answers on patterns of MP Firefighting. As a result, this purpose calls for a quantitative investigation.

A quantitative investigation has the potential to reveal patterns of MP Firefighting. By using quantitative techniques, it is possible to document to what extent Firefighting increases or attenuates in accordance with the project's independent variables. Focus is on to what extent the project's dependent variable, MP Firefighting, co-varies with the project's independent variables in accordance with the theoretical expectations. For details of the design of the quantitative investigation, see section 5.5 in this chapter.

The project has developed causal expectations, or claims about how certain conditions will cause or moderate MP Firefighting. Regarding causality, evidence of co-variation is not strong evidence. In addition, therefore, the project's research question and hypothesis call for a qualitative investigation of the mechanisms that condition MP Firefighting. For this reason, the project supplements the quantitative investigation using a qualitative, in-depth investigation. I thereby investigate further, how the project's variables are related to each other. The project selects specific institutional Fire Alarm cases for a within-case investigation by the using the process tracing method. This way, the project demonstrates evidence of the mechanism playing out, linking the theorized conditions to the Firefighting outcome. For details of the design of the qualitative investigation, see chapter 7.

Finally, the project focuses on the importance of institutionalized processes for the degree and type of MP Firefighting. A mix of quantitative and qualitative methods is also utilized in this investigation. As mentioned previously, in the Faroese country case, the Ombudsman institution is an example of a low-institutionalized process, while the audit institution is an example of a high-institutionalized process.

To sum up, the project's overall analytical strategy is to use mixed methods in order to answer the project's research question. I use quantitative methods to investigate patterns of MP Firefighting, while I use qualitative methods to document essential mechanisms of MP Firefighting. While the previous sections have presented the case selection and this section the overall mixed-method approach, the chapter now focuses on the data collection for the project's investigation.

5.4. Data collection

This section and following sub-sections present the data sources and the collection of data for the project's investigation.

As previously presented, I have selected 25 Ombudsman and 27 audit institutional Fire Alarm cases for the project's investigation. In addition to material on these cases, I need data material for the project's different variables. I need data on parliamentary activity for the independent variable, MP Firefighting, media coverage for the media variable, and data on agency response for the damage control variable. I use information from the institutional Fire Alarm case material for the explosive variable. For the position variable, I use overviews of government constellations for the 2000-2015 time-period in order to investigate the MPs' position in government or opposition when conducting Firefighting. For the institutionalization variable, I use information on the degree of institutionalization, based on information about the institutional settings (from section 4.4).

The following sub-sections will in turn present the data sources and the collection of the project's data, the collection of data for institutional Fire Alarm cases, parliamentary records, media coverage and agency documents. For an overview of the project's data, see table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Overview of the project's data

Data sources	Data collection
Ombudsman and audit reports	Text on 25 Ombudsman and 27 audit cases
Parliamentary records for MP Firefighting	100 parliamentary questions 11 control committee cases 1 investigative committee case 2 Votes of No Confidence
Parliamentary records on institutionalized MP Firefighting	11 audit committee reports and related finance committee reports, assembly readings, and voting results
Media cover	245 Ombudsman news media features 262 audit institution news media features
Agency documents	Around 200 documents related to Ombudsman cases used for the damage control variable
Interviews	4 elite expert interviews 1 political elite interview

5.4.1. Institutional Fire Alarm case material

The Ombudsman and audit reports are public reports, which are accessible on the institutions' respective websites. From these reports, I collected case material related to the selected institutional Fire Alarm cases. However, first I needed to identify the correct critical cases.

For the Ombudsman cases the challenge is that there exists no overview for § 10 critical Ombudsman cases for the whole project time-period. Moreover, there is not always a clear reference to § 10 in the text in the annual reports. However, I searched all the annual reports in the project time-period for § 10 cases and created an overview. Thereafter, in order to ensure the reliability⁴⁵ in the selection of the critical Ombudsman cases, I sent the list of cases listed by headline, date and archive code (for identification) to the Ombudsman institution for authoritative verification.

For the audit institution, the challenges consisted not so much of identifying the critical audit cases from the annual reports, since the audit committee makes clear comments on cases in relatively short decision proposals. The challenge here was smaller variations in the critique formulation, such as

⁴⁵ Miles et al. (2014: 312) use the concept of reliability related to the process of the study, whether it is consistent.

harsh or sharp. In addition, I had to make sure that I did not miss critical cases from additional audit reports. For this, I consulted the Audit General in order to secure correct identification.

After correct identification of all the critical cases and a complete case overview, I collected case material for the 25 Ombudsman and 27 audit cases. The case material was collected from the various reports and decision proposals, accessible on the two institutions' websites, the Ombudsman institution on www.lum.fo and the Audit General institution on www.lg.fo. For the Ombudsman cases, the annual reports do not include the reporting date to parliament in the critical § 10 cases. Therefore, I also searched for Ombudsman newsletters in order to identify the time for the institutional Fire Alarm alert. For the audit institution, the report states the time for the reporting to the audit committee.

To sum up, the data material for the institutional Fire Alarm cases is Ombudsman and audit reports, decision proposals, and Ombudsman newsletter.

5.4.2. Parliamentary data records

For the independent variable, MP Firefighting, I need data on parliamentary activity. MP Firefighting is parliamentary activity initiated by MPs by the use of parliamentary control institutions according to section 2.5 and 4.3. In addition, related to the institutionalization variable, I also investigate institutionalized MP Firefighting as MP parliamentary activity in the institutionalized audit process.

I searched for related parliamentary activity in parliamentary data records. Except for closed committee talks, parliamentary activity is public activity. Parliament's website (www.logting.fo) has various overviews of the different parliamentary activity, such as parliamentary questions, decision proposals, and proposals for legal acts. The activity is registered for each parliamentary year, and each parliamentary year starts on July 29.

For parliamentary questions, different overviews distinguish between oral questions, written questions, and interpellations. These overviews provide information on which MP is asking the question, the minister the question is for, the time for the raised question, and by a subject label providing information on the topic for the question. Regarding the other type of oral questions, the un-prepared question type, there are no index overviews (for information on typical question types, see section 2.5, and section 4.3.1 on question types in the Faroese parliament). I use the activity overviews in order to identify the parliamentary activity that relates to the institutional Fire Alarm cases.

Regarding the content of the questioning activity, all written questions and written responses are presented in documents, which are accessible on the

website. However, oral questions are only stored in audio files. In other words, the Løgting has no practice of transcribing oral questions (or parliamentary debates) and storing them in written documents. The audio files are accessible on the website. However, technical challenges for audio files before 2008 means that the content of oral questions before 2008 simple is not accessible.⁴⁶ This audio file challenge precludes the possibility of including the “un-prepared” oral questions, since these questions do not have overview information either. For some of the older questions, where the subject label is inconclusive, the defective audio files provide a challenge in the process of verification. Yet, for some of the questions, I can use information on the MP, the minister and the timing of the event to exclude some of these inconclusive questions. In addition, for some questions I find media coverage that I can use to verify that the question relates to an institutional Fire Alarm case. This means that for some questions I use a secondary source to verify the relevance of the question.

As previously explained, the standing committee system in the Faroese parliament has a specific control committee that I investigate for activity related to the selected institutional Fire Alarm cases. For the control committee, there is also an overview of the cases investigated by the control committee, registered for each parliamentary year. The cases on the list contain information on the time the complaint was made to the committee and a subject label that provides information on the content of the case. I use this information to identify if there is control committee activity related to the selected institutional Fire Alarm cases. For the content of the control committee activity, documents as well as committee conclusions are accessible on the website. However, if the case concerns individual citizens, the case is closed, leaving no case documents.

For Votes of No Confidence activity and different types of investigative or parliamentary commission activity, this activity often figures on the overviews for so-called decision-proposals in parliament. However, the decision-proposals consist of other types of activity. Therefore, I contacted the administration in parliament for information and received overviews for commissions and Vote of No Confidence in the time-period following the new governing rule from 1994. For the content of the Vote of No Confidence and investigative committee activity, I use the overviews to search for the specific activity on the website. The content of this type of activity consists of documents, the decision proposals, but also voting records.

⁴⁶ I have contacted the administration in the Løgting on this challenge. I have not been informed of any solution.

For institutionalized MP Firefighting, I have collected data on MP activity, conducted as part of the institutionalized audit process. I used the parliamentary ID (parliamentary year and no. for parliamentary matter) of the decision proposals related to the audit reports (collected for the selection of critical institutional Fire Alarm cases, see section 5.2.1) to locate the finance committee discussion and the reading in the parliamentary assembly.

To sum up, the main strategy has been to collect all relevant activity overviews from the parliament's homepage for the project time-period, together with the overviews from the parliament's administration, and to screen these overviews for relevant parliamentary activity. The parliamentary data consists of documents such as parliamentary questions, committee documents, and decision proposals, but also audio files and voting records.

5.4.3. Media data

For the media coverage variable, I need information on coverage related to the selected institutional Fire Alarm cases.

In the Faroe Islands, several different media produce news. There is the larger independent public service institution (Kringvarpið, KvF), additional radio channels, internet platforms and newspapers. For more information on the media system, see section 4.1.3.

It is not possible to investigate media coverage for 52 cases from 2000-2015 across all of these media platforms, considering the high resource demands this would require. Moreover, some of these news media, such as the internet platform, do not cover the entire time-period, and some of the newspapers do not have a database or applicable searching techniques.

The KvF institution is by far the largest media institution and covers the entire time-period. In addition, the institution's radio station has the highest frequency of news broadcasts. The KvF institution also has the only Faroese TV channel. The KvF radio channel seems the best option, considering the frequent news coverage.

However, the KvF archive is not publicly accessible for the whole time-period. Nevertheless, the KvF institution consented to grant me access to their internal radio news editing system, so that I could conduct my searches and collect data. It was not possible to get the same access to the KvF TV archive. Instead, for the TV news, together with KvF staff, I conducted some overall searches for activity related to the selected Ombudsman and Audit cases. This means that the primary source for media coverage is the public service radio channel.

I conducted the searches and data collection from the radio archive by visiting the radio institution and accessing the system via a local computer. For

the process, I received some initial instruction on how reporters use the system and on searching techniques.

The overall search strategy was to use multiple labels for every single case, including making time specific searches. For the media coverage searches, I used my case and parliamentary activity overviews to inform the search. The search strategy was to search broad as well as narrow, and to search from various angles. Broad searches consisted of search for media coverage of the Ombudsman and audit institutions in general. For narrow searches, I focused on various specific search labels that related to a specific Ombudsman or audit institutional Fire Alarm case. For these rather extensive, time-consuming searches, I made use of four main search strategies, for the overview see table 5.2.

Table 5.2: overview of the search strategy for media data

Search strategy
1. To find and use suitable content labels for each case
2. To use the respective agency for each case as a search label
3. To use the relevant minister for each case as a search label
4. To search for media coverage related to the MP activity in parliament for each case

Overall, I conducted the search for media coverage by using multiple different searches. From this followed a careful review of the results and a collection of the relevant media coverage. However, the label search system means that the label was linked to any word in the headline as well as the manuscript. Most search results were a mix of relevant media coverage and non-relevant coverage. Therefore, I had to go through the list of findings in order to assess relevant and collect the relevant media coverage. However, considering the multiple searches for each cases, the same findings could appear several times. This required some additional editing work after the data collection.

The archive system consists of manuscripts written and used by reporters to read on air as well as are audio files. It would require a substantial workload for KvF staff to collect and deliver all the relevant audio files identified. Therefore, I decided to use the manuscripts as the data source for the content of the media coverage. The manuscripts offer detailed information, including references to actors that participated in the media coverage.

To sum up, the main source for the media data is news coverage from the public service institution’s (KvF) radio channel, while news from the TV channel is an additional source. The data for the media coverage consist of written manuscripts for reporters to use on air.

5.4.4. Damage control data

For the damage control variable, I need information on damage control activity related to the Ombudsman and audit cases.

For the audit institution, the Audit General institution hears agency critique before reporting to the audit committee in parliament. Therefore, information on agency reactions and activity is available in the annual audit reports. For the Ombudsman cases, some of the case material contains references to agency comments and activity, while others have no such information. Therefore, I applied for access to documents from the relevant agencies in the Ombudsman cases. Public agency documents are accessible according to the law on access to documents, yet still require an application, with the exception of sensitive personal information.

In order to access relevant documents in the Ombudsman cases, I sent an application to all relevant agencies asking for documents in the case dated after the critique from the Ombudsman. For institutions below the departmental level, I also sent an application to the ministry responsible in order to see if they had been involved in the case. For most of the cases, access was easily granted and documents delivered in paper or by e-mail. However, for some of the cases, there were complications such as old archive systems and a lack of digital archives in some municipalities. However, these challenges were eventually solved. For a few cases, there was no response, and in some cases, there were no documents archived after the Ombudsman critique.

Overall, the cases were well ordered and thereby accessible. However, in some instances, cases were not well ordered, making the process accessing the relevant documents challenging (Matthew and Sutton 2004). However, the purpose of selecting these documents is to assess the overall damage control related to the critique. In some instances, the lack of documents is not particularly surprising, considering that the critique from the Ombudsman concerns the agency's lack of adherence to requirements concerning archiving documents. Therefore, a lack of documents means at the same time that the agency probably did not adhere to the Ombudsman critique. If they did adhere, one might expect that they would have corrected the mistake of missing archived documents. Another challenge related to the "large" cases in which the large volume of documents made it impossible to collect the all. The strategy in such cases was to use the case archive overview to select seemingly relevant documents.

Overall, the damage control data consists of information on the agency response from the audit and Ombudsman reports and from agency documents.

5.4.5. Elite interviews

For the project's investigation, I have supplemented the collection of the previously listed documents and parliamentary records with expert interviews. The purpose of these interviews has been to collect information that I could not obtain from the other data sources, and which required that I consulted experts. This means that the type of interview is an elite interview. I have conducted five interviews, four elite expert interviews and one political elite interview with a former audit chair MP.

Mostly the interviews concern collecting information related to the Faroe Islands country case. I have conducted interviews with the present Faroese Ombudsman, Sólja í Ólavsstovu (on January 18 2018), as well as the Audit General, Beinta Dam (on October 6 and November 14 2017, for an additional question June 14 2018). The purpose of these two interviews was to collect information on the Faroese Ombudsman and Audit General institutions. In addition, I conducted the interviews in order to ensure a correct identification and collection of critical institutional Fire Alarm cases. In addition to these two interviews, I conducted an interview of a constitutional expert, Sjúrdur Rasmussen (on December 7 2017), from the Prime Minister's office related to the interpretation of some institutional issues, in particular on the minister responsibility act in the Faroese empirical context. In addition to these expert interviews, I conducted an interview with a former Danish Ombudsman, Hans Gammeltoft Hansen (on May 24 2017). The focus for this interview was information about the Danish Folketingets Ombudsman, which is the typical Ombudsman model. In addition, Gammeltoft-Hansen has experiences related to the Faroese empirical context from his work in an investigative committee (kanningarstjóri).

The fifth interview was with a former audit chair MP, Reimund Laangaard (on November 22 2017). Interviews with MPs are also elite interviews, but political elite interviews (on political elite interview: Bailer 2014). An MP is not an expert in technical constitutional matters, but has first-hand knowledge on political processes. Before I selected this interviewee, I had to consider several candidates. I decided to aim at getting an interview with an audit chair, which reduced the potential candidates substantially. One of the parliamentary periods in the project time-period is from 2011 to 2015. The audit chair for this period from the Unionist party was not re-elected in the 2015 election,⁴⁷ and later decided to withdraw from politics. Since I expect a former MP to be able to talk more freely; I decided to aim for an interview with this specific former MP audit chair.

⁴⁷ Source: overview of the election results on www.kvf.fo/val – Løgtingsval 2015.

Overall, the classification of the type of interviews according to Goldstein's (2002:669) list is that I used the interview for data collection, since I needed some specific information, but also to provide information about highly complex technical contexts. The goal for the interviews was to gather information, but not in order to make generalizable claims.

A typical challenge regarding elite interviews is getting access to your subject or in Goldstein's words: "getting in the door", which is more art than science (Goldstein 2002). In most of the cases, it was relatively easy to get "in the door", since an e-mail was all that was required. In the case of the MP, the situation was somewhat different, since the former MP no longer lives in the Faroe Islands. Therefore, I contacted him via Facebook and caught him on a visit in the Faroe Islands. I conducted the interview over lunch, since the former MP had a busy schedule during his stay.

In all of the interviews, the focus was on receiving information about institutions and processes. The interviewees had the knowledge and experience to inform me on these different matters. In other words, I made use of a positivist approach, in which I tried to minimize my role as an interviewer when the data was generated (Roulston 2010, Bailer 2014: 173).

I made use, however, of two different strategies. For the experts, ahead of the interview I formulated some specific themes followed by specific questions for each theme. For the former MP, I decided on a different approach, that of a more open interview in which I only stated the overall theme. I did present my project, but formulated a specific focus for the interview. My overall question for the interview was how the control committee decides on the ranking of cases related to the critique formulation. From this, the strategy was to make use of follow-up questions related to the information from the former audit chair. For instance, I expected the subject of committee unity to relate closely to my overall question. In addition, I had prepared some other questions to raise towards the end of the interview if there was any time. These questions focused for instance on MPs' committee preferences and an additional validating question related to my operationalization of the explosive policy criteria in a Faroese context.

In order to secure the reliability in the information collecting process by the use of interviews, I have sent notes of the final text to the interviewees for approval. Overall, I use the interview data to supplement the other data sources.

5.4.6. Classification and reliability of the project's data sources

This section addresses the question of classification and the reliability of the project's data sources.

For the project, I collect historical data material, produced at the time of the events, making it better suited for an investigation than, for example, pursuing interviews with relevant actors regarding their participation in Firefighting. The advantage of documentary material in this sense is the “non-reactive” character (Matthew and Sutton 2004), and avoidance of after-rationalizations by actors.

Overall, the project’s data are mainly textual, specifically Ombudsman and audit reports, agency documents, parliamentary documents, and media manuscripts. In addition, the data consist of parliamentary indexes, audio files, parliamentary voting records as well as expert interviews. The previous section presented the project’s use of interview.

According to Scott’s (1990:14, in Matthew and Sutton 2004) classification list, reports from the Ombudsman and audit institutions, agency documents and data on parliamentary activity are “state” documents. The documents and data come from public authorities that function on the premise of law regulation, public funding and archive systems. In other words, the documents provide reliable information.

Compared to the reports and agency documents, parliamentary data are another type of state documents, considering that these data are primarily MP statements. Still, the records are highly reliable, since they reflect what MPs said and did. However, MPs might also receive assistance from the administration in parliament in formulating questions, and in particular, for their work in the control and audit committee. Still, MPs sign or authorize these various documents. Although the respective data sources are highly reliable, this does not necessarily mean the data tell the whole story related to the institutional Fire Alarm cases. There is still insecurity related to activity that might have taken place without documentation. Agencies, for instance, do not record everything in documents. In addition, some material might have gone missing, and some material might be present, but not found by me.

The data from the media coverage in the radio and TV archive are, however, a different kind of text documents; they are not state documents, but text manuscripts written for the media institution’s reporter to read “on air”. The data are considered a highly reliable source on media cover, since they come from the institution’s own internal archive system. Still, there are some insecurities considering that the data are manuscript text. One question is if the reporter “on air” used the exact wording in the text or if the reporter might have skipped some sections. I could investigate this by comparing the content of the manuscripts to the audio files, but considering the volume of manuscripts and challenges in accessing the audio files, this would have considerably increased the already quite extensive data workload. However, considering

my use of the data – to track the events in the case and to investigate the degree of media coverage – this kind of data insecurity seems to be of minor importance for the project’s investigation. This means, however, that it is not always possible to quote from an actor’s statements in the media coverage. I only quote actor statements if the media manuscripts directly signal that text is a quote. However, it is no hindrance in quoting what the manuscripts states.

To sum up, this section, and its sub-sections, have presented the project’s data sources and data collection. The project uses different data sources that consist of reports from decentral parliamentary control institutions, parliamentary activity, media cover, agency documents, and expert interviews. Now, the chapter directs its focus to the design of the project’s quantitative investigation.

5.5. Quantitative investigation

This chapter started by presenting the project’s use of a theory-centric research design. Thereafter, the chapter has presented the selection of institutional Fire Alarm cases and the project’s mixed method approach. The previous section presented the data sources and data collection. Now, what is left to present is the specific investigations that the project intends to conduct.

The project’s initial investigation is, as mentioned, the quantitative investigation of patterns of co-variation between the project’s dependent variable, MP Firefighting, and the project’s moderating variables. This section will describe the quantitative investigation in more detail, while the detailed presentation of the qualitative investigation will follow in chapter 7 after the presentation of the results from the quantitative investigation in chapter 6.

As previously explained, for the project’s investigation, I have selected two cases of decentral parliamentary control institution. Moreover, I have selected 52 specific institutional Fire Alarm cases, 25 Ombudsman and 27 audit institutional cases. This means that the project applies a medium-n research design.

The overall strategy for the quantitative investigation is first to conduct bi-variate analysis of the dependent variable, MP Firefighting, and the moderating variables in order to see if the variables co-vary. Thereafter, I conduct an investigation of the complete theoretical model by conducting a multivariate analysis.

In order to ensure unit homogeneity, I keep the institutional Fire Alarm cases for the two institutions separate in the bi-variate analysis. This strategy not only ensures unit homogeneity, but also offers a harder test of my theoretical model. By keeping the institutions separate in this analysis, I can see if the

two institutions display the same patterns for MP Firefighting. If the investigation demonstrates similar patterns, this considerably strengthens confidence in the project's theoretical model.

For the bi-variate analysis, I conduct the investigations in relation to the different variables' level. The purpose is to see if a Firefighting outcome is present when each of the causes, the moderating variables, are present. For some of the variables, where it is possible to rescale the values to an interval level, I also conduct analysis by the use of scatterplots, including a tendency line. In addition, I make use of correlation tests, the Pearson's r or the tau- b , depending on the variable levels. For more information on the variables' scale, see the following section.

In supplement to the bi-variate analysis, I conduct a multivariate analysis, including the Ombudsman as well as the audit Fire Alarm cases. This way, I conduct a robustness of the complete theoretical model. I use OLS regression analysis (variance analysis), using the MP Firefighting interval scaled variable as my dependent variable. This technique also offers potential information on the importance of the individual coefficients in relation to each other.

The fifth hypothesis, the institutionalization hypothesis, is not included in the bi-variate analysis, since this variable relates to the whole institution and not the individual institutional Fire Alarm cases. However, in the multivariate analysis, including the Ombudsman as well as the audit cases, I add an institution variable, which means that in the multivariate investigation, I also conduct an investigation of an institution effect on MP Firefighting. I investigate the effect of the institution by the difference in mean effect across the two institution cases.

However, before I start conducting the quantitative investigation, see the following chapter 6; I first conduct an operationalization of the project's variables.

5.6. Operationalization of project variables

The previous chapter (3) formulated the project's hypothesis, thereby defining the project's variables. This section will explain the operationalization of the variables. In this section, I conduct a general operationalization of relevance for all of the project's investigations. In addition, I conduct a specific operationalization for the quantitative investigation by presenting the different variables' level and values. The specific operationalization for the within case investigation is presented in chapter 7 together with the qualitative design, while the operationalization of institutionalized Firefighting is saved for this investigation in chapter 9.

As previously explained, the project applies a mixed-method approach. Related to operationalizations, quantitative scholars make use of the term “indicator”, while qualitative scholars make use of the term “observable manifestations” (Møller and Skaaning in Beach et al. 2016 on the difference in use of terms). In this project, I use the term “indicator”, since I also use the quantitative term of variables.

In the following sections, I operationalize the project variables in turn, clarifying the indicators that instruct what to look for in the data material. Recalling the variables, the dependent variable is MP Firefighting, and the independent variables are the MPs party’s position, the explosive potential, media coverage, damage control, and the institutionalization variable. Regarding the variable levels and values in the quantitative investigation, these depend on the operationalization, the use of indicators, as well as the data sources.

5.6.1. MP Firefighting

The project’s dependent variable is MP Firefighting. MP Firefighting is defined as formal parliamentary activity related to institutional Fire Alarm cases from the Ombudsman and audit institutions. MPs have access to several different institutions to utilise for the purpose Firefighting, also referred to as central control institutions (for typical characteristics, see section 2.5, and for the specific Faroese institutions, see section 4.3).

The project investigates MPs’ formal parliamentary control activity, the parliamentary questions, the standing control committee (Landsstýrismálanevndin), ad-hoc investigative committees (parliamentary or expert), and the Vote of No Confidence. This will reveal the extent to which MPs use parliamentary tools for Firefighting, which is a crucial part of the understanding of parliamentary control. In addition to these formal methods, however, there are more informal or closed forums for MPs to use in order to respond to Ombudsman and audit cases (on intra-party control processes: Muller 2000, Strøm 2003; on coalition government control processes: Strøm et al. 2010, Saalfeld 2000). However, these are not forums for parliamentary control activity.

For the dependent variable in the quantitative investigation, I first use a dichotomous nominal variable/dummy variable, distinguishing between cases that have Firefighting and cases that have no Firefighting (variable values – 1: Firefighting; 0: No Firefighting). Then, I continue and measure the degree of Firefighting in the cases that have a Firefighting outcome. I count the amount of activity for each parliamentary institution, and I weight the activity. The overall activity score is measured as a weighted sum (for the details on the weights see section 6.1).

5.6.2. Party position

The project's first moderating variable is the MP party position. The expectation is that MP Firefighting is opposition MP activity. In addition, I expect MP Firefighting to some extent to be coalition MP activity.

In the project, I define government parties as parties represented by a minister in government. From this follows a negative definition of opposition parties, as parties that do not have party representatives in government positions.⁴⁸ Opposition Firefighting is activity by an MP representing a party in opposition, and government Firefighting is activity by an MP representing a party in government.

In addition to the definition of opposition and government MP Firefighting, I need to distinguish between government parties in order to clarify the term, coalition MP Firefighting. The Faroe Islands' government system is a case of coalition government. This means that government consists of more than one party that together constitute a government constellation. Coalition MP Firefighting refers to MP parliamentary activity in response to an institutional Fire Alarm case that relates to another government party's minister resort area.

It is, even if theoretically not likely, empirically possible that government MPs engage in Firefighting in response to an institutional Fire Alarm case that relates to their own party's resort area. Party Firefighting is MP parliamentary activity in response to an institutional Fire Alarm case related to the MPs party's own resort area. Overall, MP Firefighting is opposition, coalition, or party Firefighting.

For the position variable in the quantitative investigation, I use a dichotomous nominal variable/dummy variable and distinguish between opposition activity and no opposition activity (variable values: 1: Opposition Firefighting; 2: No opposition Firefighting). However, I still use information on coalition and party Firefighting. If there are mixed activity cases such as opposition and coalition MP Firefighting, I investigate the activity more closely in order to clarify if the opposition still has the main share of the Firefighting.

5.6.3. The explosive potential

The project's second moderating variable is the explosive potential of the institutional Fire Alarm case. The expectation is that MPs will consider the ex-

⁴⁸ The Faroese case is a case of majority governments, as previously explained. Following from this, there is no tradition of so-called supporting parties, parties that support government without being part of government.

plosive potential of the Fire Alarm case before they decide to engage in Firefighting. The institutional Fire Alarm case has to be bad enough for the government in order to be good for the opposition. The explosive potential relates to political parties' goals of votes, office, and policy (for more information, see section 3.5.2).

Ombudsman and audit institutional Fire Alarm cases are critiques of agency mal-administration and directly linked to neither policy, office nor votes. Still, I argue that if a case relates to a policy area, which is politically controversial, if the case relates to important public office positions, or if the case links to a third party, the institutional Fire Alarm case has an explosive potential that leads to MP Firefighting.

The explosive criteria relate in different degrees to the empirical context. In particular, controversial policy areas depend on the empirical context. The relevant controversial policy issues might vary over time and across countries. Therefore, for more information, see section 4.5.1. Regarding third parties, in the same way as other countries, the Faroese case has a broad range of organized interests, see section 4.5.1. High-ranking public positions in the Faroese case are rather typical positions: ministers, department managers, and leaders for large public institutions. From this, I operationalize the explosive potential variable.

Votes is operationalized as third party and organized interests' involvement. This criterion is activated if the institutional Fire Alarm case links to a third party. For the Ombudsman cases, I consider it a link if a third party is the sender of the complaint to the Ombudsman. In the audit cases, there is no complaint option. In these cases, I consider the case related to a third party if the case subject concerns third party interests. It is important that the third party criteria relates to an explosive potential, not an explosive outcome. In some of the cases, third parties take an interest in the cases after the control process in parliament has started. This kind of third party activity does not count as an explosive potential.

Office is operationalized as high-ranking public positions in the Faroese case. The indicators are if the institutional Fire Alarm case implicates a minister, or if the case relates to a minister department or a leader of a large public institution. However, I double the weight of the minister office indicator, because this criterion is considerably more explosive compared to the other two office indicators.

Policy is operationalized as controversial policy issues related to the relationship between Faroe Islands and Denmark, moral issues, and center-periphery resource allocation. The typical controversial issues are fishery policy, infrastructure (including public transport), location of hospitals, public institutions and investments.

For the explosive variable in the quantitative investigation, I first use a dichotomous nominal variable/dummy variable. I consider the explosive criteria for each case. If the case meets one of the criteria, the case has an explosive potential. The case value on the dummy variable is that either there is an explosive potential or there is no explosive potential (variable values – 1: Explosive potential; 0: No explosive potential). Then, I continue and measure the degree of the explosive potential for each specific cases. For the third party criteria, I allocate 1 point if the case relates to a third party. For the office criteria, I consider a minister mistake as more explosive than all the other criteria. Therefore, I allocate 2 points for the minister criteria and 1 point for each of the two other office criteria. For the policy criteria, I allocate 1 point if the case relates to a controversial policy area. Based on these scores, I calculate the overall explosive score for each case.

This seemingly ordinal-scaled variable meets the requirements for being an interval-scaled variable. There is a meaningful difference between the variable values, since the difference between the different values is comparable. In addition, the variable ranges from a 0 score (if the case meets none of the explosive criteria), to potentially a case that meets all the criteria scores 6. This means that the variable has the minimum requirement of five different values (Møller Hansen and Hansen 2012: 343). Therefore, I make use of the extra variable information and define the explosive variable as an interval variable. Although interpretation of results should be conducted with some caution.

5.6.4. Media coverage

The third moderating variable is media coverage related to the institutional Fire Alarm cases. The expectation is that media coverage turns up the institutional Fire Alarm, increasing the likelihood for MP Firefighting.

Media coverage means that the case receives attention from the media, leading to news coverage of the case. When this happens the salience of the institutional Fire Alarm case increases. It is important that the news media coverage be directly about the institutional Fire Alarm case. It has to be clear that the media is covering the specific case.

For the media variable in the quantitative investigation, I first use a dichotomous nominal variable/dummy variable. Either there is media coverage or there is no media coverage (variable values – 1: Media cover; 0: No Media cover). However, in the Ombudsman institution case, all cases receive media coverage. Still, there are several cases that only receive one instance of media cover, which is information based on the Ombudsman news later, while other cases also receive “follow up” media coverage. For the audit institution cases, there are no newsletters on specific cases and therefore not the same pattern

for media coverage. Still, in the audit institution cases, some cases receive 0 and some only 1 instance of media coverage. Therefore, I allocate cases that receive 0 or only 1 instance of media coverage the value of 0 on the dummy media variable in order to distinguish between cases.

Then, in the same way as for the explosive variable, I continue and measure the degree of media coverage for each specific case. Here, I simply count the instances of media coverage. From this, I create an interval media coverage variable that measures the degree of media coverage. However, in some of the cases, the media coverage continues for years, and the searching techniques available make it impossible to count the exact number of instances of media activity. For these cases, it is necessary to decide on a maximum number. I base the threshold for maximum cases on the overall level of findings. I select the number of 50 as an expression of the highest degree of media activity.

5.6.5. Damage control

The fourth moderating variable is damage control. I expect that the more damage control, the less MPs will use time and effort to engage in Firefighting related to the institutional Fire Alarm case.

Damage control is operationalized as the activity conducted in order to adhere to the critique from the Ombudsman or audit institution. Following from this, I consider a lack of activity or activity contradicting the instructions from the Ombudsman or the audit institution as a lack of damage control. At the opposite end of the damage control continuum, I consider activity that demonstrates a will to make changes and adhere to the critique as damage control. It is possible, however, that cases reveal a mix of a damage control and a lack of damage control. For this type of case, I make an overall assessment. Damage control might not always imply correcting all mistakes, but it is still important that government or agencies seem willing to correct mistakes.

For the damage control variable in the quantitative investigation, I use a dichotomous nominal variable/dummy variable. Either there is damage control or there is no damage control (variable values – 1: No damage control; 0: Damage control). However, these variable values are based on an overall qualitative assessment of the damage control activity related to the case.

5.6.6. Institutionalization

The fifth moderating variable is the institutionalization variable. The expectation is that as part of an institutionalized process, rules and procedures create

additional support for MPs' role as "Parliamentarians". In case of a higher degree of institutionalization of activity in parliament, government MPs will also engage in Firefighting.

Institutionalization is operationalized as the degree of rules and requirements for MPs' scrutiny of reports from decentral parliamentary control institutions. In case of no or few requirements, the degree of institutionalization is low. In case of specifically stated requirements for parliamentary activity related to the reports, the degree of institutionalization is high. In the Faroese case, there is a low degree of institutionalization in the Ombudsman case and a high degree of institutionalization in the audit institution case.

For the institutionalization variable in the quantitative investigation, I use a dichotomous nominal variable/dummy variable. I distinguish between a low or high degree of institutionalization (variable values – 1: High degree (the audit institution); 0: Low degree (the Ombudsman institution)). However, the institutionalization variable only relates to the institution cases. In other words, all the Ombudsman cases have the value of 0, while all the audit cases have the score of 1.

5.6.7. Data triangulation

The previous sub-sections have in turn presented the operationalization of the project's variables. This last sub-section will explain the use of data triangulation for the project variables. For the assessment of the variables' values, for some variables I only use one data source, while for other variables I use more than one.

For parliamentary activity and media cover, I only use direct sources to state if there was parliamentary activity or media coverage related to the institutional Fire Alarm case. Still, whenever I located media coverage of parliamentary activity, I used this information to check if this parliamentary activity was on my overview. In other words, I used the media data to strengthen the reliability of the parliamentary data collection process.

For the damage control variable, I used a data triangulation approach, since no single data source could deliver information on the damage control for all of the cases. I looked for information on agency responses in the Ombudsman and audit reports and the agency documents related to the Ombudsman cases. In addition, I used information from the media coverage when there were agency statements or media reporting on agency statements.

This means that the media data in addition to information on media coverage of institutional Fire Alarm cases also offer information on some of the project's other variables. The media files provide information on events and activity related to the specific cases. The media data to some extent refer to

MP activity. The media data also offer information on agency activity of importance to damage control, not found in the agency documents or reports. One example is a case, in which the media coverage reveals that a case went to court, which was not clear from the agency documents. In addition, as previously mentioned, the media files also function as a secondary source for some of the aforementioned missing audio files for parliamentary oral questions. If the media refers to content of parliamentary questions, I still consider the difference between primary and secondary sources in relation to implications concerning motive. In other words, I distinguish between media referral to MPs' statements and the media's own editorial comments.

Overall, the strategy for recalling the events in the case is to carefully assess and compare the information in the data and pay attention to differences between primary and secondary sources in order to ensure the validity of the events (Miles, Huberman, Saldaña 2014: 313). I compare the information from the different pieces of evidence in a triangulation process to assess the size and direction of bias contained in the source (Beach and Pedersen 2016: 194).

To sum up, this section, and its sub-sections, have in turn presented the operationalization of the project's variables. This last sub-section has presented the use of data triangulation related to some of the project's variables. In addition, this section has presented the variable levels for the quantitative investigation in the following chapter 6. Overall, for three of the project's variables, I only use a dichotomous nominal variable/dummy variable, while for two of the moderating variables and the dependent variables; I use a dichotomous nominal variable/ dummy variable and an interval level scaled variable.

5.7. Conclusion and chapter summery

This chapter has presented the project's overall research design and the detailed design of the quantitative investigation. The detailed design of the qualitative investigation follows in chapter 7.

Overall, the project applies a theory-centric research design. The overall approach is deductive. The project's investigation is conducted as a comparative institution case study. The research design applies two different cases of decentral parliamentary control institutions, the Ombudsman and the audit institution. These institutions raise institutional Fire Alarms. In order to multiply the observable implications of theory and avoid the challenge of few cases and many variables, I have selected cases for a medium-n design. The project avoids selecting on the dependent variable for seemingly interesting Fire-fighting outcome cases by selecting the entire population of critical cases; for

the Ombudsman institution in the time-period 2000-2015 and for the audit institution for the time-period 2007-2015.

The overall analytical strategy is to apply a combination of different methods. I use quantitative as well as qualitative methods in a “triangulation” approach to achieve a thorough understanding of MP Firefighting. I use quantitative methods to investigate patterns of MP Firefighting in form of co-variation, and qualitative methods to conduct an in-depth investigation of the mechanisms that condition MP Firefighting.

The research design consists of four investigations. The initial study is a bi-variate investigation of patterns of co-variation between the project’s dependent variable, MP Firefighting, and each of the project’s moderating variables, except for the institutionalization variable. For this investigation, I keep the Ombudsman and the audit Fire Alarm cases separate. The second investigation is to conduct another quantitative investigation, a multivariate analysis, in which all the variables and all the institutional Fire Alarm cases are included in one investigation. For this investigation, I add an institution-dummy variable and test the effect of the institution on MP Firefighting. The third investigation is to select two specific institutional Fire Alarm cases for a within-case study using the process tracing method (for the selection of cases and the details of the qualitative design, see chapter 7). The fourth investigation is a follow up investigation of the institutionalization variable. This investigation uses qualitative methods to investigate institutionalized MP Firefighting. For an overview of the project’s investigations, see table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Overview of the project’s investigations and use of methods

Investigation	Focus	Method
1 Effect of individual variables	Patterns of co-variation, institution cases separate	Bi-variate quantitative analysis
2 Effect of overall theoretical model + effect of institution	Robustness test, individual coefficients in relation to each other, institution cases together	Multi-variate quantitative analysis, OLS-regression
3 The mechanism linking conditions to outcome	Within case investigation of specific institutional Fire Alarm cases	Qualitative investigation, process tracing
4 Institutionalization variable	Difference between MP Firefighting and institutionalized MP Firefighting	Qualitative analysis

Chapter 6: Patterns of MP Firefighting: a quantitative analysis

The previous chapter has presented the project's overall research design and the design of the quantitative investigation. This chapter conducts the quantitative investigation of MP Firefighting itself.

The chapter uses quantitative methods to investigate patterns of MP Firefighting. First, I conduct an institutional Fire Alarm across-case investigation within the two institution cases: the Ombudsman and the audit institution. I use quantitative techniques to investigate patterns of co-variation between the project's dependent and moderating variables. At first, the methods applied are descriptive statistics and bi-variate correlation tests between the independent variables and MP Firefighting. Then I conduct a multivariate analysis by OLS linear regression analysis, including all the variables and all the institutional Fire Alarm cases in the same model. The institutionalization variable is investigated by adding a dummy variable for the multivariate analysis. Thus, the chapter tests the project's hypothesis concerning when MPs react to institutional Fire Alarms of mal-administration from the Ombudsman and the audit institutions. The quantitative analysis offers the first test of the project's theoretical framework.

Having presented the purpose of this chapter, I now recall the project variables. The project's dependent variable is MP Firefighting, defined as formal MP activity related to institutional Fire Alarm cases. I consider the hypothesized explanatory variables to be moderating variables that trigger MP Firefighting when the Ombudsman and the Audit General institution raise a Fire Alarm regarding mal-administration. The first moderating variable is the position of the MP's political party in either opposition or government. The expectation is that Firefighting is primarily opposition activity, since opposition MPs have the stronger incentives to engage. The second moderating variable is the explosive potential of the cases. Institutional Fire Alarms must have the potential to inflict cost on government; otherwise even opposition MPs will refrain from engaging in Firefighting. The third moderating variable is media coverage. Media coverage turns up the Fire Alarm and increases Firefighting. The fourth moderating variable is damage control. A lack of damage control also turns up the Fire Alarm and leads to MP Firefighting. In addition, there is the institutionalization variable. The expectation is that a higher degree of

institutionalization related to the control institution provides additional support and strengthens the expectation that as “parliamentarians”, MPs engage in control of government.

The chapter starts out by describing the project’s dependent variable, MP Firefighting. The first section clarifies whether or not there is parliamentary activity related to the institutional Fire Alarm cases. Subsequently, it investigates the use of control institutions and the difference in degree of Firefighting in the activity cases. Then the investigation continues to look for patterns of co-variation between the project’s dependent variable – MP Firefighting – and the project’s moderating variables. The following sections test each variable in turn. Thereafter, the chapter conducts the multivariate analysis. The chapter ends by discussing the effect of the institution on MP Firefighting.

6.1. MP Firefighting

This section will describe the project’s dependent variable, MP Firefighting. First, the section clarifies whether there is parliamentary activity related to the selected Fire Alarm cases. Thereafter, the section further investigates the activity by looking into which control institutions MPs make use of, and the degree of activity related to each specific activity case.

I operationalize MP Firefighting as formal parliamentary activity by the use of institutions within parliament related to institutional Fire Alarms. In parliament, MPs have access to various institutions that can be utilized for Firefighting. The institutions that I consider are typical parliamentary control institutions: the standing control committee; parliamentary questions; ad hoc investigative committees; and the ultimate instrument of the Vote of No Confidence (for more information on these typical institutions, see section 2.5; for the Faroe Islands parliamentary institutions, see section 4.3).

The investigation starts by examining whether there is any MP Firefighting in parliament, which is related to the selected institutional Fire Alarm cases. In other words, the starting point is to clarify the number of activity and no-activity cases among the selected 25 Ombudsman and 27 audit Fire Alarm cases. Recalling the analytical strategy, I conducted a total screening of activity overviews for the selected parliamentary institutions for case related parliamentary activity. Relevant activity was registered and used to categorize the case as an activity case.

The results of the investigation of the dependent variable are that 10 of the 25 Ombudsman cases and 10 of the 27 audit cases have related formal parliamentary activity. This means that MPs engage in Firefighting in 10 of the Ombudsman and 10 of the audit cases. Following from this, there is no related parliamentary activity for 15 of the Ombudsman and 17 of the audit cases. In

other words, MPs respond to less than half of the cases. This is, however, not a surprising result when considering the previous reference to a rather low overall level of MP interest in reporting information (see section 3.5.2). The no-activity cases are registered by 0, while the activity cases are registered by 1 on the dichotomous Firefighting variable. For an overview of MP activity and no-activity cases, see table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Overview of MP activity cases and no-activity cases among the 25 Ombudsman and 27 audit Fire Alarm cases

Institution	MP no-activity cases	MP activity cases	Total
Ombudsman	15	10	25
Audit	17	10	27

In order to investigate the degree of activity, this section continues by investigating the parliamentary activity in the two sets of 10 activity cases. First, the investigation looks into the variation in the use of parliamentary institutions, and then the degree of activity is examined. A closer look at the two sets of 10 activity cases reveals different combinations of activity related to the different control institutions. In both institution cases, parliamentary questions are most frequently used. MPs raise parliamentary questions in all of the 10 activity cases in both institutions although the number of questions varies from only 1 to 19 in the Ombudsman case and from 1 to 16 in the audit case. Still, the total frequency is somewhat higher in the Ombudsman than in the audit institution case; 56 questions compared to 44. The standing control committee is the second most frequently used institution, and again the frequency is higher for the Ombudsman institution. Seven of the Ombudsman Fire Alarm cases activate the control committee compared to only two of the audit institution cases. Still, in one of the audit cases, the control committee is activated several times. The two remaining institutions – investigative committees and the Vote of No Confidence – are less frequently used. MPs suggest and succeed in settling an investigative committee in one of the Ombudsman cases. There is no attempt to settle an investigative committee in the audit cases. When it comes to the Vote of No Confidence, there is one proposal related to one case for each institution case. In both instances, parliament votes down the No Confidence proposals. Overall, there is a rather similar use of central parliamentary institutions for the Ombudsman and the audit institution, although the degree of activity is higher for the Ombudsman institution. For an overview of the use of control institutions in the two sets of 10 activity cases, see table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Overview of the use of control institutions in the 10 Ombudsman and 10 MP audit activity cases^{a)}

Case no.	Parliamentary questions	Control committee	Investigative committee	Vote of No Confidence
Ombudsman institution				
1	6	1	0	0
5	2	0	0	0
9	1	1	0	0
10	3	1	0	(1)*
15	3	0	0	0
16	8	1	0	0
19	3	1	0	0
21	1	1	0	0
23	10	0	1**	0
25	19	1	0	0
Total	56	7	1	1
Audit institution				
26	1	0	0	0
29	5	0	0	0
30	16	3	0	0
36	6	0	0	0
37	1	0	0	0
40	5	0	0	0
41	2	0	0	0
45	5	1	0	(1)*
46	1	0	0	0
47	2	0	0	0
Total	44	4	0	1

a. For the case overview, see appendix 1.

* The proposals were outvoted, Vote of No Confidence or Investigative committee

**Settle a § 25 ad hoc committee, which arranges an investigation of the two ministers.

Having stated and described the variation in the use of control institutions for MP Firefighting, the question is how to condense this activity into one measure. I solve this by the use of an index. First, by assigning weights and then calculating the score related to the use of each specific control institution for each case. Second, by measuring the overall degree of Firefighting for each case as the sum of the points assigned for each institution. Still, the question

is how to assign the weights for the different control institutions. Before deciding on the weights, one must consider the institutional differences.

The institution of parliamentary questions only requires one MP to activate. In addition, parliamentary questions are typically a weak control institution, considering the formal powers. On the one hand, therefore, one should not give too much weight to a single parliamentary question. On the other hand, however, one can argue that several parliamentary questions concerning the same case puts pressure on the minister/government, with some subsequent level of parliamentary control effect besides the effect related to the public. When it comes to the control committee, in the same way as for parliamentary questions, the institution only requires one MP (or an actor outside parliament) to activate, but once activated, three MPs from different political parties (opposition as well as government, see section 4.3.2) have to address and comment on the case. I argue, therefore, for weighting the activity in the control committee substantially higher than a single parliamentary question. When it comes to settling investigative committees, there are different routes for MPs to pursue (see section 4.3.3), still typically involving more than one MP. A formal proposal of an investigative committee is a relatively rare event – rarer than the activation of the control committee – and signals an even higher degree of seriousness, with a decision to settle an investigative committee even more so. In addition, settling an investigative committee typically requires assistance from a government party. Further, the same logic of argument regarding an increasing degree of seriousness applies for the use of the Vote of No Confidence. A proposal of a Vote of No Confidence is a relatively rare event and offers a strong opportunity for damaging government reputation, even if the proposal subsequently fails in parliament. However, considering the ultimate implications of parliament passing a No Confidence Vote (this requires a 50+1 majority in the Faroese case, see section 4.3.3), such an act is given the highest weight. However, in reality, this rarely happens, and indeed, does not happen in relation to the selected institutional Fire Alarm cases.

Having pointed out the differences between the institutions, the question is how to weight the activity. First, to capture the difference between a single and multiple parliamentary questions, I suggest assigning one point for each question. Second, I rank the activity for the other three institutions in relation to the scores on parliamentary questions by increasing the weight in the following order: the control committee; the investigative committee; and the Vote of No Confidence. In other words, I consider the control committee a medium strength control category and assign the score based on the average

number of parliamentary questions, which is five.⁴⁹ I rank outvoted proposals of an investigative committee or a Vote of No Confidence that are followed by debate, somewhat higher. I therefore suggest weighting these acts in the following way: investigative committee activity by control committee + 2 and Vote of No Confidence activity by investigative committee + 3. However, when it comes to a settled investigative committee, I weigh the activity considerably higher by considering the further activity in the case that will follow such a decision. I assign such activity a score of Vote of No Confidence + 8. Nevertheless, the passing of a Vote of No Confidence is the ultimate decision and receives a score of a settled investigative committee + 2. For an overview of the institution’s weights, see table 6.3.

Table 6.3: The weights for the parliamentary institutions^{a)}

	Institution					
	Parliamentary questions	Control committee	Investigative committee	Vote of No Confidence	Investigative committee, settled	Vote of No Confidence, passed
Weights	1	5	7	10	18	20

a. The total number of parliamentary questions in the two institution cases is 100. The total number of 100 divided by 20 (the number of activity cases) returns the number of 5.

Having decided on the weights for each central parliamentary control institution, from the information on the parliamentary activity in table 6.2, it is possible to calculate the points for each institution and from this, the overall Firefighting values for each institutional Fire Alarm case.⁵⁰ For the values on the project’s dependent variable, MP Firefighting, see table 6.4.

⁴⁹ The total number of parliamentary questions in the two institution cases is 100. The total number of 100 divided by 20 (the number of activity cases) returns the number 5.

⁵⁰ Related to the values for the Firefighting variable, I have conducted robustness tests. For the investigations, I have conducted a test where no weights are applied for the Firefighting variable. For the bivariate investigations, the results show very limited changes. For the multivariate analysis, the changes were more noticeable. The results of the robustness tests are reported together with the results.

Table 6.4: The Firefighting values in the Ombudsman and audit activity cases

Case no.	Parliamentary questions	Control committee	Investigative committee	Vote of No Confidence	Overall values
Ombudsman institution					
1	6	5	0	0	11
5	2	0	0	0	2
9	1	5	0	0	6
10	3	5	0	10	18
15	3	0	0	0	3
16	8	5	0	0	13
19	3	5	0	0	8
21	1	5	0	0	6
23	10	0	18	0	28
25	19	5	0	0	24
Audit institution					
26	1	0	0	0	1
29	5	0	0	0	5
30	16	15	0	0	31
36	6	0	0	0	6
37	1	0	0	0	1
40	5	0	0	0	5
41	2	0	0	0	2
45	5	5	0	10	20
46	1	0	0	0	1
47	2	0	0	0	2

a. For the case overview, see appendix 1.

The results of the measurement of the Firefighting values reveals a varying degree of activity. For each institution case, two to three cases stand out with a relatively high degree of activity, illustrated by values of 18, 24 and 28 for the Ombudsman institution and 20 and 31 for the audit institution. Two cases have a low score of 2 to 3 for the Ombudsman institution case, while five of the audit cases have a low score of 1 to 2. Five of the Ombudsman cases have a medium score of 6 to 13, while three of the audit cases have a medium score of 5 to 6. I recall that the remaining 15 of the Ombudsman and 17 of the audit cases have a score of 0 on the dependent variable.

To sum up, overall, the results show that there is a higher degree of activity in the Ombudsman compared to the audit cases. For instance, in total there are 56 parliamentary questions for the Ombudsman compared to 44 questions

for the audit institution. In addition, MPs apply harsher measures for the Ombudsman institution than the audit institution by the more frequent use of the control committee and one instance of an investigative committee.

This section has described the results for the project's dependent variable, MP Firefighting. The following section initiates the investigation of the independent variables by directing focus to the first of the project's hypotheses, the position of the MP's party in either government or opposition.

6.2. Oppositional Firefighting

This section investigates if the position of the MP's political party in either government or opposition can explain MP Firefighting according to hypothesis 1. The section investigates the MP's party position related to Firefighting. In general, MPs are expected to be influenced by their political party's partisan preferences when it comes to parliamentary activity. MPs from opposition parties have stronger incentives, because engaging in Firefighting is an opportunity to damage government reputation and inflict cost on government. I expect, therefore, that opposition MPs will be more inclined to engage in Firefighting. Critique of government from decentral parliamentary control institutions is an opportunity for opposition MPs to challenge and impose cost on government in a continuous re-election strategy (Saalfeld 2000, Maor 1999, Wiberg 1995, see also chapter 3). Although, expecting oppositional Firefighting to be the main pattern, MPs from coalition parties might still be expected to join with the opposition in case of alignment challenges within coalition governments (Strøm et al. 2010). However, I expect MPs that engage in Firefighting in cases that inflict damage on a minister from their own party to be very rare events.

For each instance of parliamentary activity in the activity cases, the MP's position in either government or opposition is registered. If the MP's party is in the opposition when the MP is asking a parliamentary question, activating the control committee, or suggesting an investigative committee or a Vote of No Confidence, then the activity is registered as opposition Firefighting. If the MP's party is in government, the investigation continues to clarify if the Firefighting is an example of one coalition party controlling another coalition party, or if the activity is an example of intra-party challenges in which an MP is engaging in control of a minister from the same party.

Overall, the results reveal a clear pattern of opposition Firefighting. MPs from opposition parties dominate the control activity in the selected cases. This pattern applies for the Ombudsman as well as the audit institution. Opposition MPs respond with activity in all of the activity cases. Still, in addition to the opposition Firefighting, the results show some coalition Firefighting

and a single example of party Firefighting. For the Ombudsman institution, MPs from a coalition government party join the opposition in Firefighting in three of the cases, but there is no example of party Firefighting. For the audit institution, coalition MPs join the opposition in two of the cases. In one of the audit cases, there is an example of party Firefighting, since an MP engages in activity related to a policy area controlled by a minister from the same party. For the results of MP Firefighting related to the position of the MP's party, see table 6.5.

Table 6.5: MP Firefighting related to the position of the MP's party

Firefighting	Ombudsman	Audit
Only oppositional	7 (70 %)	8 (80 %)
Oppositional and coalitional	3 (30 %)	1 (10 %)
Oppositional, coalitional and party	0 (0 %)	1 (10 %)
Total	10 (100 %)	10 (100 %)

Overall, the results reveal a clear pattern of opposition Firefighting. Still, the results also reveal some coalition activity and a single case of party Firefighting. Therefore, I take a closer look at the three cases for the Ombudsman institution case and the two cases for the audit institution in which coalition and party MPs join the opposition MPs in the Firefighting. I register each activity in the five cases in relation to the position of the MP's party in order to investigate the share of the activity between opposition and government MPs. Following the position hypothesis, I expect opposition parties to dominate the control activity in these mixed opposition/coalition/party MP activity cases. For the shares of activity, see table 6.6.

Table 6.6: The shares of coalition and opposition activity in mixed activity cases^{a)}

Case no.	Parliamentary questions	Control Committee^{b)}	Investigative committee	Vote of No Confidence
Ombudsman institution				
1	6 (2 x opposition, 4 x coalition)	1 (coalition)	0	0
23	10 (10 x opposition)	0	1 (opposition and coalition votes)	0
25	19 (18 x opposition, 1 x coalition)	1 (opposition)	0	0
Audit institution				
40	5 (3 x opposition, 1 x coalition, 1 x party)	0	0	0
45	5 (5 x opposition)	1 (opposition)	0	1 (opposition and coalition votes)

a. For the case overview, see appendix 1.

b. The position of the MP or MPs that activate the control committee.

Overall, the results of this investigation show that the opposition dominates the control activity in the mixed cases. This is the result for all but one of the cases. In two of the cases, the coalition joins the opposition in voting for proposals on an investigative committee and Vote of No Confidence. In one case, the coalition activity consists of a single parliamentary question compared with 18 from opposition MPs. The table also reveals that the example of party Firefighting consists of a single parliamentary question. However, for the Ombudsman case no. 1, coalition MPs dominate the control activity by activating the control committee and asking the main share of parliamentary questions.

However, the documents available in the cases reveal information that can explain the breaches of expected patterns. For the party Firefighting case, the sources reveal that a new MP in a supplementary seat presents the question, and that the question is raised a long time after a change of minister, not implicating the party minister in any way. Regarding the Ombudsman case no.1, in which coalition MPs dominate the Firefighting, the data sources also offer an explanation for this breach of the expected pattern. This case concerns the infrastructure institution, Landsverk. In one of the parliamentary questions

from a coalition MP from the Republican Party, the wording of the question reveals a high degree of disagreement within government and dissatisfaction with the People's Party minister's handling of the case. The sources reveal that in order to handle the government disagreement, the Prime Minister from the People's Party formulates a critique of the minister. In addition, parliamentary activity indicates a high degree of policy agreement (on infrastructure) between the right-wing Unionist Party in the opposition and the right-wing minister's party, the People's Party. Twice, the Unionist Party raises a decision proposal to implement structural changes and privatization related to the infrastructure institution (parliamentary matter 96/1999 and 71/2000). These suggested policy changes are close to the minister's policy intentions. The government MPs from the Republican Party disagree. This could explain the low opposition share of the Firefighting activity. In other words, this finding indicates that policy agreement reduces the opposition party's incentive to engage in parliamentary control activity. However, even after the minister has received critique together with policy changes that have been dropped to satisfy the coalition party, one of the two coalition MPs still hangs on to the case. Therefore, a possible supplementary explanation to this breach of pattern is intra-party disagreement within the Republican Party. A backbencher who lacks the option of party office might pay more attention to parliamentary office (Strøm 2012) and thus consider parliamentary control activity as a re-election strategy (Saalfeld 2000).

To sum up, the investigation in relation to MP Firefighting of the position of the MP's party in either opposition or government has revealed a pattern of Firefighting dominated by opposition activity. Opposition MPs engage in all 10 Ombudsman and 10 audit activity cases, while coalition parties engage in five of the cases, and a party MP in one of the cases. In four of these five mixed position cases, opposition MPs still dominate the Firefighting activity.

6.2.1. Oppositional coherence

The previous section revealed an overall pattern of opposition Firefighting. MP Firefighting is primarily opposition activity. This section investigates the degree of opposition coherence in the MP Firefighting.

The previous investigation reveals no information about whether opposition Firefighting is single opposition party Firefighting or joint opposition Firefighting. Opposition parties share the incentives to impose cost and damage government reputation. However, opposition parties need not always constitute a united alternative to government office, considering differences in policy preferences. If opposition parties have closer policy preferences to government parties, they might refrain from supporting other opposition parties

in control activity directed at government. MPs might also use Fire Alarm cases to benefit their own party rather than focusing on co-operation within the opposition. Therefore, I expect the question of stronger or weaker coherence to offer further information about MPs partisan motivations.

The operationalization of opposition coherence relates to the project's empirical country case, the Faroe Islands. The political system consists of seven political parties. The number of parties in opposition varies but consists of more than one party (for more information on the Faroe Islands' party system, see section 4.5). I consider the coherence as weak when only one opposition party engages and strong when more than one opposition party participates.

In the Ombudsman as well as the audit institution case, the results reveal variation in opposition coherence. The dominant pattern for both institutions is that one opposition party (in most cases one of the larger opposition parties) engages in Firefighting. This applies for seven of the Ombudsman and six of the audit cases; 13 of the 20 cases in total. In three of the 10 Ombudsman and four of the 10 audit activity cases, more than one opposition party engages in the Firefighting; seven of the 20 cases in total. In addition, the cases that have strong coherence have more frequent coalition MP activity. In two of the three Ombudsman strong coherence cases and two of the four audit strong coherence cases, there is also coalition MP activity. For the results on the opposition coherence, see table 6.7.

In the two institution cases taken together, the dominant pattern overall is Firefighting as a single opposition party activity. However, several cases demonstrate a more coherent opposition engaging in MP Firefighting. In addition, the investigation shows that coalition/party Firefighting is often found in strong opposition coherence cases.

To sum up, this section has investigated the position of the MP's party in relation to MP Firefighting. The investigation has shown that Firefighting is primarily oppositional parliamentary activity. Opposition MPs engage in all of the 10 Ombudsman and 10 audit activity cases. In addition, coalition parties engage in five of the cases, and a party MP in one of the cases. In the mixed activity cases, the investigation shows that opposition parties still dominate the Firefighting. Moreover, this sub-section has demonstrated that the opposition coherence varies. Most frequently, one main opposition party engages in the Firefighting, indicating to a great extent that Firefighting is partisan motivated activity, thereby supporting the project's hypothesis regarding the position of the MP's party.

Table 6.7: Overview of the opposition coherence in the 10 Ombudsman and 10 audit^{a)} activity cases^{b)}

Case no.	One opposition party	More than one opposition party	Coalition party
Ombudsman institution			
1	1	0	1
5	1	0	0
9	1	0	0
10	1	0	0
15	1	0	0
16	0	1	0
19	1	0	0
21	1	0	0
23	0	1	1
25	0	1	1
Audit institution			
26	1	0	0
29	1	0	0
30	0	1	0
36	1	0	0
37	0	1	0
40	0	1	1
41	1	0	0
45	0	1	1
46	1	0	0
47	1	0	0
Total	13	7	5

a. For the audit cases that receive critique several times for different years (see section 5.3.1 on this challenge), and therefore also crossing different government constellation periods, the condition of more than one opposition party is only met if it is from the same government period. If one opposition party engages in one government period, and a different opposition party engages in another government period, I still consider this as one opposition party.

b. For the case overview, see appendix 1.

This section's investigation has not, however, explained the occurrence of no Firefighting in 15 Ombudsman and 17 audit cases, despite the presence of incentives for opposition parties to engage. Therefore, the following section continues the investigation by investigating whether the explosive potential of the

institutional Fire Alarm case might explain the subsequent outcome of MP Firefighting or no Firefighting.

6.3. Explosive institutional Fire Alarms

The previous section revealed a rather clear pattern of Firefighting as opposition activity. This section continues and investigates if the explosive potential of the institutional Fire Alarm case explains MP Firefighting according to hypothesis 2.

The previous investigation revealed that in more than half of the cases there is no Firefighting outcome. Opposition parties have the incentives to respond to criticism of government actions, since damage to government reputation improves the opposition's position. Therefore, one would expect opposition MPs to use every Fire Alarm case to get some attention. If something is bad for government, it is good for the opposition (see section 3.5.2). However, if a Fire Alarm case is to be good for the opposition, it has to be bad enough for the government. If not, the opposition MPs risk paying the cost of engaging in Firefighting without getting any credit. Even worse, opposition MPs also risk damaging their own reputation if the public considers that the MP Firefighting serves an opportunistic purpose only. Therefore, before engaging in Firefighting, the opposition MPs will consider the explosive potential of the Fire Alarm. MPs consider if the case is explosive enough to impose cost and damage government reputation and thereby if it will benefit the opposition. If the case is explosive, opposition MPs have the incentives to engage in Firefighting. However, government MPs will also consider engaging in Firefighting if a case is explosive in order to control the damage of a government's reputation.

Recalling the understanding of the explosive potential of an institutional Fire Alarm case, the explosive potential relates to political parties' votes, office and policy goals. I operationalize the explosive potential variable to meet at least one of three criteria. The case is explosive if the case: 1) implicates high-ranking public positions (office); 2) relates to a controversial policy issue (policy); and 3) activates third party interests (votes).

High-ranking positions refer to ministers (the most explosive potential), but also high-level civil servant institutions and positions (departments, department managers and leaders of central public institutions). Because of the difference in explosive potential, I divide the office category in two, and assign one extra point if the case implicates a minister in the sense that the minister has made a mistake that relates to the case. In some of the audit cases, the minister is responsible in a more indirect way, for correcting the mistake, but not so much for the mistake itself. Therefore, in order to handle the cases in

the same way across the two institutions, I only allocate two points if cases have a direct link to a minister's mistake or minister involvement. I allocate one point for cases in which together with the minister's department, the minister is responsible for making corrections and amends (for more information on this explosive criteria, see section 5.6.3 and 4.5.1).

The criteria concerning controversial policy issues and third parties are particularly context related and might vary across different empirical country contexts and over time (for more information on this explosive criteria, see in particular section 4.5.1, but also section 5.6.3). For the criteria concerning third party interests, I focus on a link between the case content and third-party interests. If a third party is involved in the complaint process, there is a clear link and I assign the case a point for potential voter concern. I do not assign points to cases in which third parties engage at a later point in time, since the variable measures an explosive potential. For instance, media coverage or MP Firefighting might cause a third party to engage at a later point in time. However, a challenge in this respect is that the audit case deviates from the Ombudsman case, since the audit institution lacks a citizen complaint opportunity, apart from the option that third parties are involved in a complaint process. Nonetheless, I assign two of the audit cases scores for third party interests. One of the cases directly concerns retirement savings for a distinct group of union members, and one case directly concerns well-established public board interests (for more information on this criteria see 5.6.3 and 4.5.1).

I investigate the explosive potential of the 25 Ombudsman and 27 audit Fire Alarm cases by evaluating each case according to the criteria presented. I allocate one point for each criterion the case meets, except for the implicated minister criterion that gives two points.⁵¹ For the explosiveness scores for the 25 Ombudsman and 27 audit cases, see tables 6.8 and 6.9.

⁵¹ I conduct a robustness test for the explosive variable in which no weights are applied. The result is reported together with the results in figure 6.1 and 6.2.

Table 6.8: Explosiveness scores in the 25 Ombudsman Fire Alarm cases^{a)}

	Minister	High ranking position	Controversial policy area	Third party involvement**	Total explosive score
1	2 ^{b)}	1	1	0	4
2	0	0	1	0	1
3	0	0	0	0	0
4	0	0	0	0	0
5	2 ^{c)}	0	1	0	3
6	0	0	0	0	0
7	0	0	0	0	0
8	0	0	0	0	0
9	0	0	0	0	0
10	2	0	0	1	3
11	0	0	0	0	0
12	0	0	0	0	0
13	0	0	0	0	0
14	0	0	0	0	0
15	0	0	0	1	1
16	2 ^{d)}	1	0	0	3
17	0	0	0	0	0
18	0	0	0	0	0
19	0	0	0	1	1
20	0	0	0	0	0
21	2 ^{e)}	0	0	0	2
22	0	0	0	0	0
23	4*	1	0	0	5
24	0	0	0	0	0
25	4*	0	1	0	5

a. For the case overview, see appendix 1. b. The minister does not receive critique from the Ombudsman, but case documents show an implicated minister. c. The minister does not receive critique from the Ombudsman, but case directly links to an investigation of a minister. d. The minister does not receive critique from the Ombudsman, but case documents show an implicated minister. e. The minister does not receive critique from the Ombudsman, but case directly links to government conflict

* More than one minister implicated.

Table 6.9: Explosive scores in the 27 audit Fire Alarm cases^{a)}

	Minister	High ranking position	Controversial policy area	Third party involvement	Total explosive score
26	0	1	0	0	1
27	0	1	0	0	1
28	0	0	1	0	1
29	0	1	0	0	1
30	0	1	1	1	3
31	0	1	1	0	2
32	0	0	0	0	0
33	0	1	0	0	1
34	0	1	0	0	1
35	0	0	0	0	0
36	0	1	0	0	1
37	0	0	0	0	1
38	0	1	0	0	1
39	0	0	1	0	1
40	0	1	1	0	2
41	2	0	1	0	3
42	0	0	0	0	0
43	0	0	0	0	0
44	0	0	0	1	1
45	2	1	1	0	4
46	2	0	1	0	3
47	0	1	1	0	2
48	0	1	1	0	2
49	0	1	0	0	1
50	0	0	0	0	0
51	0	0	0	0	0
52	0	1	1	0	2

a. For the case overview, see appendix 1.

The results reveal a varying degree of explosiveness among the cases. For the Ombudsman institution, 10 of the cases have explosive potential. Some of the cases meet one of the criteria, while others meet several. For the audit institution, a majority of the cases, i.e. 21 of the 27 cases, have explosive potential. Still, most of the explosive audit cases are only “light” explosive, considering the high frequency of the score of 1. For the Ombudsman, 15 of the cases have no explosive potential, while for the audit institution, the number is 6.

The question remains whether co-variation exists between the explosive/not-explosive cases and the MP Firefighting/No Firefighting outcome. In

other words, does the explosive variable explain the Firefighting outcome? First, I use the variable, distinguishing between explosive and non-explosive cases and the dichotomy version of the Firefighting independent variable. Focus is on whether explosive potential co-varies with Firefighting outcome or no outcome. Table 6.10 displays the results of the bivariate analysis for the Ombudsman as well as the audit institutions.

Table 6.10: Overview of the results for the dichotomous explosive variable and Firefighting outcome

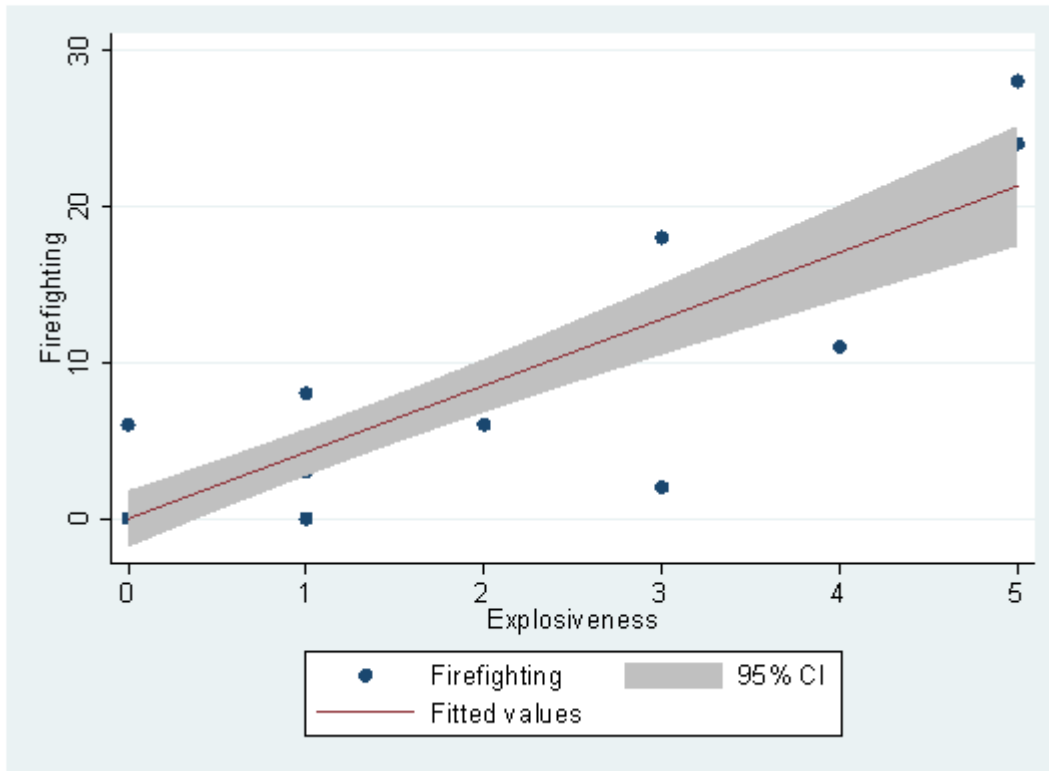
	Ombudsman			Audit		
	No Firefighting	Firefighting	Total	No Firefighting	Firefighting	Total
Not explosive	14 93 %	1 7 %	15 100 %	6 100 %	0 0 %	6 100 %
Explosive	1 10 %	9 90 %	10 100 %	11 52 %	10 48 %	21 100 %

OMB: tau-b = 0.83 ^{***}, Audit: tau-b = 0.41^{***} (***: p < 0.01).

For the Ombudsman institution, the results show that nine of the 10 explosive cases have a Firefighting outcome, and in 14 of the 15 non-explosive cases, there is no Firefighting outcome. The results for the audit institution are more mixed, since only 10 of 21 explosive cases have a Firefighting outcome. However, all six non-explosive cases have no Firefighting outcome. For the audit institution, a closer look at the difference between the explosive cases that have a Firefighting outcome and the ones without such an outcome reveal that the Firefighting outcome cases are more explosive. All of the four most explosive cases have a Firefighting outcome. In addition, the tau-b estimate is positive and statistically significant, which is in accordance with my hypothesis that Firefighting is more likely when the institutional Fire Alarm case is explosive.

Another question is if there is also co-variation between the degree of explosive potential and the degree of MP Firefighting. I investigate this question by using the entire scale of Firefighting and explosiveness, which I consider as interval variables to investigate the correlation between the level of explosiveness and Firefighting (on the variable levels, see section 5.6). Now the two variables are ready for a bivariate analysis on the interval variable level. For the results for the two institutions, see the scatterplots in figures 6.1 and 6.2.

Figure 6.1: Ombudsman institution scatterplot, illustrating the correlation between the degree of MP Firefighting and the degree of case explosiveness^{a)}



Notes: Pearson's $r = 0.90^{***}$ ($*** p < 0.001$)

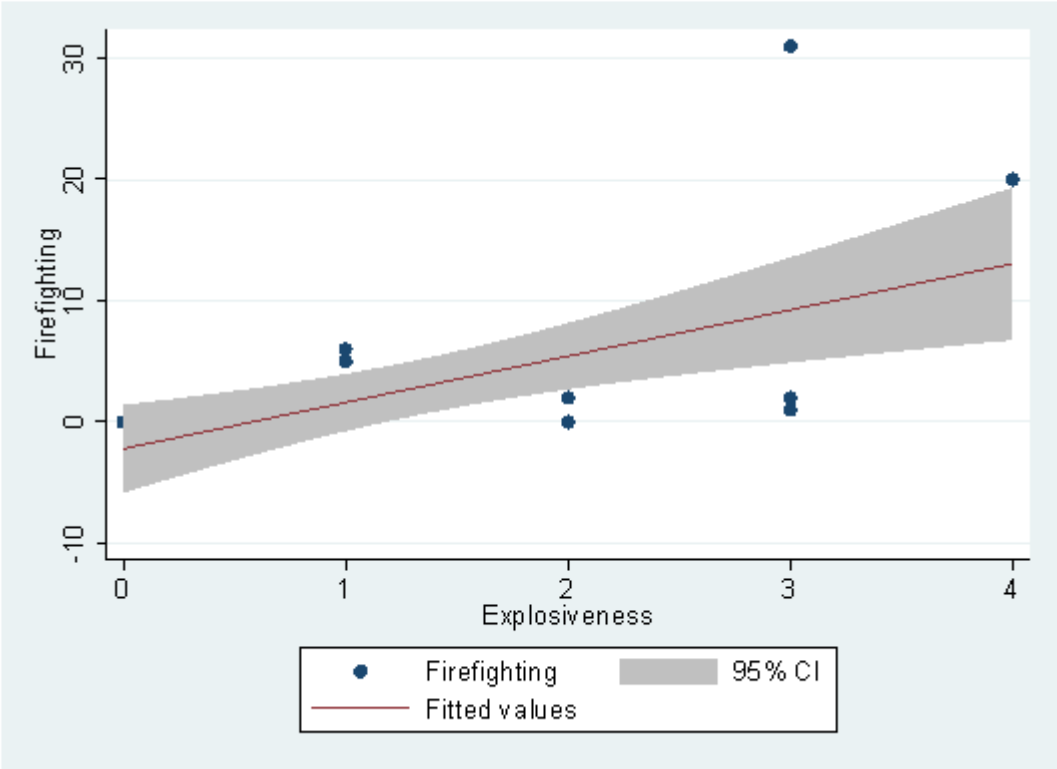
a. The result of the robustness test, where no weights are applied for the explosive scores, is a reduction in the measure for the correlation to 0.76. The result, where no weights are applied for the Firefighting variable is a limited reduction to 0.87. The measure still resembles a strong correlation.

The results for the Ombudsman as well as the audit institution show that there is co-variation between the degree of explosive potential and the degree of Firefighting. The scatterplots demonstrate increasing tendency curves. A higher degree of explosiveness is followed by a higher degree of MP Firefighting. In addition, the Pearson's r estimates are positive and statistically significant. This means that in addition to a correlation between explosive cases and Firefighting, there also is correlation between the degree of explosiveness and the degree of Firefighting. However, the correlation estimates for the audit institution are not as strong as for the Ombudsman institution.

Overall, the two models are only influenced by extreme observations to a very limited extent. Most variable values are placed at a limited distance from the fitted value lines. However, in the audit case, the high Firefighting score of 31 in case 5 is placed rather far from the tendency line.⁵²

⁵² There still is a positive and statistical significant correlation when the case is removed. In fact, the results for the Pearson's r estimate does not change.

Figure 6.2: Audit institution scatterplot, illustrating the correlation between the degree of MP Firefighting and the degree of case explosiveness^{a)}



Notes: Pearson’s $r = 0.59^{**}$ (**: $p < 0.01$)

a. The result of the robustness test, where no weights are applied for the explosive scores, is a very limited increase in the measure for the correlation to 0.62. The result, where no weights are applied for the Firefighting variable is a limited reduction to 0.52. The measure still resembles a rather strong correlation.

To sum up the results, the degree of explosiveness varies across cases, ranging from the score of 0 to 5. Comparing the two institutions, the two bivariate investigations of the explosive variable and the Firefighting variable in the two institutions show that the explosive potential of the Fire Alarm seems to a great extent to explain the difference in Firefighting and no Firefighting outcome. In addition, the degree of explosiveness correlates to the degree of Firefighting. The correlation coefficients are statistically significant on the nominal as well as the interval variable level. However, when comparing the two institutions, the effects are present for both institutions but seem to be stronger for the Ombudsman than for the audit institutions.

6.4. Media coverage

The previous two sections have demonstrated that both the MP's party position and the explosive potential explain MP Firefighting. Firefighting is primarily an opposition MP activity, and MPs primarily engage in Firefighting related to cases that have explosive potential.

This section investigates whether media coverage of the institutional Fire Alarm cases correlates to the Firefighting outcome according to hypothesis 3. Recalling the media coverage hypothesis, re-election seeking MPs care about voters' attitudes and media coverage increases the salience of the institutional Fire Alarm case. Political parties or individual MPs exploit the media interest, but MPs might also worry about voters' attitudes and adhere to the role of "parliamentarian". This means that media coverage turns up the Fire Alarm and motivates MPs to engage in Firefighting.

First, I investigate the extent of media coverage of the selected institutional Fire Alarm cases. The investigation of the Ombudsman cases reveals that all cases receive at least a single instance of standard media coverage. However, several cases receive additional instances of follow-up media coverage. Therefore, when categorizing the Ombudsman cases, I distinguish between cases that receive only a single piece of standard media coverage and cases that also receive follow-up media coverage. The results for the Ombudsman institution show that there is follow-up media coverage in 15 of the cases, while 10 cases receive only a single piece of standard media coverage. The content of the standard media coverage are references to the Ombudsman newsletter. For the audit institution there is no procedure for newsletter content related to individual cases. For the audit institution, four cases receive no media coverage while 23 cases receive media coverage. Still, two of the cases receive only one instance of media coverage. Therefore, I make a similar distinction as for the Ombudsman institution and distinguish between cases that receive 0 or 1 instance of media coverage and cases that receive more than one instance of media coverage. The result for the audit institution is that six audit cases fit the into the no media coverage category, while 21 cases fit into the media coverage category. For an overview of media coverage for the Ombudsman and audit institutions, see table 6.11.

Table 6.11: Overview of cases that receive media coverage or no media coverage

	No media coverage	Media coverage	Total
Ombudsman	10	15	25
Audit	6	21	27

Having clarified the number of media coverage cases, the investigation continues to clarify whether there is co-variation between Firefighting outcome and media coverage. First, I use the dichotomous variables, distinguishing between media coverage and no media coverage as well as Firefighting and no Firefighting (on the variable levels, see section 5.6). The results show a relatively high degree of co-variation between the dependent Firefighting variable and the media coverage variable. Cases that receive media coverage tend to have a Firefighting outcome. For both the Ombudsman and the audit institutions, all cases that have a Firefighting outcome receive media coverage. In addition, the cases that have no Firefighting outcome receive no media coverage. However, as the numbers indicate, there are more cases that receive media coverage than there are Firefighting outcome cases. The results show that five of the Ombudsman and 10 of the audit cases receive media coverage but have no Firefighting outcome. Moreover, the correlation tests show significant correlations between the two variables, although stronger for the Ombudsman than for the audit institution. For the results of the bivariate analysis for the dichotomous media coverage and Firefighting variables, see table 6.12.

Table 6.12: Overview of the results for the dichotomous media and Firefighting variables for the two institution cases

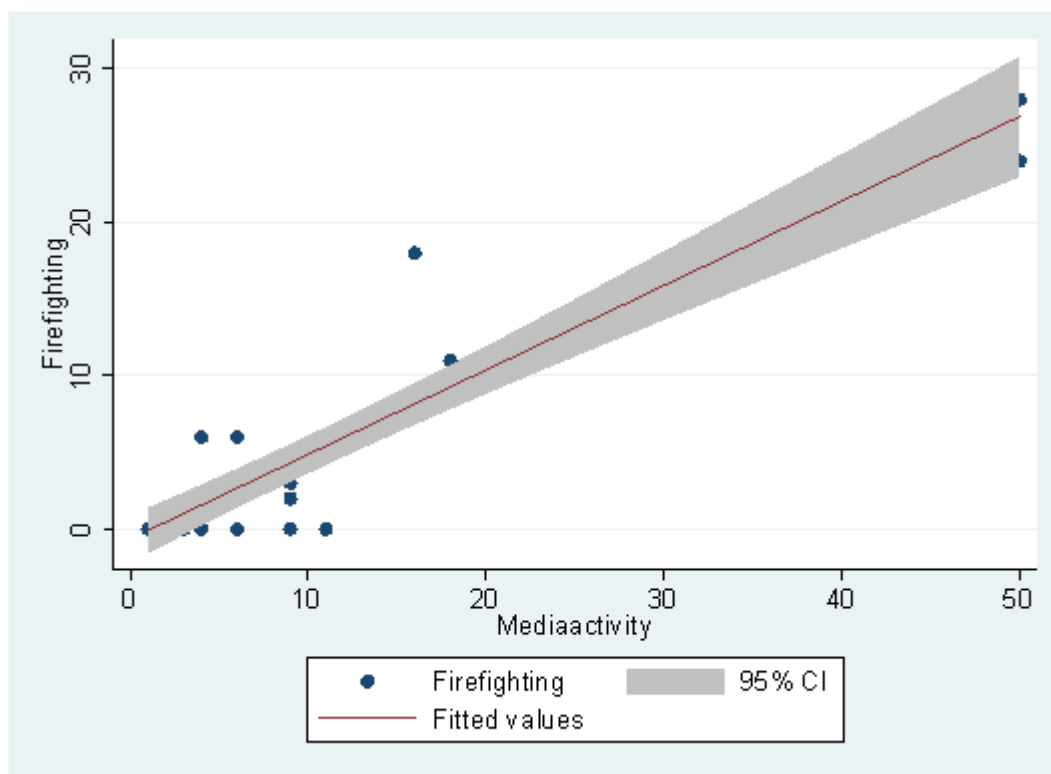
	Ombudsman			Audit		
	No Firefighting	Firefighting	Total	No Firefighting	Firefighting	Total
No Media	10 100 %	0 0 %	10 100 %	6 100 %	0 0 %	6 100 %
Media	5 33 %	10 67 %	15 100 %	10 48 %	11 52 %	21 100 %

OMB: tau-b = 0.67***; Audit: tau-b = 0.41*** (***) p < 0.001).

Another question for the media coverage variable is if the degree of media coverage co-varies with the degree of Firefighting. For this analysis, I investigate this question by using the entire range for media coverage and Firefighting – which I consider as interval variables – to investigate the correlation between the level of media coverage and Firefighting (on the variable levels, see section 5.6). Now the two variables are ready for a bivariate analysis on the interval variable level. For the media variable values, instead of ordinal categories I use the exact numbers of registered media events in order to capture the large spread in the number of media coverage instances that varies from only one to several hundreds. Ordinal categories would remove this difference. It is, however, not possible to count the exact number of media coverage instances for all of the cases. Therefore, I assign a maximum media value of 50, which

seems suitable compared to the small and medium media coverage numbers of the other cases. For the results, see the scatterplots for the two institutions in figure 6.3 and 6.4.

Figure 6.3: Ombudsman institution scatterplot, illustrating the correlation between the degree of MP Firefighting and the degree of media coverage^{a)}



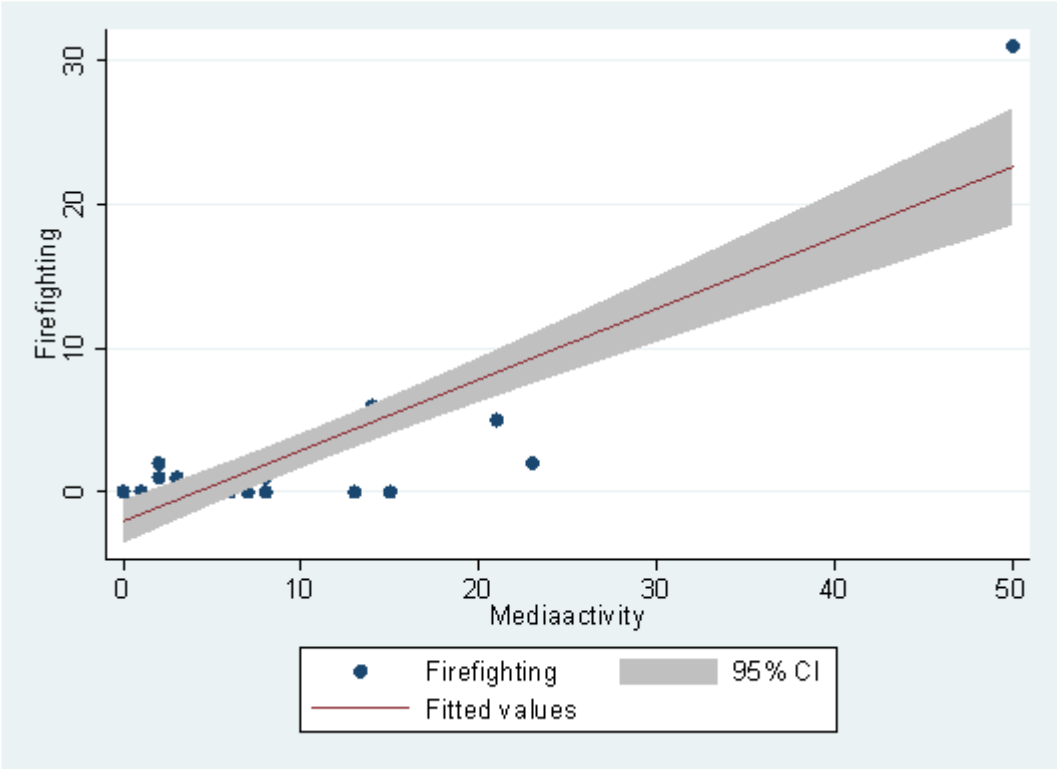
Notes: Pearson's $r = 0.93$ *** (***: $p < 0.001$).

a. The result of the robustness test, where the weights for the Firefighting variable are removed, demonstrate highly similar scatterplots. In fact, the Pearson's r measure comes out identical.

Both the results illustrated in the scatterplots and the results for Pearson's r indicate strong, significant correlations between the degree of media coverage and the degree of Firefighting. The results are remarkably similar for the two institutions. Besides the almost identical Pearson's r result, the scatterplots also reveal very similar patterns of a clustering of cases in the low degree of media coverage/low degree of Firefighting followed by a few high activity cases. There are, however, a few more medium cases for the Ombudsman than the audit institution. The scatterplot also reveals that most case values are close to the fitted value line.⁵³

⁵³ For the Ombudsman and the audit institution, there still is a positive and statistical significant correlation when the two high activity, value 50, media cases for each institution are removed. For the Ombudsman institution, the results for the Pearson's

Figure 6.4: Audit institution scatterplot, illustrating the correlation between the degree of MP Firefighting and the degree of media coverage^{a)}



Notes: Pearson’s $r = 0.90$ *** (***: $p < 0.001$)

a. The result of the robustness test, where the weights for the Firefighting variable are removed, demonstrate highly similar scatterplots. The Pearson’s r measure is slightly changed to 0.85.

Although, the Pearson’s r result shows a positive correlation, it is important to stress that the direction of the causality is insecure. It is more difficult to assess the direction, because it is highly likely that the media coverage and Firefighting direction goes in both directions. In other words, media coverage might lead to Firefighting, and Firefighting might lead to media coverage. It is not possible from this type of investigation to decide on the direction of the causality between the media coverage and the Firefighting. Nonetheless, we can conclude that there is media coverage in cases that have no Firefighting outcome, so at least we know that media coverage does not entirely depend on Firefighting. Further investigations are required in order to answer this question. Therefore, the direction of the causality will be investigated as part of the qualitative within case investigation using the process tracing method in chapter 8, in which the timing of the events can be clarified.

r estimate is slightly reduced to 0.81. For the audit institution, the results for the Pearson’s r estimate is reduced to 0.62.

To sum up, the results show a high degree of co-variation between the media coverage variable and Firefighting outcome, and between the degree of media coverage and degree of Firefighting. Still, this analysis leaves insecurity related to the direction of the causality. Nevertheless, the investigation has demonstrated that there is always media coverage in Firefighting cases.

6.5. Damage control

The previous sections have demonstrated effects of the position of the MP's party, the explosive potential, and media coverage on MP Firefighting. This section investigates if damage control is associated with Firefighting as stated in hypothesis 4.

Both the Ombudsman and the audit Fire Alarm cases are criticism of maladministration directed at public agencies. I expect that if agencies demonstrate or give an impression of handling the case, MPs are less likely to spend time and effort to engage in Firefighting related to the case, but if agencies seem to lack the will to meet the Ombudsman or audit recommendations of changes, MPs are more likely to engage in Firefighting. In other words, if agencies respond in an effective way by putting the fire out, there is no reason for MPs to engage in Firefighting.

I investigate damage control related to the institutional Fire Alarm cases by deciding if agencies adhere to the critique, correct mistakes or demonstrate a will to do so. Damage control might not always imply correcting all mistakes, but whether agencies seem willing to correct mistakes is nonetheless important. I consider if agencies attract attention to the case by refusing to adhere to the critique, make no response or demonstrate a lack of effort. The damage control variable is investigated as a 0/1 dichotomous variable, either agencies engage in damage control (0) or they do not (1).

The investigation reveals a rather large variation in the agency response. For some cases, agencies demonstrate mixed strategies. Therefore, I make an overview of agency comments and agency activity related to each case. From this, I consider each comment and activity separately. I register if a comment or an activity is damage control or not. In a mixed case, I consider the overall impression of the agency response. For instance, in case 1, I register supporting activity as well as less acknowledging comments. Since there is direct supporting activity, I assess this case as having damage control. It is, however, not so clear, if supporting activity makes damage control effective. Therefore, the question of damage control is investigated in more detail in the qualitative investigation in chapter 8.

Overall, the result of the damage control assessment is that a majority of cases lack damage control. In 13 of the Ombudsman and 21 of the audit cases,

there is a lack of damage control. For an overview of the number of cases in relation to damage control and no damage control for the two institutions, see table 6.13.

Table 6.13: Overview of damage control values for the Ombudsman and audit institutions

	Damage control (0)	No damage control (1)	Total
Ombudsman	12	13	25
Audit	6	21	27

Having clarified the values for the damage control variable, the investigation continues to investigate if there is co-variation between Firefighting outcome and the damage control variable. The investigation continues to investigate if a lack of damage control leads to Firefighting. The results reveal a rather blurred picture. In addition, the results for the tau-b demonstrate no correlation effect between damage control and Firefighting outcome. For the results of the investigation of co-variation between damage control and Firefighting, see table 6.14.

Table 6.14: Overview of the results for the damage control variable and Firefighting outcome

	Ombudsman			Audit		
	No Firefighting	Firefighting	Total	No Firefighting	Firefighting	Total
Damage control (0)	7 58 %	5 42 %	12 100 %	4 67 %	2 33 %	6 100 %
No damage control (1)	8 62 %	5 38 %	13 100 %	13 62 %	8 38 %	21 100 %

Ombudsman: Tau-b= -0.03, p=0.44; Audit: Tau-b= 0.04, p=0.41

However, I have previously argued that MPs engage in Firefighting if there is a potential to inflict cost on government. MPs will only have the incentives to respond if there is a plausible reason that government is responsible for the agency action. In order to blame the government for agency mistakes, the agency must be within the reach of a minister. Therefore, the effect of the damage control variable may depend on the distance between agency and government. In this respect, there is an important difference between the Ombudsman and audit institution to consider. There is greater variation in the agency type for the Ombudsman institution than in the audit institution. The Ombudsman deals with cases concerning ministerial departments, lower standing institutions and municipalities, as well as different external boards. The audit case deviates from the Ombudsman case, since all the cases concern either government matters (department level) or lower standing institutions, which nevertheless function because of department delegation. The Audit General institution only deals with cases concerning the national budget, and therefore neither municipalities nor different external agency bodies are among the agencies in the audit cases. This means that for the audit institution, all inflicted agencies are within the reach of a minister, but still there is no effect for the audit institution. It is possible, however, that the distance from lower standing institutions is also too far away from the minister. Therefore, I conduct a new investigation by creating a new damage control variable that distinguishes between department related cases and other cases. I multiply the original damage control value by 1 if the case is on the department level, thereby sustaining the original damage control value. For other agency types, I multiply the damage control value by 0, thereby leaving all these cases with a damage control value of 0, regardless of the original damage control value. Then, I investigate once again if there is co-variation between Firefighting and the new damage control variable. For the results, see figure 6.15.

Table 6.15: Overview of the results for the new damage control variable and Firefighting outcome

	Ombudsman			Audit		
	No Firefighting	Firefighting	Total	No Firefighting	Firefighting	Total
New damage control (0)	12 71 %	45 29 %	17 100 %	9 82 %	2 18 %	11 100 %
New no damage control (1)	3 38 %	5 62 %	8 100 %	8 50 %	8 50 %	16 100 %

OMB: Tau-b = 0.32, p = 0.51; Pearson r (Firefighting interval variable) = 0.42*, Audit: Tau-b = 0.32* (* p < 0.05).

The result of the analysis of the new damage control variable and Firefighting show that there is an effect of damage control. Although the table still leaves a somewhat mixed picture, the correlation coefficients’ revealed were moderate and significant. However, the tests on the 0.05 level are close to being insignificant (the tau-b for the Ombudsman case is in fact insignificant). In other words, the new damage control variable, which distinguishes between agencies on department level and other agencies, indicates that there might be a damage control effect on MP Firefighting. This means that there seems to be an effect of an interaction between damage control and the office criteria for the explosive variable. Although, this investigation indicates an effect, it is important to stress that there is some insecurity on the direction of the causality. It is not possible in this analysis to ensure that the agency activity always comes before the parliamentary activity. In addition, as previously mentioned, it is not so clear what makes damage control effective. Therefore, I make a more thorough investigation of damage control in the qualitative investigation in chapter 8.

6.6. Multivariate analysis

The previous sections have investigated each of the project’s variables in turn. The previously demonstrated results indicate that all variables correlate to a very high or some degree with the Firefighting outcome for the Ombudsman as well as the audit institution.

This section conducts a multivariate analysis, including all the variables in one model. In addition, I merge the data for the Ombudsman and the audit institution into one dataset. This way, I double the number of observations in the analysis and thereby decrease the sensitivity and influence of single observations.

The analysis starts out by including one independent variable in the model and subsequently one more until all variables are included in the same model. This way, I can see how the effects vary between models. I conduct this multivariate analysis as a linear regression analysis and I use the interval scaled Firefighting variable as the model's dependent variable. When it comes to the independent variables, as demonstrated in previous sections, some variables are interval scaled variables (the explosive and the media coverage variables), while others are dichotomous variables (the opposition and the damage control variable).

For this analysis, I include the institutionalization variable. The previous investigations have demonstrated similar patterns of MP Firefighting for both institutions. Here, I construct an institution dummy variable in order to investigate possible effects of the institution – the Ombudsman or the audit institution – on MP Firefighting. I assign the value of 0 to the audit cases and the value of 1 to the Ombudsman cases. For a discussion on the institution effect, see the following section.

The multivariate analysis tests the project's theoretical expectations by measuring the effect of the overall theoretical model as well as the effect of the individual independent variables. For the results of the multivariate analysis, see table 6.16.⁵⁴

Overall, the model is quite convincing, since the adjusted R-square value is close to 0.9. In other words, the independent variables explain almost 90% of the variation on the dependent variable, MP Firefighting. Nevertheless, the multivariate analysis reveals insecure individual coefficients

The new damage control variable is the first variable to enter the model and comes out insignificant. Still, recalling the bivariate analysis, the correlation coefficients were close to being insignificant. The party position variable is second to enter the model. At first, the variable is significant, but when the explosive variable is included; the opposition variable loses explanatory power. However, when the media coverage variable, as the final variable, is included in the model, the explosive variable turns out to be insignificant. In other words, the explosive variable is significant at first, but not significant together with the media coverage variable. The institution dummy variable is present in all four models but is not significant until the final model in which all variables are included. In this final model, the media variable and the institution dummy variable come out significant. The significant institution dummy variable indicates that there is an effect related to the degree of institutionalization. I comment on this result in the following section.

⁵⁴ For a Lvr2plot, a leverage versus residual squared plot, related to the importance of extreme observations, see appendix 3.

Table 6.16: Multivariate analysis of MP Firefighting^{a)}

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Firefighting	Firefighting	Firefighting	Firefighting
Institution	2.393 (2.208)	1.207 (1.727)	2.288 (1.423)	2.264** (0.772)
Damagecont.	1.196 (2.222)	-1.646 (1.794)	-0.725 (1.472)	-0.265 (0.800)
Opposition		10.03*** (1.739)	3.275 (1.951)	1.879 (1.067)
Explosiveness			3.360*** (0.667)	0.630 (0.443)
Media coverage				0.398*** (0.0373)
_cons	2.032 (1.961)	-0.000225 (1.563)	-2.398 (1.359)	-2.770*** (0.738)
<i>N</i>	52	52	52	52
adj. <i>R</i> ²	-0.016	0.388	0.594	0.880

a. The result of a robustness test, where no weights are applied for the Firefighting activity, shows some noticeable changes. Overall, the model where no weights are applied demonstrate weaker effects. The size of the coefficients tend to decrease, while the direction of the effects stay the same. In particular the effect of the institution variable decreases. In addition, there are some differences related to the question of significance. The effect of the institution is no longer significant; instead, the opposition variable comes out significant. However, related to the results of significance, one has to take into consideration that this investigation is a population study. In addition, the results show signs of multicollinearity, which is commented on in the text. Related to the adjusted square R measure, the result of 0.85 is close to the value of 0.88 in the weighted model.

Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

While the previously conducted bivariate analyses were quite convincing, the multivariate analysis reveals rather insecure individual coefficients. These rather insecure measures and changing sizes of coefficients and related p-values indicate multi collinearity challenges in the model. If this is the case, one should be careful about concluding on the individual coefficients; for instance, ruling out the importance of the explosive variable. When testing the model for multi collinearity, the explosive variable in particular comes close to the

tolerance limit of 0.3,⁵⁵ while the media and opposition variables have tolerance values of 0.45 and 0.48. For all the VIF and tolerance values, see table A.1 in appendix 3. In addition, measures for correlations between the independent variables come out significant for several of the variable relations. For instance, the test between the explosive and the media coverage variables comes out strong and significant (0.74*** (p < 0.001)). For the results of the correlation measures for the other variable relations, see table A.2 in appendix 3.

In addition to the individual coefficient challenges, the previous sections made some reservations on endogenous challenges in relation to the media coverage and damage control variables. Regarding media coverage and parliamentary activity, it is highly likely that a feedback loop exists (on feedback loop, see Stubager and Sønderskov 2011: 15). The multivariate analysis provides no answer to this insecurity either. However, together with the insecure effects of the individual independent variables, this challenge supports the necessity of supplementing the quantitative bi- and multivariate investigation by a qualitative within-case investigation, which follows in chapter 8. Nevertheless, this analysis supports that the overall theoretical framework seems to a high degree to explain MP Firefighting.

6.7. Institution effect

The multivariate analysis in the previous section demonstrated a significant effect of the institution dummy variable in the final model, where all variables were included. This result indicates an effect of the institution on MP Firefighting. However, the robustness test showed some noticeable changes, when no weights were applied for the Firefighting variable. Still, I argue that the weights offer a more informed operationalization of the Firefighting variable.

The previous quantitative investigation demonstrated very similar patterns of Firefighting for the two institutions, the Ombudsman and the audit institution. Overall, for both institutions, the investigation demonstrates rather clear patterns of co-variation between MP Firefighting and the project's variables: the party's position (opposition), the explosive potential, media coverage and damage control variables.

The chapter's initial investigations demonstrated that the parliamentary activity is slightly higher for the Ombudsman than for the audit institution. There are several more parliamentary questions and more frequent control committee activity in the Ombudsman cases than in the audit cases. From this

⁵⁵ Sønderskov refers to values below 0.3 (2014: 221).

follows a higher Firefighting score for the Ombudsman than the audit institution. For an overview of the parliamentary activity for the two institutions, see table 6.17. In addition, the table shows a calculation of the average activity, demonstrating a higher average activity for Ombudsman cases than audit cases.

Table 6.17: Overview of the parliamentary activity for the two institutions, the Ombudsman and audit institution

	Ombudsman	Audit
Parliamentary Q	56	44
Control Committee	7 (in 7 cases)	4 (in 2 cases)
Investigative Committee	1	0
No Confidence vote	1	1
Total Firefighting	119	74
Total cases/activity cases	25/10	27/10
Average activity	4.76/11.9	2.7/7.4

At first, one might get the impression that these results do not support the institutionalization hypothesis very well. The result that the more institutionalized institution demonstrates a lower degree of Firefighting might seem remarkable, since institutionalization facilitates and provides structure for activity according to hypothesis 5. However, the Firefighting investigated is activity initiated by MPs. In other words, the institutionalized process does not guide this Firefighting activity. However, the fact that there is an institutionalized process related to the audit cases means that there is institutionalized Firefighting to consider. In chapter 9, therefore, I continue the investigation of the institutionalization variable by conducting an investigation of institutionalized MP Firefighting.

6.8. Conclusion and chapter summery

This chapter has presented the results of the quantitative investigation of MP Firefighting in the Ombudsman and the audit institution. I have used quantitative techniques to investigate patterns of co-variation between the project’s dependent variable, MP Firefighting, and the project’s moderating variables.

The project’s dependent variable is MP Firefighting defined as formal parliamentary activity based on MPs’ own initiative utilizing parliamentary questions, the control committee, investigative committees, and the No Confidence Vote. The hypothesized explaining variables are moderating variables that

trigger MP Firefighting, when the Ombudsman and audit institution raise institutional Fire Alarms of mal-administration. The expectation is that Firefighting is primarily opposition activity, since opposition MPs have the incentives to engage. However, MPs only engage in Firefighting if the institutional Fire Alarm cases have an explosive potential. The cases must have the potential of inflicting cost on government; otherwise, even opposition MPs will refrain from engaging in Firefighting. In addition, I expect that media coverage and a lack of damage control to turn up the Fire Alarm, leading to MP Firefighting. The fifth and last variable relates to the institution. I expect that government MPs need additional institutional support in order to engage in MP Firefighting. In case of a higher degree of institutionalized process, I expect more government MP Firefighting. The investigation of the institutionalization variable continues in chapter 9.

First, I conducted bi-variate analysis, while keeping the two institution's Fire Alarm cases separate. The methods applied for these analyses were descriptive statistics, quantitative bi-variate correlation measures and scatter plots, including tendency lines. Overall, these results demonstrate similar patterns of MP Firefighting for the two institutions. MP Firefighting is to a great extent opposition MP activity. Explosive cases lead to a high degree to MP Firefighting. There is always media coverage of cases that have a Firefighting outcome, and a lack of damage control correlates to MP Firefighting (new damage control, interaction variable). However, in relation to the media coverage and damage control variables, the investigation leaves insecurity on the direction of the causality.

In addition to these bivariate analyses, this chapter has conducted a multivariate analysis using OLS linear regression analysis. For this investigation, all 52 institutional Fire Alarm cases were included in one model. In addition to the four variables from the bivariate analysis, I included the project's fifth variable, the institutionalization variable, by adding an institution dummy variable. Overall, the results of the multivariate analysis demonstrate a rather convincing model, since the adjusted R-square value is close to 0.9. In other words, the independent variables explain almost 90% of the variation on the dependent variable, MP Firefighting. However, the multivariate analysis reveals insecure individual coefficients, indicating multi collinearity challenges. This means that the quantitative investigation leaves unresolved questions regarding the importance of the individual variables in relation to each other.

In addition to these results, the multivariate analysis demonstrated an effect of the institution on MP Firefighting. The significant institution dummy variable indicates an effect related to the degree of institutionalization. The direction of the effect is that a higher degree of institutionalization has a negative effect on MP Firefighting, since the investigation states a lower degree of

Firefighting in the more institutionalized institution, the audit institution. However, an institutionalized institution means that there is institutionalized Firefighting to consider. Therefore, I return to the institutionalization hypothesis in chapter 9, where I investigate institutionalized MP Firefighting.

Overall, the chapter has applied quantitative techniques in order to test the project's hypotheses concerning when MPs engage in Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarms of mal-administration from the Ombudsman and the audit institutions. It has demonstrated evidence for the project's theoretical model and demonstrated clear patterns of MP Firefighting. In addition, the investigations demonstrate similar patterns for two of the other independent decentral parliamentary control institutions, the Ombudsman and the audit institution. However, as mentioned, the chapter also revealed insecurity on the direction of the causality for the media coverage and damage control variables, and the multivariate analysis demonstrated insecurity on the individual effects of the variables. Therefore, the project continues the investigation and supplements the quantitative investigation using a qualitative in-depth investigation.

Chapter 7: Design of qualitative investigation

The previous chapter presented a quantitative investigation of the theoretical hypothesis, demonstrating rather clear patterns of co-variation between the project's dependent variable, MP Firefighting, and the project's moderating variables. Thus, the previous chapter's results demonstrated a rather high confidence in the project's theoretical model.

However, the investigation also demonstrated some challenges. The multivariate analysis revealed insecure effects of the individual independent variables when they figure in the same model in the multivariate analysis. In addition, the investigation was not able to answer questions concerning the direction of causal order between the media variable, the damage control variable and MP Firefighting. The challenge related to the direction of causality and measurement challenges are typical challenges related to larger-N studies (Lieberman 2005). Although I have carefully assessed and measured my indicators, this type of categorization of variable values implies the reduction of empirical complexity. In addition, it is a rather common assumption that patterns of co-variation do not qualify as satisfying causal evidence.

Therefore, this chapter will present the design of a qualitative in-depth case study of institutional Fire Alarm cases using the process tracing method. The purpose is to provide empirical evidence of the causal mechanisms playing out, as indicated in the correlation analysis in the previous quantitative investigation. This means that I stress the value added by small-N comparisons in providing empirical evidence for the causal mechanism. A small-N investigation provides insights into how the various factors are related. Overall, I expect the qualitative case study to offer more in-depth knowledge of MP Firefighting. The following chapter (8) conducts the qualitative investigation of institutional Fire Alarm cases.

This chapter will proceed as follows. First, the chapter presents the project's type of qualitative case study – a theory-testing case study – and the use of typical cases. Then the chapter presents the criteria for case selection and the selection of the cases themselves. Following from this, the chapter presents the project's use of the process tracing method. The chapter ends by presenting additional information for the qualitative investigation in the chapter that follows (chapter 8) about the use of data sources and the political context related to the selected cases.

7.1. Theory testing case study and typical cases

This section explains the type of within-case study for the project's qualitative investigation. Related to this, the section deals with the question of different ontological views related to small-N studies when dealing with recommendations for case selection.

In the previous chapter (chapter 6), I concluded that the results of the quantitative investigation were convincing in terms of establishing the expected correlation between Firefighting and the independent moderating variables. The overall test of the theoretical model left an adjusted R-square value close to 0.9. This means that the quantitative analysis provides a high degree of confidence in the theoretical model. I consider this when deciding on the type of within-case study for the qualitative investigation.

Lieberman (2005), Beach and Pedersen (2016) and Seawright and Gerring (2008) distinguish between different types of small-N within case studies, such as model/theory building studies or theory testing studies. If there is a high degree of confidence in the theoretical model, they recommend conducting a theory testing within case study. In addition, Lieberman (2005:440) and Beach and Pedersen ed. (2016) refer to the purpose of this kind of theory testing within-case study as providing information about mechanism and context. In other words, the type of within-case study for this project seems clear. Thus, I conduct this project's small-N within case study as a theory testing investigation in order to demonstrate empirical evidence for the mechanisms triggering MP Firefighting.

Now that I have decided on the type of within case study, I can continue to address the question of case selection. It is important to decide on the type of within-case study before selecting the cases, since the recommendations for the case selection vary for a model-building study compared to a model-testing study.

In spite of the fundamental difference in terms and ontological starting points, the different approaches share an overall understanding regarding selecting cases for a small-N theory testing study, where confidence in the theoretical model is stated. Beach et al. (2016), Lieberman (2005) and Seawright and Gerring (2008) unanimously recommend selecting typical cases for such a theory testing study. It therefore seems uncontroversial to pursue such a path. Thus, the strategy is to select typical cases for the qualitative case study.

However, these scholars' approaches differ when it comes to how to select typical cases for the study. In other words, regarding the methods for selecting cases for a theory testing within-case study by the use of typical cases, the approaches suggest different methods that result in the selection of different

cases. This means that the selection methods are somewhat more controversial. In addition, the methodological approaches, reflecting different ontological starting points, use different language related to the selection of cases. For instance, as a starting point, it is worth mentioning that Beach and Pedersen's ed. (2016) recommendations concerning within-case studies do not refer to variables as Lieberman (2005) does, but to causes and outcomes. I handle this challenge by making "translations" from cause and outcome references to variable values when needed. However, for the selection of cases, based on the purpose of this project, I first consider these different approaches and decide on which criteria to follow.

Beach and Pedersen ed. (2016) refer to typical cases as cases where cause and outcome are present. In variable terms in relation to this project, this means cases that have a Firefighting outcome and values for the moderating variables above 0. Lieberman refers to typical cases as cases "on the line", which means that typical cases also consist of cases that have a value of 0 on the dependent and independent variable. Beach and Pedersen ed. (2016) argue on the contrary that cases lacking membership in cause and outcome are theoretically uninteresting for a theory-testing study. Seawright and Gerring (2008) follow the same logic as Lieberman by defining typical cases as cases, which have the lowest residual (distance between expected value and actual value). A brief test of the Seawright and Gerring (2008) method, calculating the residual for each case, results in most typical cases being among the no-activity cases.

The purpose of this project's case study is to provide evidence for the causal mechanism playing out as indicated in the quantitative investigation. Therefore, I also argue that both the cause and the outcome needs to be present in order to trace the mechanism. The activity has to be present in the case in order to clarify the relationship between the variables. Therefore, I select typical cases among cases where cause and outcome are present. In variable terms, this means that I refrain from selecting cases that have the value of 0 on the dependent variables, and at least one of the moderating variables has to be present in the case.

In addition, for the case selection, Lieberman (2005) stresses the importance of selecting more than one case in order to be able to compare. Nonetheless, in this project I stress the importance of enhancing the advantage of the within-case approach in demonstrating how the theorized mechanisms actually work, since in the quantitative investigation I have already made use of an across-case approach.

To sum up, I will conduct the project's qualitative case study as a theory testing investigation, selecting typical cases for the investigation. I follow Beach and Pedersen's (2016) advice and define typical cases as cases where

both outcome and causes are present. In the following section, I consider criteria for selecting between the typical cases and the cases for the project's qualitative case study.

7.2. The case selection

This section presents criteria for the selection of cases and conducts the selection of cases among the typical cases for the project's qualitative case study.

In addition to general case selection criteria, I consider if the before mentioned project-related challenges require that I add some project specific criteria for the case selection. The literature suggests several criteria for case selections. In this project, I make use of four of these criteria, while adding one project specific criteria.

The first criterion is to select different cases within the group of typical cases. When selecting more than one case, both Lieberman (2005) and Beach and Pedersen ed. (2016) recommend, here in Lieberman's (2005:445) terms, to select cases with the widest degree of variation on the central independent variable as well as the dependent variable. The central goal is to account for important patterns of variation on the outcome. Beach and Pedersen ed. refer to selecting cases that are different within the category of "typical" cases, formulated thus: "Given the sensitivity of mechanisms to contextual conditions, it is best if these two studies were done on cases that are maximally different within the set of typical cases" (2016: 325). Thus, the two approaches agree on the importance of selecting different cases within the category of typical cases. In this project, I have selected cases for two different decentral parliamentary control institutions. Therefore, I consider this criterion of different cases to mean cases from different institutions.

The second criteria, adhering to Beach et al. (2016: 282), is to avoid cases where there is residual empirical uncertainty about membership in the category of typical cases. In variable terms, I consider case values of 1 on the interval dependent variable as uncertain. Therefore, I exclude these cases. For the moderating variables, the previous quantitative investigation has revealed that there are always some of these active in Firefighting outcome cases.

The third criterion is to select cases that have a rich empirical record (Beach and Pedersen ed. 2016: 282; Lieberman 2005). This is a very important criterion, since I need rich data on the activity in the cases in order to be able to demonstrate how the mechanism plays out in the selected cases. Considering this criterion, I have to exclude Ombudsman cases dated before 2008 if the activity largely consists of parliamentary questions, due to the defective audio files (see section 5.4.2 for more information).

The fourth criteria, is not to select cases that have been used to develop the research design (Lieberman 2005). Even though, I haven't directly used cases to develop the project framework, case no. 23 for the Ombudsman institution did in fact function as a motivating idea case (for the case overview, see appendix 1). I therefore exclude this case.

The question then is, if the previously mentioned challenges of the direction of causality related to the media coverage and damage control variables call for some specific project selection criteria. In addition, the multivariate analysis revealed insecure effects of the individual moderating variables, indicating challenges of multicollinearity, in particular between the media coverage and the explosive variable.

The challenge concerning the causal order related to the media variable requires no extra criteria. The focus of interest is to clarify whether media coverage precedes or follows Firefighting. In order to clarify causal order, I need cases in which media coverage is present together with MP Firefighting. Yet, all typical cases have MP Firefighting, and all MP Firefighting cases receive media coverage.

Regarding the challenges of insecure coefficients – particularly the relationship between the explosive and the media variable – it is not possible to select cases where either the explosive potential or media coverage is present, since both these conditions are present in all Firefighting outcome cases. Still, in order to investigate how these two variables affect Firefighting, both conditions have to be present. Therefore, I see no problem here. This challenge requires no extra selection criteria.

For the challenges concerning the insecurity of the damage control variable, I suggest adding a fifth criterion. The damage control variable is not as convincing as the other variables, considering the results of the bi-variate analysis. It is, however, not possible to select cases in which the damage control condition is present but the explosive and media coverage condition is not, since as previously mentioned, the media coverage and explosive condition are present in all Firefighting outcome cases. For the Ombudsman institution, there is a case in which a Firefighting outcome is combined with a lack of damage control, but without an explosive potential. However, the case still receives media coverage. Nevertheless, the case lacks a rich empirical record, which makes it less well suited for an in-depth investigation. Instead, I focus on investigating effects of damage control by selecting cases that lack damage control (receiving the score of 1), since the theoretical expectation is that this leads to MP Firefighting. Theoretically, I expect MPs to refrain from engaging if cases demonstrating damage control. The condition needs to be present in order to observe whether MPs refer to the activity or lack of effort, which means that cases lack damage control.

To sum up, for the qualitative case study, I select typical cases in which a Firefighting outcome and at least some of the moderating variable conditions are present. In addition, I use the following five criteria for the case selection:

1. The different criteria: I select different cases by selecting cases from the two different decentral parliamentary control institutions,
2. The membership uncertainty criteria: I exclude cases that have low values on the dependent variable, MP Firefighting. I consider low values of 1,
3. The rich empirical record criteria: I exclude cases that lack empirical material on the dependent variable, MP Firefighting. I exclude cases dominated by defective audio files,
4. The model building criteria: I exclude idea cases used for model-development, and
5. The damage control criteria: I select cases that lack damage control.

Following from this, I apply the case selection criteria on the project’s 52 cases. I start out with typical cases, which have a Firefighting outcome and at least one hypothesized cause present. This means that I start with all 20 Firefighting outcome cases. The different institution criteria means that I distinguish between the 10 Ombudsman and 10 audit cases. Then, I apply the criteria of membership uncertainty, excluding cases that have a value of 1 on the dependent variable. This results in the exclusion of three audit cases. Continuing, the third rich empirical record criteria excludes five Ombudsman cases, while the fourth model building criteria excludes one Ombudsman case. The fifth and final criteria on damage control excludes two Ombudsman and two audit cases that have damage control values of 0. For an overview of the result of the case sorting, see table 7.1.

Table 7.1: The result of the case sorting based on the five selection criteria^{a)}

Criteria	Cases sorted out	Total cases left (O+A)
Different institution	0, cases divided	10 + 10
Membership uncertainty	3 (A26, A37, A46)	10 + 7
Rich empirical record	5 (O5, O9, O15, O16, O19)	5+7
Model building	1 (O23)	4+7
Damage control	4 (O1, O10, A30, A40)	2 + 5

Notes: O: Ombudsman; A: Audit.
a. For the case overview, see appendix 1.

The result of the case sorting, listed in table 7.1, shows that there are two Ombudsman and five audit cases left. Among these cases, there is one Ombudsman and one audit case that have a high degree of activity. I consider these high activity cases well suited for an in-depth case study, since the high degree of activity leaves a rich empirical record. Therefore, I select two cases for the case study: case O25 and A45. The audit case is the Transport Company Accounts case and the Ombudsman case is the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case (for the case overview, see appendix 1)

The two cases relate to different policy areas and different agencies. Both cases relate to separate ministerial departments. In addition, the content of the cases differ significantly; while one relates directly to policy administration, the other relates to a procedural appropriation matter. Moreover, the two cases vary to some degree on the dependent variable; the degree of Firefighting. With a Firefighting score on 26, the Ombudsman case is one of the only three cases that receive a Firefighting score at this level. With a Firefighting score of 18, the audit case, also receives a high degree of attention in parliament, still not as high as the three top Firefighting cases. Both cases are explosive with scores of 5 and 4 and both cases receive maximum media coverage scores of 50.

To sum up, this section has applied the project's case selection criteria to the project's 52 Ombudsman and audit cases, selecting one Ombudsman and one audit case for the project's qualitative investigation. In the following section, I turn to the process tracing method, which I intend to use for the qualitative case study.

7.3. The process-tracing method

In the previous sections, I have discussed the type of within-case study and the criteria for the case selection. In addition, the previous section conducted the case selection and selected one Ombudsman and one audit case for the investigation.

This section will present the analytical strategy for the qualitative case study. The method applied is process tracing. This section clarifies the project's understanding of the process-tracing method.

I understand process tracing as a method for tracing mechanism in a case, demonstrating how the hypothesized cause leads to the expected outcome. This understanding is in accordance with Beach and Pedersen ed. (2016: 302) that define process-tracing in the following way: "... the defining feature of process-tracing is the unpacking of causal mechanisms into their constituent parts, which are then traced using in-depth case studies." According to Beach

and Pedersen, this is a common understanding: “Recently a consensus has begun developing that sees the tracing of causal mechanism as the core of process-tracing” (2016: 304). Thus, I use case studies to trace the causal mechanism and to demonstrate how the hypothesized causal mechanisms did in fact play out in the selected empirical cases. The understanding of causality is also borrowed from Beach and Pedersen: “... causality is understood in process-tracing in terms of mechanisms as a system that transfer causal forces from C to O” (2016: 305).

First, I formulate an understanding of the mechanism linking C (the cause) to O (outcome), making explicit the context within which it functions. Beach and Pedersen refer to a system understanding of mechanisms in process tracing. This means to use process tracing to trace the actual operation of each of the parts in detail after we have theorized them explicitly in terms of entities engaging in activities (2016: 72). Therefore, second, I operationalize the causal mechanism by translating theoretical expectations into case-specific propositions about what evidence each of the parts of the mechanism should have left. In section 5.6 in the overall research design chapter, I have already operationalized my variables/causes, however, as a part of the following chapter’s investigation, I operationalize the causes in relation to the specific empirical case context. Thereafter, having formulated a plausible causal mechanism and operationalized the mechanism in the specific empirical case, I assess the prior confidence in my hypothesized causes and the operationalized mechanism, which determines the strength of evidence that I need to utilize.

Before I continue to the specific case related operationalization and the conduction of the qualitative investigation in the following chapter, in the following section I first offer some additional information about the use of data sources, as well as the political context related to the two selected cases.

7.4. Additional case specific information

This section provides some specific information related to the two cases selected. In addition, the section offers information about the data sources related to the qualitative investigation of the two cases (for more general information about data sources, see section 5.4; for more general information about the Faroese political context, see chapter 4).

In section 5.4, I have previously presented the data sources as well as the data collection for the project’s quantitative as well as qualitative investigation. For the qualitative investigation, I make use of the data sources related to the two selected cases. Recalling information presented earlier, the investigation uses reports from control institutions, parliamentary activity, media

files, and for Ombudsman cases potentially agency documents. Regarding references, I use titles, dates or other available information for identification. For parliamentary activity, I use the parliamentary year, the type of activity, date and no. or label for identification.

Regarding media coverage, as previously explained in section 5.4.3, I have used an internal editing system in order to obtain data on media coverage. The media coverage obtained is radio and TV news broadcasts from the public media institution, Kringvarpið (KVF). The radio news broadcasts are the primary source. This was selected due to of the breadth and frequency of the news coverage. The source of the media coverage is the written manuscript used by the reporter to read on air, not the broadcast audio or video files themselves.

Additionally, there is some variation in the type of radio news features. Radio feature can in some cases be mere informative in nature (reportage), in which the reporter simply informs about the content of a report or on activity in parliament, making references to who said and did what. These more informative features are rare in TV broadcasting. The TV news and the frequent radio news features consist of actors participating more directly, answering questions or presenting a particular angle or specific knowledge related to a case. Moreover, these features might vary in the degree of confrontation or critical tone. The general pattern is that in case of a conflict, both sides participate in these features, though sometimes references are made to actors that have refrained from participating.

Having offered some additional information on the data sources, the following sub-section offers some general information on the political context of relevance to the two cases.

7.4.1. Additional case-specific information about the political context

This sub-section offers some additional case specific information of relevance to the qualitative in-depth investigation of the audit case concerning the Transport Company Accounts and the Ombudsman case concerning the 2012 Mackerel Allocation.

These two cases relate to two of the most controversial policy areas in Faroese politics, infrastructure/public transport and fisheries policy. The audit case relates to the public Transport Company, which provides vital transport services that are particularly important for citizens living on islands outside the main capital area. The two main vessel routes are to the two southern islands, Sandoy and Suðuroy. In 2013, these two islands had around 1.300 and

4.700 inhabitants respectively, out of a total population of 48,062.⁵⁶ The Ombudsman case relates to allocation of mackerel fishing quotas to Faroese vessels. This means that the case links to fisheries policy, a highly controversial policy area. Most Faroese exports come from goods associated with fisheries and aqua culture. 10-15 % of the workforce work in the fishing or the fish processing industry.⁵⁷ In addition, as a curiosum, one might mention that while in the early 20th century, Suðuroy was the most important area related to fishery, today Faroese often refer to Klaksvík – the Northern second largest city – as the Faroe Islands’ fishery capital. In other words, both cases link to the center-periphery dimension, generally assumed to play an important role in Faroese politics (for more information see section 4.5).

The two cases relate to ministries, but different ministerial departments. At the time, the audit case concerning the Transport Company existed under the Ministry of Trade. Today, however, the government has established a Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure and Labor (Samferðslumálaráðið). The Faroese name only refers to the parts on transport and infrastructure. The Ombudsman case relates to the Ministry of Fishery. In addition, the ministry is responsible for an important fishery research institution, the Faroe Marine Research Institute (Havstovan), as well as other resource policy areas such as agriculture, although this is a very small industry in the Faroe Islands. Nonetheless, the ministry title has typically only referred to the fishing activity; in addition, the name of the website is simply fish (www.fisk.fo).⁵⁸ The fact that transport and fishery have such a dominant position in the design of ministries today signals the salience of these issues in the Faroese context

The two cases take place during the same government coalition period, which lasts from November 14 2011 to September 15 2015. The government coalition consists of four parties, two of the four main parties, the Unionist Party (B) and the People’s Party (A), and two of the three smaller parties, the Centre Party (H) and the Autonomist Party (D). The coalition is a conservative, right wing government, and by leftists, is typically referred to as the BADH government. The government coalition holds 19 (B:8; A:8; H:2; D:1) of the 33 seats in parliament, while the opposition parties hold 14. The two main opposition parties, the Republican Party (E) and the Social Democratic Party

⁵⁶ Statistics Faroe Islands, www.hagstova.fo, statbank: population and elections: IB01030 Population by sex, age and village/city, 1th January (1985-2017). For 2017 the numbers are: Suðuroy: 4,611, Sandoy: 1,287, total: 49,864.

⁵⁷ In 2012: 13 %, and in 2017: 11 %, calculations based on information from: Statistics Faroe Islands, www.hagstova.fo, statbank: labor and wages: AM03030.

⁵⁸ Aqua culture is ranges, however, not under the Ministry of Fishery, but to the Ministry of Trade.

(C) have six seats each, while the Progressive Party (F) has two seats⁵⁹ (for more information on the Faroese political parties, see section 4.5). This means that the coalition has a comfortable majority position. Still, on September 5 2013, the minister from the Autonomist Party (D) left government,⁶⁰ reducing the coalitions' number of seats to 18. However, two examples of party switchers, in which MPs from opposition parties joined government parties, strengthened the government.⁶¹

Although, the two cases are from the same government period, the implicated ministers vary. The head of the coalition, the Prime Minister (Løgmaður), is from the Unionist Party and is the same in both cases. In relation to the audit case, the Minister of Trade comes from the Unionist Party, the same party as the Prime Minister. The minister in the Ombudsman case comes from the People's party. This means that in the Ombudsman case, the minister and Prime Minister have a coalition party relationship. However, the focus of this investigation is primarily on the control activity in parliament. Therefore, the most important question is whether the government period affects parliamentary control activity. For this, I consider this government period rather typical in terms of the seat share allocation between government and opposition and party constellation, since two of the four main political parties (see section 4.5) are seated in government, while the other two are opposition parties during this government period. For an overview of the government constellations and the opposition strength ratio for the time-period 1998-2015, see appendix 2.

This section and sub-section have offered additional information about the use of data sources and about the political context related to the two cases for the project's qualitative investigation in the following chapter 8.

7.5. Conclusion and chapter summery

This chapter has presented the project's design of the qualitative within-case study, the selection of institutional Fire Alarm cases for the investigation, and the project's understanding of the process tracing method. In addition, the chapter has offered some additional information about the use of data sources for the qualitative investigation and about the political context related to the two selected cases.

⁵⁹ Statistics Faroe Islands, www.hagstova.fo: IB10010 Løgtingsval skift á flokkar, atkvøður og tingmenn (1978-2015).

⁶⁰ Prime Minister's Office, government records: www.tinganes.fo: Landsstýrið síðani 1948.

⁶¹ G.L. from the Social Democratic Party (C) to the Unionist Party (B) and J.R. from the Progressive Party (F) to the People's Party (A).

The qualitative case study is conducted as a theory testing small-n investigation. The previous quantitative investigation demonstrated a high degree of confidence in the overall theoretical model. The project, therefore, selects typical cases for the investigation. The purpose of the qualitative investigation is to demonstrate evidence of the causal mechanism playing out, linking the theorized conditions to the Firefighting outcome.

The chapter has carefully addressed the criteria for the selection of specific institutional Fire Alarm cases for the investigation. It suggests and applies five criteria for the case selection: four general case selection criteria and one project-specific criterion. The four general criteria are: the criteria of different cases, to avoid empirically uncertain cases, that cases have a rich empirical record, and not to select model-building cases. The project related criteria relates to the damage control variable. I select cases that lack damage control, since this condition theoretically links to MP Firefighting. The result is the selection of one Ombudsman and one audit institutional Fire Alarm case, both high activity cases with a rich empirical record.

Following the case selection, the chapter presented the project's understanding of process-tracing method. The project uses process-tracing to trace in detail the actual operation of each of the theoretical conditions by considering the evidence in the cases. In addition, the project formulates an understanding of the mechanism of a reaction process expected to link the theoretical conditions to the Firefighting outcome. Finally, the chapter offered some additional case-specific information of relevance for the qualitative investigation.

From this chapter's presentation of the design of the project's qualitative investigation of MP Firefighting, the following chapter (chapter 8) conducts the qualitative case study of the Transport Company Accounts case and the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case.

Chapter 8: MP Firefighting and the mechanism

Chapter 7 has presented the design of the qualitative investigation, a theory-testing within-case study, and the selection of typical cases. In addition, the previous chapter presented the project's understanding of the process-tracing method.

This chapter conducts the project's qualitative investigation of the two selected cases, one Ombudsman and one audit Fire Alarm case. The purpose is to provide empirical evidence of the causal mechanisms playing out in specific cases. This chapter will demonstrate evidence of the mechanism linking the theoretical conditions to the Firefighting outcome, as indicated in the quantitative investigation in the previous chapter 6.

The chapter will proceed as follows. First, it formulates an understanding of the mechanism and assesses the prior confidence in the theorized conditions and the mechanism. Subsequently, it conducts the investigation of the two cases, first the audit case concerning the Transport Company Accounts, and then the Ombudsman case concerning the 2012 Mackerel Allocation.

8.1. The causal mechanism and the prior confidence

This section will conceptualize the causal mechanism that links the theorized conditions to the Firefighting outcome. Following this, the section operationalizes the causal mechanism by translating theoretical expectations into case-specific propositions. This means that the section considers what kind of evidence is required for the mechanism, however in relation to the theorized conditions. In addition, the section assesses the prior confidence in the theorized conditions and the mechanism.

Overall, the project's theoretical model explains MP Firefighting as a question of MPs' incentives and different roles in parliament. MPs adhere for the most part to the role of "partisan" and engage in Firefighting in order to inflict cost on government, and to position themselves optimally and get attention of value for up-coming elections. The theoretical model explains MP Firefighting as a question of the position of the MP's party in opposition or government, the explosive potential of the Fire Alarm case, the media coverage of the case, and damage control. Nonetheless, the question is what the mechanism linking these conditions to MP Firefighting actually looks like.

I expect that the mechanism linking the theorized conditions to MP Firefighting is a reaction process. The conditions have to be present in order to produce an outcome, but the conditions have to come to the MPs' attention in order to be visible in some way. The conditions have to produce a reaction process. In addition, the conditions might also react with each other in order to create a reaction process, affecting MPs. If this latter scenario is the case, the theoretical model consists of more complex variable relationships. The reaction process can, for instance, play out as a chain relation in which the explosive potential causes media coverage, which causes MP Firefighting. Alternatively, the mechanism could turn out to be an interaction relationship where the explosive potential causes Firefighting, while the effect of the explosive potential varies with the degree of media coverage. Another option is that there exists some kind of a multiple relationship (Møller Hansen et al. 2012: 388). Nevertheless, there needs to be a process of reaction that creates some kind of change. However, when it comes to the political reaction process, the strength might fluctuate depending on the varying number of factors. In other words, there needs to be a gradual change that leads to a particular result, otherwise there is no mechanism linking the conditions to the outcome.

Having conceptualized an understanding of the causal mechanism, I now turn to the task of operationalizing the causal mechanism by translating the theoretical expectations into case-specific propositions about evidence for the parts of the mechanism.

Overall, evidence for a political "reaction process" taking place requires events and arenas. Arenas refer to a scene where activity takes place, such as in a committee or parliamentary setting. Events refer to concrete activity in an arena. The events need to connect together in order to create a process, and the process has to link the conditioning factors to the outcome. In other words, the content of the activity, MP statements, and content of the media coverage has to link together in order to be evidence of a developing reaction process. In addition, considering that the theoretical model has several different conditioning factors, I also have to look for specific evidence for each of the conditions. Therefore, in the MP's statement, I investigate if and how they link to the different conditions.

I expect that the content of opposition MP Firefighting will show MPs trying to inflict cost and damage government reputation by the use of language blaming government for institutional Fire Alarm cases, insinuating that the minister/government is responsible for the mistakes. If in the activity, opposition MPs focus on other aspects of the case, not blaming government, the evidence hardly confirms the position in opposition as causing the activity (falsification). Following this, I use the same logic for the explosive and dam-

age control conditions. However, the effect of damage control and the explosive potential might not be explicit. Nonetheless, if MPs make references of relevance to the explosive criteria, I consider this strong confirming evidence of the explosive potential in the specific case as causing MP Firefighting. In addition, if MPs directly refer to the lack of damage control, I consider this strong evidence of the importance of damage control. For the media coverage conditioning MP Firefighting, I expect the evidence to be indirect. Strong evidence would be MPs directly referring to media coverage. This is, however, not very likely. Another type of evidence is if I find clear links between media coverage and the content of MP activity, such as breaking information in the media followed by parliamentary activity referring to the activity covered, though without direct references to the media. Yet another more indirect type of evidence is if there is some kind of continuous media coverage pattern, which makes MPs hang on to a case, because they assume that in this way they will get attention in the media.

Overall, I expect that a mechanism in form of a reaction process will link the conditioning factors to MP Firefighting. Evidence of the conditioning factors depend on MPs' references, while evidence of a reaction process requires events that link the conditioning factors to MP parliamentary activity. Having clarified the expectations for evidence concerning the specific conditions as well as the mechanism, I now turn to the question of the prior confidence in the overall theoretical model.

The prior confidence in the overall theoretical model is high, considering the results of the quantitative investigation. The theoretical model seems to explain to a high degree when MPs engage in parliamentary activity related to Ombudsman and audit Fire Alarm cases. This means that in order to strengthen the confidence in the theoretical model, the evidence for the specific conditions has to be strong in order to improve the confidence. However, the theoretical model does not state how the conditions link to the outcome. Therefore, the prior confidence in the specific mechanism, the reaction process, linking the hypothesized causes to the Firefighting outcome, is low.⁶² Beach and Pedersen (2016: 177 and 330) argue that when we have low prior confidence, even relatively weak confirming evidence can be enough to update our confidence. This means, that when it comes to the mechanism and the interaction between the hypothesized conditioning factors, the demands for evidence are not as high as for the conditioning factors. In other words, it is not so clear, how the reaction process plays out. Therefore, the qualitative in-

⁶² Here, I use the same argument as Brast (2015), referred to in Beach and Pedersen (2016: 330).

depth investigation has the potential to offer information about the process, and about how the theoretical conditions link to the Firefighting outcome.

To sum up, this section has conceptualized an understanding of the mechanism and assessed the prior confidence in the theoretical model. I have formulated an understanding of a mechanism as a reaction process linking the theorized conditions to the Firefighting outcome. I expect that events in the specific cases link together and further expect MP Firefighting statements to refer to the specific values for the hypothesized conditions. Now the chapter proceeds to conducting the case studies, starting with the investigation of the Transport Company Accounts case.

8.2. The Transport Company Accounts

This section conducts the within-case investigation of the audit case concerning the Transport Company related to the accounts for 2013. I will use the process tracing method to trace in detail the actual process in the case, searching for a reaction process. First, I describe the case content, and then the content of parliamentary activity and media coverage related to the case. Thereafter, I consider to what extent the information provided by the data meets requirements for being evidence of the mechanism playing out, linking the theorized conditions to the Firefighting in the Transport Company Accounts case. First, I present the Transport Company and the content of the case concerning the accounts for 2013.

8.2.1. The Transport Company and the case content

The Transport Company is a public transport institution, which in the Faroe Islands has the Faroese name of “Strandferðslan”. The institution is a so-called public company, but still not a public corporation. The company is regulated by a legal act and a specific regulation.⁶³ The company has to be run to the greatest extent possible according to commercial principles. The Transport Company’s income for services provided in 2013 were around 57 million DKK.⁶⁴ However, at the same time, the company receives an appropriation according to the annual appropriation act.

The company provides services according to the legal act and regulation. The institution’s main job is to meet the country’s need for domestic transfer

⁶³ Legal act no. 82 from 2001 concerning transfer of people and freight, latest changed by legal act no. 56 from 2014 (www.logir.fo). Regulation for the National Faroese Transport Company (Strandfaraskip Landsins) from July 30 2015, which replaced the regulation from January 22 1997.

⁶⁴ Appropriation Act 2013: 147.

of people and freight. Yet, a part of the transfer of freight has been privatized⁶⁵. The company services includes bus service between villages and towns as well as vessel routes between islands. The Transport Company statistics for 2013 show that the company transported around 525,000 passengers on land, and around 530,000 passengers and 131,000 vehicles by sea.⁶⁶ The Transport Company provides vital infrastructure lifelines in the Faroe Islands, considering very limited alternatives on the private market. This means that the Transport Company is a highly important public company in Faroese society. Overall, infrastructure and public transport is a controversial policy area in the Faroese case (see section 4.5.1).

The selected audit case concerns the challenges related to the Transport Company's accounts for 2013 as well as the minister's and department's involvement in the case. Related to the planned appropriation act for 2013, the political intention was to implement some savings initiatives for the Transport Company. The minister's intention was to reduce the number of trips for the vessel routes to Suðuroy and Sandoy, and to increase ticket prices by 10 %, resulting in savings/revenue increase of 4.7 million DKK. However, the lack of political support prevented the initiatives from being implemented (control committee, complaint case 06-05-2014, doc. no. 14: 3-4: references to internal document from the Ministry of Trade from December 6 2013; minister response, written § 52 b question, parliamentary year 2013: no. 32). Nevertheless, the minister still implemented the budget cut, leaving the company with a net appropriation of approximately 139 million DKK instead of an appropriation of approximately net 143.6 million DKK. The minister stated that the Transport Company was to find ways to rationalize the institution's operations in order to meet the implemented reduced budget appropriations (audit committee, report May 2014: 3).

The audit report as well as other documents in the case reveal some serious disputes concerning this appropriation between, on the one side, the Transport Company and on the other side, the minister and department. The Transport Company argues that the institution is under-budgeted, since the intended cost saving initiatives were not implemented (control committee, complaint case 06-05-2014, doc. no. 14: 3: quotes from e-mails from the Transport Company). The Transport Company further emphasizes that the institution will not be able to meet the budget requirements for 2013 (audit committee, report May 2014: 3 and 6). The minister and department point to de-

⁶⁵ Source: Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure and Labor, www.smr.fo, "Strandfaraskip Landsins", visited on April 16 2018.

⁶⁶ Source: Transport Company, www.ssl.fo, visited April 10 2018.

creases in some expenditure areas, such as oil expenses and a cancelled summer trip in the program for the Suðuroy vessel. The ministry calculates this to be enough to cover the budget cut.

In spite of the agency reporting, the minister does not inform parliament of the situation and makes no request for supplementary appropriation for the year of 2013 (audit committee, report May 2014: 3). In addition, the Ministry of Trade also approves the section accounts without comments. The minister argues that to ask for supplementary appropriations requires that he knows and is able to document the figures in the accounts, thereby demonstrating that the expenses will exceed the appropriation. The minister states that this was not possible, since the information on the accounts provided by the Transport Company did not add up (audit committee, report May 2014: 8; minister response, written § 52 b question, parliamentary year 2013: no. 32).

Late in the 2014, several events take place. There seems to be an agency leak at some time in December 2014. The Transport Company informs the finance committee in parliament of the financial situation, arguing that the minister has retained information (TV news archive, 4921: 28/1-14 and 4931:14/2-14; Radio archive, 29-01-2014: “Dahl bar seg undan at svára”). In December 2013 the minister states in the media that he has asked the Transport Company’s private audit for a report on the Transport Company accounts (audit committee, report May 2014: 2). In addition, the minister fires the company manager (Radioarchive, 21-08-2014: samandráttur). These events attract attention in parliament, from MPs as well as from the audit committee.

After receiving the private audit report, the audit committee, consisting of two government MPs from the People’s Party and the Unionist Party and two opposition MPs from the Republican Party and the Social Democratic Party, decides to take the case up for discussion. The audit committee formulates six critique points. For two of the critique points, the audit committee attaches the “harsh” label. The other four points are different critique points related to the conditions of the Transport Company accounts, the communication between the company and the ministry, the different parties’ handling of the case, and lack of information provided to the audit committee. One of the two harsh critique points relates to the minister’s obligation in relation to parliament: “Løgtingsgrannskoðararnir [the audit committee] harshly criticize the minister for not informing parliament and for not requesting parliament for a supplementary appropriation, although the minister knew that the institution’s appropriation would not hold” (audit committee, report May 2014: 3; author’s translation). The other harsh critique point concerns the ministerial department’s actions, in particular that the department approved the section accounts for the Transport Company without comments. The audit committee

formulates the critique in the following way: “Løgtingsgrannskoðararnir [the audit committee] also harshly criticize that the Ministry of Trade did not do more to get the state of affairs in order, when the ministry in October 2013 states the lack of confidence in the numbers from the Transport Company, and that the ministry in spite of this approves the section accounts without comments” (audit committee, report May 2014: 3; author’s translation).

To sum up, the Transport Company Accounts case relates to a budget cut implemented in the 2013 appropriation. The minister’s savings initiatives meet political resistance. The Transport Company states that the institution will not be able to meet the budget requirements. Nonetheless, the minister does not inform parliament, making no request for a supplementary appropriation. The minister makes a request for a private audit report and fires the company manager. Nevertheless, the minister receives harsh critique for not informing parliament, since he knew the appropriation would not hold.

Having presented the Transport Company and the content of the case concerning the accounts for 2013, I now turn to the content of the parliamentary activity related to the case.

8.2.2. Audit case-related parliamentary activity⁶⁷

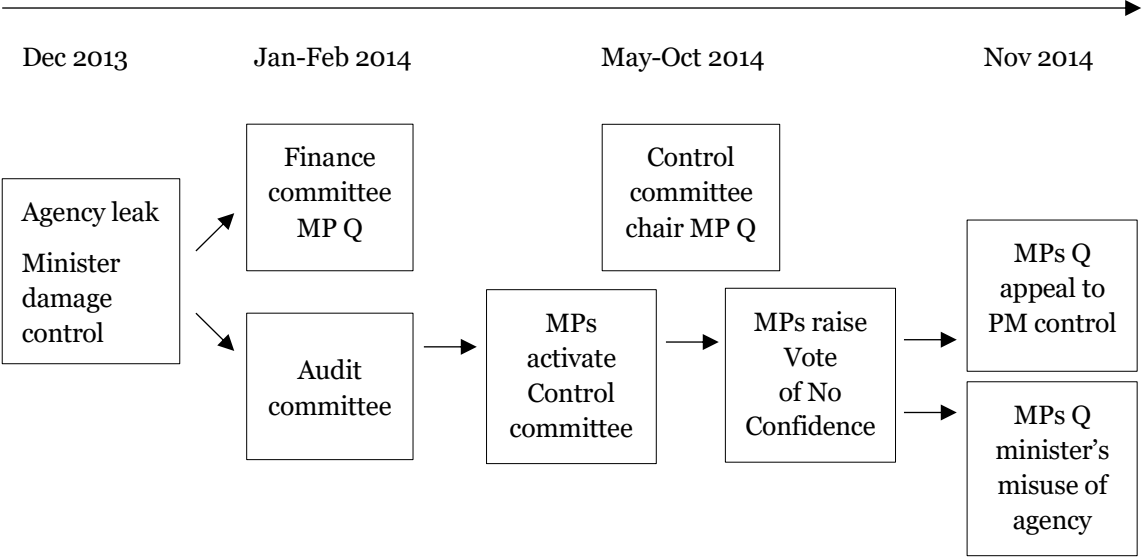
The previous section presented the Transport Company and explained the case content concerning the accounts for 2013. This section presents the content of the parliamentary activity related to the audit case.

The parliamentary activity related to the case consists of various types of parliamentary activity. The case is an audit institution case, which means that the case has been under discussion in the audit committee in parliament. In addition, the case-related parliamentary activity consists of five parliamentary questions, one discussion in the control committee, and one proposal of a Vote of No Confidence.

Overall, the content of the parliamentary activity reveals that the process starts by an opposition MP sitting in the finance committee and the audit committee’s decision to process the case. Following from the audit committee conclusion, a united opposition activates the control committee in parliament, requesting the committee to assess questions concerning the minister’s responsibility. Thereafter, again a united opposition activates the ultimate instrument of the Vote of No Confidence, which parliament, however, outvotes. The parliamentary process ends with two additional questions focusing on the minister as well as the Prime Minister. For an overview of the parliamentary process, see figure 8.1.

⁶⁷ The source to parliamentary activity is parliament’s archive on www.logting.fo.

Figure 8.1: Overview of the parliamentary activity in the Transport Company Accounts case



In the following text, I investigate the content of the parliamentary activity. For the investigation of the content, I refer to the different types of central parliamentary control institutions, such as different types of parliamentary questions. In the investigation, MPs make use of oral questions that are followed by debate, written interpellation type questions that are followed by debate, and a written question that is not followed by debate. For more information about typical parliamentary questions, see section 2.5, and for the specific questions and control institutions in the Faroese case, see section 4.3.

MP questioning

The first registered parliamentary activity is an oral question to the Minister of Trade from an opposition finance committee member, Kristina Háfoss from the Republican Party, on January 29 2014 (oral question, parliamentary year 2013: no. 12). However, the minister requests that the MP instead use the option to ask a written question. Therefore, the MP raises the same question, though in an expanded version, in a written non-debatable question on February 7 2014 (written § 52b question, parliamentary year 2013: no. 32), which is the second registered parliamentary activity. The focus in the MP’s question is the lack of congruence between the information from the Transport Company and the information from the minister regarding the company accounts. In addition, the MP wants to know why the minister has not applied to parliament for a supplementary appropriation. The MP emphasizes that the minister knew that his savings initiatives lacked political support. The MP wants to

know when the minister knew that it was not possible to implement the policy changes and when the minister knew that the expenses would exceed the appropriation. In addition, the MP wants to know if the minister has refused to inform the Transport Company regarding the challenges related to the 2013 appropriation, and if the minister has changed the information from the Transport Company related to the appropriation for 2014.

Comments: In this MP statement, there are clear references to the policy explosive criteria, since the MP addresses the policy implications of the minister's original policy savings intentions, which lacked political support. The MP's emphasis is on the minister's role in relation to the accounts, stressing the minister's mistakes and obligations. At the same time, the MP seems to be defending the Transport Company. This means that the MP's focus has clear references to two of the criteria for the explosive potential, the policy as well as the minister implication criteria. In addition, the opposition incentives to use the case to inflict cost on the minister seem rather clear. However, there is no clear evidence for the importance of media coverage or damage control in this MP activity.

Control committee process and MP questioning

The audit committee reports on the case to parliament on May 1 2014, formulating critique of the minister as well as the ministerial department (audit committee, report May 2014: 3), as described in section 8.2.1 in this chapter. The audit committee report leads to the activation of the control committee, uniting all four opposition parties (Republican Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Autonomist Party and the Progress Party). The four party leaders request that the control committee to assess the minister's responsibility in the case. The complaint is dated May 6 2014 (control committee, complaint case 06-05-2014, doc. no. 1).⁶⁸

⁶⁸ The documents in the case, 06-05-2014: "Complaint on J. Dahl, minister – SL": Document 1: Complaint (06-05-2014), Document 2: Request to the Audit General for explanation and documents (21-05-2014), Document 3: Request to the Transport Company for documents (21-05-2014), Document 4: Request to Jóhan Dahl, minister, for explanation and documents (21-05-2014), Document 5: Information to complainants (21-05-2014), Document 6: Request from the Ministry of Trade for a longer respite (27-05-2014), Document 7: Granting Ministry of Trade deadline (28-05-2014), Document 8: Request from the Transport Company for a longer respite (30-05-2014), Document 9: Granting Transport Company deadline (30-05-2014), Document 10: Letter to Transport Company on documents (10-06-2014), Document 11: Letter of reply from the Ministry of Trade (24-06-2014), Document 12: Exhibits to

The complaint is a one page written document. In the complaint, the opposition party leaders quote all six of the audit committee's concluding statements (Audit committee, report May 2014: 3). Following these citations, the opposition party leaders call upon the control committee to conclude on five questions concerning the minister's administration and responsibility. The five questions are formulated as follows: "– If the minister has administered in a legal way, – If the minister has adhered to the governing rule, – If the minister has adhered to the legal act on the appropriation system, – If the minister has adhered to the legal act on Landsstýrið's [government's] responsibility, – If the minister has attended to his obligations according to legal acts and rules in the administration of the case" (control committee, complaint case 06-05-2014, doc. 1; author's translation).

On September 10 2014 during the control committee process, the control committee chair, Sirið Steenberg, an opposition MP from the Republican Party, raises an oral parliamentary question, which seems to relate to the case (oral questions, parliamentary year 2014, no. 24). Unfortunately, the content of the question is unclear, since the audio file is missing on parliament's webpage. Nonetheless, the label of the question is: "The Transport Company", and the MP asking the question is the control committee chair, who is processing the case at the time of the question. Therefore, I assume that the question links to the case in some way.

The control committee conclusion is dated October 24 2014. The conclusion is written as a letter directed to the complainants, the four opposition party leaders (control committee, parliamentary year 2013, complaint case 06-05-2014, document no. 14). In the concluding document, which is seven pages long, the control committee first comments on the committee process. It comments on the questions discussed in the committee as well as the number and dates for committee meetings. The committee discussed the case on May 13, August 6 and 13, September 22 and 30, October 10, 22, and 24 2014. The control committee states that the last question, quoted in the previous sub-section, has already been covered, and therefore the control committee has no further comments to this part (doc. 14: 2).

Then the committee addresses the question related to the governing rule. The committee discusses the provision in the governing act concerning public spending, which states that spending must be authorized in the appropriation law. The committee refers to a deficit of almost 4.4 million DKK for 2013, and states that this is not in accordance with the provision in the governing rule.

letter of reply from the Ministry of Trade (24-06-2014), Document 13: Reply letter from Ministry of Trade and exhibits sent to complainants (24-06-2014), Document 14: Conclusion (24-10-2014).

Following this, the committee refers to § 1 in the appropriation legal act on the requirements for legal authorization for public spending. The committee simply states that the stated deficit means a lack of adherence to the legal act on appropriation (doc. 14: 2).

Thereafter, the committee considers the ministerial responsibility act in relation to the case. § 2 states that the Prime Minister (Løgmaður) and ministers are responsible for the administration of their jurisdictions. § 4 states that a minister can be punished for legal breaches conducted by a subordinate. The committee considers two specific provisions, § 4, nr. 1 and 3, that address the minister's knowledge of illegal activity, the minister's effort to prevent this activity, and whether the minister's lack of control has contributed to the acts (doc. 14: 2-3). The control committee states that during 2013 the Transport Company continuously reported that the expenses would exceed the appropriation (doc. 14: 3-4). The committee states, that the minister knew or ought to have known that the spending would end up exceeding the appropriation, in accordance to the audit committee conclusion (doc. 14: 4).

In these kinds of situations in which the conditions for the appropriation do not hold, the minister has two choices, either to ask for supplementary appropriation or to decide on initiatives to decrease spending. The committee quotes from the legal appropriation act § 2.1, nr. 2 and from the report on the appropriation system (5.5 on supplementary appropriation) (doc. 14: 2).

The committee states that it is well known that the minister did not apply parliament for supplementary appropriation. Therefore, the committee focuses on the minister's attempts to prevent the situation. The committee refers to documents in July 2013 on savings initiatives, but stress in particular the events or lack of events after the letter dated September 19 2013. In this letter, the Transport Company informs the ministry regarding various challenges, meaning that the company has not succeeded in reducing spending, and assesses a budget deficit of 4.7 million DKK. In a meeting on October 11 2013, the ministry/minister questions and states a lack of confidence in the figures from the Transport Company and requests supplementary information (doc. 14: 4). The ministerial department writes an internal document, dated December 6 2013, assessing the deficit to be 3.9 million DKK. The minister informs government in a regular government meeting on December 9 2013. Following the government meeting, on December 18, the minister requests the aforementioned private audit report on the accounts (doc. 14: 5).

The control committee ends this part by pointing out the difficulties in the communication between the minister/department on the one side and the Transport Company on the other side. The committee concludes that although the minister did not implement any policy initiatives, in his communication he did try to persuade the Transport Company to implement budget cuts.

From this, the committee concludes that there are doubts on the question of the minister's effort to prevent the situation and a lack of evidence that the minister has violated § 4, no. 1 in the responsibility act (doc. 14: 5).

The committee has no comments on lacking rules or procedures related to the question concerning the minister's control obligation (§ § 4, nr. 3). This leaves the question of whether the minister has fulfilled his control obligation. The control committee refers to the audit committee report and agrees on statements. The control committee also emphasizes the second half of 2013, in which the ministry questions the numbers provided by the Transport Company. The control committee questions why after this, the ministry approves the company budget three times without comments. Not until January 20 2014, reservations are made (doc. 14: 5-6).

Following these more specific concluding comments, the control committee formulates an overall conclusion. It formulates critique of the minister for not adhering to either of his two options, either to apply to parliament for supplementary appropriation or to "make sure that the budget holds": "Landsstýris-málanevndin [control committee] finds it blameworthy that the minister did not ask for supplementary appropriation or that the minister did not make sure that matters were put in order for the financial year of 2013" (doc. 14: 6; author's translation). The committee acknowledges steps taken by the minister to request a report from the private audit. Nevertheless, the control committee states that the minister should have acted sooner. Following the meeting on October 11, the minister should have demanded the figures and prepared a request for supplementary appropriation. In addition, the committee formulates a harsh critique of the ministry's lack of effort and for approving the accounts: "Landsstýrismálanevndin [the control committee] harshly criticizes that VMR [The Ministry of Trade] did not do more in order to get matters in order, when the ministry in October 2013 states a lack of confidence in the figures from SSL [The Transport Company], and that VMR in spite of this approves the accounts without comments" (doc. 14: 6).

After this formulation of critique directed at the minister and ministry, the committee divides in two. On the one side, the two government MPs from the Peoples Party and Unionist Party find that even though the minister should have acted sooner, it is difficult to state that these mistakes are breaches of the ministerial responsibility act: "*The majority* (Joen Magnus Rasmussen and Eivind Jacobsen) finds that even though the minister initiated the necessary steps too late, it is difficult to confirm that the minister did not adhere to his control obligation according to § 4, nr. 3 in the legal act on minister responsibility. Therefore, the majority does not find this provision to be broken" (doc. 14: 6; author's translation). On the other side, the opposition MP from the Republican Party, which is also the committee chair, states that the minister did

not execute control to a reasonable extent: “*The minority* (Sirið Steenberg) finds that the minister has not to an equitable extent conducted control related to SSL [The Transport Company] and prevented SSL from exceeding the budget appropriation for 2013. Therefore, the minority finds that the minister has not attended to his control obligation in a satisfying way, and that the minister therefore has acted in contradiction to § 4, nr. 3 in the legal act on minister responsibility” (doc. 14: 7; author’s translation).

Comments: In the control committee discussion, the focus by definition is on the minister’s role in the case, since this is the focus of the complaint. The opposition complainants only address the question of the minister’s role, making clear references to this explosive criterion. Nonetheless, the committee’s response is somewhat mixed. The committee formulates critique of the minister and supports the audit report. Yet, at the same time, adds the “harsh” label to the critique point of the ministry, which to at least some extent seems to be diminishing the focus on the minister’s mistake. In addition, the committee conclusion reveals clear evidence of the importance of the position of the MP’s party, considering the government-opposition MP divide. It is, however, worth mentioning that the audit committee managed to formulate a united conclusion across the opposition and government MPs. This is not the case to the same extent for the control committee. However, the MP from the People’s Party in the control committee is also one of the members of the audit committee. This coalition MP in the audit committee formulates harsh critique of the minister, while in the control committee, he refrains from questioning the minister’s responsibility. In other words, there seem to be limits for how far government MPs will follow the opposition in critique of a minister.

The Vote of No Confidence

Following the control committee conclusion, on November 4 2014, all four opposition parties together present a Vote of No Confidence in parliament directed at the minister (parliamentary matter: 49/2014). In the written proposal which is three pages long, references are made to constitutional matters concerning the role of a minister as well as the functioning of control institutions. The proposal states that two control institutions, the audit committee and the control committee, have stated serious and fundamental breaches and the minister’s responsibility in the case. In the proposal, quotes are taken from the audit as well as the control committee conclusions (parliamentary matter: 49/2014: 1-3). Moreover, the proposal highlights that neither the minister nor

the Prime Minister have acted on the question concerning the minister's responsibility. Instead, the opposition parties state that the minister has blamed the Transport Company for the minister's mistakes in relation to parliament: "In spite of this, neither the minister himself nor lögmaður [the Prime Minister] has taken any consequences from the minister's responsibility in the case. Instead, the minister has placed all responsibility on the institution's managers for the minister's obligations related to parliament" (parliamentary matter: 49/2014: 3). In addition, opposition parties stress the minister's response to the critique. The opposition states that the minister, through his ministry, has made public statements, questioning the control committee conclusions, even before it was public. The No Confidence proposal ends by stating that parliament cannot accept the minister's breaches or the Prime Minister's response: "Løgtingið [Parliament] can in no way accept the clear breaches that have been conducted nor the minister's handling of the case. Løgtingið can neither accept that lögmaður [the Prime Minister] blesses the minister's breaches in public. Parliament must state responsibility and consequences in order to carry out legislative power, law and order, and confidence in the countries' legal acts and institutions. Therefore a No Confidence proposal is raised directed at the landsstýrismanninum í vinnumálum [Minister of Trade]" (parliamentary matter: 49/2014: 3).

The government coalition at this time consists of three parties, together holding 20 of the 33 positions in government, after one of the smaller parties left the coalition in September 2013 (1 MP) and two opposition MPs switched party to two of the government parties (stated in section 7.4.2). Following the debate on the No Confidence proposal, parliament votes. All 33 MPs are present. The result of the vote is 14 votes in favor, 17 against, and two blank votes. This means that parliament outvotes the proposal. All opposition MPs together with one coalition MP (from the People's Party) vote in favor. The blank votes also come from MPs from the People's Party (parliamentary matter: 49/2014, voting record 04-11-2014). When it comes to the members of the two control committees, the audit committee and the control committee, one government coalition MP is seated in both committees, as mentioned previously. Nonetheless, this government committee member votes against the No Confidence Vote. The other two government MPs, one in the audit committee and one in the control committee, come from the same party as the minister. The government MP from the control committee votes against the proposal, while the other, the audit committee chair, takes leave on the day before the vote, leaving the seat and the vote for his suppliant, who votes against (parliamentary matter: 49/2014, minutes from 18. meeting).

Comments: This No Confidence Vote activity provides clear evidence of the importance of the main explosive potential criterion, the minister's mistake in the case, as well as the importance of the position of the MP's party. When it comes to the opposition, the opposition coherence is very strong, considering that all opposition party leaders together complain to the control committee and later present the No Confidence Vote in parliament. In the argumentation, the opposition party leaders stress the role of the minister without commenting on either the role of the ministry or the Transport Company. In other words, opposition parties try to inflict cost on the minister by focusing on the explosive potential criteria. In addition, the opposition also addresses the role of the Prime Minister, thereby trying to expand the case from a single minister challenge to a government issue.

There is also clear evidence of the importance of the MP's position regarding the result of the vote, which demonstrates a rather clear opposition-government divide. In addition, the fact that the records show that the audit chair takes leave on the day before the vote confirms that MPs might voice their dissatisfaction, but they will not vote against a party minister. However, there is a coalition MP, who votes in favor and two who vote blank. Nonetheless, these votes are not significant and seem rather symbolic. If it was coalition MPs seated in the control committee or the audit committee who voted against, then it would send a stronger signal.

In this activity, we also see evidence of the importance of a lack of damage control. The opposition parties make clear references to the minister's public statements as mentioned in the content for the No Confidence proposal, accusing the minister of producing an alternative interpretation of the control committee conclusion, even before the public announcement. Indirectly, this is also evidence of the importance of media coverage, since the minister must have used the media in order to make these statements or expected that the media would cover his newsletter. In addition, media files referring to the minister's newsletter support this claim (Radioarchive, 25-10-2014: Landsstýrismálanevndin Jóhan Dahl), however, are first addressed in the following section on the media cover. In addition, opposition parties also refer to the Prime Minister's public statement, which also most likely refers to media coverage (Radioarchive, 30-10-2014: Ikki full semja). The opposition parties make clear indications that it is the minister who uses the ministry for this activity, ignoring that the ministry has received critique from the audit committee as well as the control committee, and therefore shares an interest with the minister in the reformulation of the conclusion.

More MP questioning

Parliamentary activity is also registered in the days following the No Confidence Vote. On November 5 and 6, the leader for the opposition Republican Party, Høgni Hoydal, asks a written question to the minister and an oral question to the Prime Minister. In the written non-debatable question, focus is directed at the minister's use of external services to assist him in his handling of the case, sending out newsletters to the media as well as to the ministry's webpage. He argues that the minister publicly framed the control committee's conclusion in favor of the minister before the control committee had made the conclusion public (written § 52b question, parliamentary year 2014: no. 17). In the oral question to the Prime Minister, the MP emphasizes the Prime Minister's obligation according to the governing rule to execute control in relation to the minister. The MP states that this obligation is independent from the control executed by parliament. The MP also points to the conclusion from the audit committee as well as the control committee and calls for Prime Minister control activity (oral question, parliamentary year 2014: no. 11).

The minister and the Prime Minister respond and close the case. In the response, the minister makes it very short. He states that, yes he did use external services and informs on the ministry spending for this assistance: "To no. 1, yes, the Ministry of Trade purchased external counseling and services for the investigation of the Transport Company appropriation and spending for 2013. To no. 2, it is legal counseling related to the control committee, which cost 79,800 DKK without VAT. To nr. 3, the Ministry of Trade has advised and serviced the minister in relation to the newsletters. Also the external legal adviser related to the investigation and the external media adviser had a role in the process" (written § 52b question, parliamentary year 2014: no. 17, response document dated November 17 2014). The minister gives no answer to who provided this assistance. The Prime Minister, in his response, has a little more to say. He starts out by referring to the Vote of No Confidence in parliament, stating that parliament has not decided on any initiatives directed at the minister. Therefore, the he sees no point in discussing the Prime Minister's control obligation. He informs that he and the minister did discuss the case on several occasions, and that he, the Prime Minister, does not find it relevant to consider legal consequences for the minister based on this case. In addition, the he states that he has confidence in the minister (oral question, parliamentary year 2014, November 6: no. 11, response audio file).

Comments: In this MP activity, a leading opposition party leader sustains focus on the minister's role, though changing the focus from the minister's

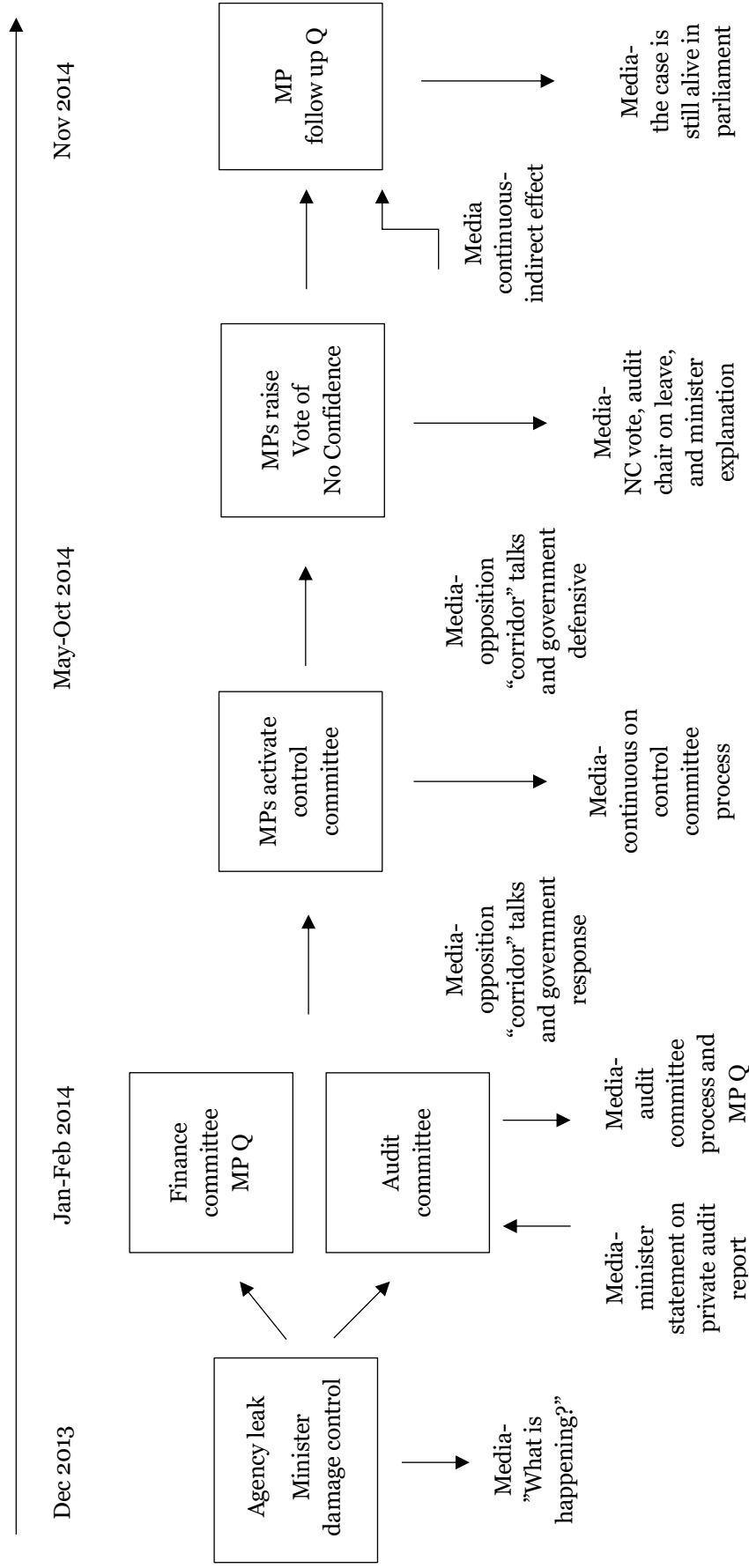
role in the Transport Company accounts case to the minister's lack of damage control. In other words, this activity contains a clear sign of the importance of a lack of damage control, considering that the minister and agency counterargue regarding the conclusions from the control institutions. Moreover, the MPs' focus on the Prime Minister's role, following the outvoted No Confidence Vote, seems to be a rather clear sign of the opposition trying to maintain focus on both the minister's and the Prime Minister's mistakes, in order to use the case to damage government as a whole. One must assume that the MP is perfectly aware, considering the previous activity in the case –even a No Confidence Vote – that there will be no consequences for the minister. Therefore, these extra parliamentary questions seem to resemble opposition party credit claiming activity (Mayhew 1974 assumption) by focusing on the government's reputation.

8.2.3. Audit case-related media coverage

The previous section presented the content of the parliamentary activity related to the Transport Company Accounts case. This section presents the content of the media coverage related to the case. There are 46 instances of media coverage registered for this case.

Overall, the radio and the TV news covers the following aspects: what has happened, the content of the case, the formal activity in parliament, informal political corridor discussions, the minister's and Prime Minister's responses, the audit chair's position, and other actors' comments on the case. The media continuously covers the parliamentary processes, the various activities, and how the process develops. The media follows the audit committee as well as the control committee processes, the No Confidence Vote, and the follow up parliamentary questions. For an overview of the media coverage, see figure 8.2. The following sections describe and analyze the content of the media coverage.

Figure 8.2: The media coverage in relation to the parliamentary activity in the Transport Company Account case



Media information on how the case breaks

The TV news recalls that the minister was not successful in gaining political acceptance for savings initiatives related to the Transport Company and that in order to escape a Vote of No Confidence, the minister let go of the savings initiatives (TV news archive, 4931-14/2-14). In addition, the TV news reports that the minister argues that the finance committee knew that the Transport Company was to implement other savings initiatives (TV news archive, 4931: 14/2-14).

Both the radio and TV news recall the case and report that the problem became public when the Transport Company's financial manager wrote directly to the finance committee members, accusing the minister of having retained information. The finance manager accused the minister of gagging the Transport Company employees (Radioarchive, 29-01-2014: "Dahl bar seg undan at svara"; TV news archive, 4931-14/2-14).

The TV news provides information on the process related to the minister's request for a report from the Transport Companies' private audit (TV news archive, 4921: 28/1-14). Nonetheless, this information is also stated in the audit committee report (May 2014).

Media coverage of parliamentary activity

The first registered media coverage is from January 28 2014, where the TV news starts to ask questions. The TV news feature reports on the content of the case. In addition, the TV news provides information on the process related to the private audit report requested by the minister. The TV news feature focuses on the decision from the audit committee to investigate the case and directs several questions towards the audit committee chair. The TV reporter wants to know why the committee is addressing the case and raises questions such as what the minister knew about the Transport Company's financial situation. According to the manuscript, one question is: "Why are you responding to the case now?", and another is: "You are saying that the audit committee wants to know, what Jóhan Dahl [minister] really knew about the Transport Company's financial situation. Do you suspect that he knew more?" (TV news archive, 4921: 28/1-14).

On February 14 2014, the TV news follows up on the audit committee process. The audit committee has had one meeting and has another planned. In addition, the TV news refers to information from the radio news about the communication from the Transport Company and the Ministry of Trade concerning the budget deficit. The audit committee intends to investigate the minister's role in the case. The focus is on when the minister knew, and what

the minister did when he knew (TV news archive, 4931: 14/2-14). The radio news reports that the minister has six weeks to answer questions from the audit committee (Radioarchive, 19-02-2014: “yvirskrift byrjan”).

On January 29 2014, the radio news reports on the oral question from the opposition finance committee MP. The radio feature focuses on the minister being under pressure because of two different cases, one of which is the Transport Company Accounts case. The radio news reports that the minister refrained from answering questions in parliament. (Radioarchive, 29-01-2014: “Dahl bar seg undan at svara”). The radio news also covers the follow up steps from the finance committee opposition MP. The radio news refers to the MP’s 10 questions, for instance, concerning the retaining of information. The radio manuscript wording is as follows: “As previously pointed out, the minister has retained important information from lögtingið [parliament] related to budget debates” (Radioarchive, 10-02-2014: Kristina spyr skrivliga). In addition, references are made to the MP arguing that even after the private audit report, the case still leaves unanswered questions. Another radio news feature refers to the MP arguing that even though the minister knew that the budget would not hold, he still did not ask parliament for supplementary appropriation. The MP states that the minister’s initiatives such as a private audit report and the firing of the manager does not change this. The MP emphasizes that the real mistake is to be found in the Ministry of Trade from the minister himself. The MP emphasizes that it was already clear before parliament passed the 2013 appropriation that the minister lacked political acceptance for his savings initiatives (Radioarchive, 14-02-2014: Kristina um Jóhan Dahl SSL). The radio news then follows up on the minister’s response to the MP’s written question. In this, the minister explains the process in the case, and states that the Transport Company had not been able to document the budget deficit. The radio news manuscript quotes from the minister’s response: “Therefore, I did not have the necessary numbers and arguments to ask for a supplementary appropriation” (Radioarchive, 24-02-2014: SSL).

Media coverage on the audit committee report

On May 1, the TV news states that the control committee has on that day, handed the report to parliament and points to the conclusion and harsh critique from the audit committee (TV archive, 4970: 1/5-14). The radio news also discloses the content of the report on the same day (Radioarchive, 01-05-2014: Hvöss átala).

On May 2, the TV news continues to address the audit report and the critique directed at the minister. The media then reports on the minister’s reaction. The minister, Jóhan Dahl, and the audit chair, Reimund Langaard, both

from the Unionist Party, participate in the TV news feature. The minister defends his actions and blames the Transport Company. The manuscript states the following: “The minister’s defense is that even though he knew that the Transport Company said they were going to be short of money, this did not mean that they in reality needed money” (TV archive, 4971: 2/5-14). In addition, the TV news manuscript states: “Jóhan Dahl [minister] has no intention of resigning voluntarily, even though the audit committee chair accuses him of violating the country’s legal acts” (TV archive, 4971: 2/5-14). In the same TV feature, the TV news also reports on the audit committee critique directed at the Ministry of Trade.

The radio news reports that the minister acknowledges the mistakes and refers to the minister’s newsletter. With hindsight, the minister can see that both he and the administration should have acted sooner. The radio manuscript quotes the minister: “Both I and the Ministry of Trade are fully aware that the matters related to the Transport Company have not been satisfactory. As the minister, I take full responsibility for the proceedings. We also took necessary actions several months ago in order to ensure that we would not end up in the same situation again”⁶⁹ (Radioarchive, 01-05-2014 (and 02-05-2014): VMR tekur til eftirtektar).

The minister states that the Transport Company is responsible for the financial situation. In addition, he states that he has no intention of resigning, arguing that the audit committee is no court (Radioarchive, 03-05-2014: Jóhan Dahl ætlar sær ekki frá). The radio news quotes the minister as saying: “The audit committee is no court” (Radioarchive, 06-05-2014: Johan kærdur (1 and 2)).

In addition, the media refers to the minister’s recent statements concerning the finance manager, for manipulating the ministerial department (Radioarchive, 06-05-2014: Jóhan kærdur (2)).

Regarding the Prime Minister, Kaj Leo Holm Johannesen from the Unionist Party, the radio first states that he has no comments, since he has not yet read the report (Radioarchive, 01-05-2014: Hvøss átala). Nonetheless, the following day, the Prime Minister does provide comment. He states that he has confidence in the minister, and that there will be no consequences (Radioarchive, 02-05-2014: Kaj Leo um grannskoðarafrágreiðing; Radioarchive, 03-05-2014: Jóhan Dahl ætlar sær ekki frá).

⁶⁹ Here, the minister seems to make references to his first damage control strategy from December 2013, when he asked for a private audit report and fired the company manager, see section 8.3.1.

In political corridor talks, the radio news reports on talks within the political environment, in which opposition actors stress that there will be consequences. Opposition parties meet in order to discuss different options, the Vote of No Confidence or to raise the case in the control committee. The leaders of the Social democratic Party, Aksel V. Johannesen, and the Republican Party, Høgni Hoydal, confirm that further action will be taken, though not yet commenting on specific actions (Radioarchive, 01-05-2014: Hvøss átala).

Media reports on control committee activity

On May 6, the TV news reports that opposition parties have raised the case in the control committee. The TV news refers to a newsletter from the four opposition party leaders. The opposition parties state that neither the Prime Minister nor the minister will suffer any consequences. The opposition parties argue that a No Confidence Vote should be presented, which, however, lacks support among MPs from government parties in parliament. Therefore, opposition parties have decided to activate the control committee to address the question of the minister's responsibility (TV archive, 4973: 6/5-14). This further step is also covered by the radio news. The leader of the Republican Party, Høgni Hoydal, presents the case in the media (Radioarchive, 06-05-2014: Jóhan kærður (1)). The minister has no comments to this follow-up step from the opposition (Radioarchive, 06-05-2014: Jóhan kærður (1 and 2)).

The radio news continues to report from the control committee process, reporting on when the control committee has meetings as well as on the agenda for such meetings (Radioarchive, 08-05-2014: Viðgera Jóhan Dahl and 12-05-2014: landsstýrismálanevndin fund). On May 13, the radio news reports that the control committee has unanimously decided to pursue the case. The minister has 14 days to comment on the complaint and to deliver documents (Radioarchive, 13-05-2014: fara at kanna Johan). On May 30, the radio news reports that the minister wants an additional 14 days to address the complaint (Radioarchive, 30-05-2014: Longri freist). On June 5, the radio news reports that the minister is due to respond to the complaint on June 18, and the Transport Company on June 11 (Radioarchive, 05-06-2014: freistin longd). The radio continues to report on the topic, speculating for instance how long it will take and the number of documents that will be presented. The committee chair comments and emphasizes the amount of work that investigating the case requires (Radioarchive, 19-06-2014: landstýrismálanevndin; 07-08-2014: landstýrismálanevndin). In September and October, the radio news reports on how the case is proceeding. The radio news reports that the control committee is about to finish the investigation. The radio news informs

that the conclusion will be sent to the minister first (Radioarchive, 22-09-2014: líður væl hjá landsstýrismálanevndini; 22-09-2014: samandráttur).

On October 25, the radio news reports on the control committee conclusion. The radio news reports that a united committee states that the minister should have asked for supplementary appropriation or solved the budget challenge related to the case. The radio news reports on the division in the committee regarding the minister's responsibility (Radioarchive, 25-10-2014: Landsstýrismálanevndin Johan Dahl). The radio news also focuses on the critique directed at the ministerial department. The department leader is in charge of the approval of section accounts in relation to the Ministry of Finances. The radio news receives no comment from the department leader (Radioarchive, 28-10-2014: finnast at aðalstjóranum).

The radio refers and quotes from a newsletter, in which the Ministry of Trade responds to the control committee conclusion: "Jóhan Dahl, the Minister of Trade, has neither violated the governing rule nor the legal act on ministerial responsibility related to the case concerning the Transport Company. That is the statement from the majority of the control committee", and: "I have received critique or a reprimand for the handling of the case, but I have neither violated the governing rule nor the legal act on ministerial responsibility. I take note of the conclusion" (Radioarchive, 25-10-2014: Landsstýrismálanevndin Johan Dahl).

The media reports on the damage control strategy. The newsletters from the ministry state that the minister has received critique, which he accepts, but that he has neither violated the ministerial responsibility act nor the governing rule (Radioarchive, 25-10-2014: Landsstýrismálanevndin Johan Dahl). The media reports on a follow up newsletter, from the ministry's webpage. This newsletter states that it is correct that the committee concludes that the governing rule has been violated, but that the committee does not state that it is the minister who has conducted this violation. The radio manuscript quotes from the newsletter: "It is correct that the committee [control committee] assesses that the Transport Company has not met the budget requirements for 2013, and that this is a violation of the governing rule. Nonetheless, the committee does not state that it is the minister, who has violated the governing rule" (Radioarchive, 26-10-2014: VMR vísir aftur).

The radio news reports on critique on the ministry's lack of damage control. The ministry is criticized for making its own interpretation in favor of the minister. In the headline of the newsletter, the ministry writes that the minister has violated neither the governing rule nor the ministerial responsibility act. One of these critics is a lawyer, who comments and criticizes the ministry's strategy. Another critic is the control committee chair, who finds it difficult to

understand the ministry's interpretation (Radioarchive: 26-10-2014: Vinnuáráðið Björn á Heygum; 27-10-2014 landsstýrismálanevndin; 26-10-2014: VMR vísir aftur; 26-10-2014: landsstýrismálanevndin ósamd).

The radio news reports on actors that defend the minister. Such an actor, Eivind Jacobsen, is a member of the control committee from the Unionist Party. He appears in the media and states that it is the Transport Company, which has conducted the violations, not the minister. Nonetheless, the radio states that the control committee members agree on the critique of the minister for not asking parliament for supplementary appropriation (Radioarchive, 26-10-2014: landsstýrismálanevndin ósamd; 26-10-2014: Vinnuáráðið Björn á Heygum; 27-10-2014: landsstýrismálanevndin).

On October 28, the radio news reports on informal opposition meetings, in which opposition parties discuss the case. The party leader for the Progressive Party, Poul Michelsen, confirms that there are discussions (Radioarchive, 28-10-2014: Andstøðan viðgerð Johan).

The media reports on the Prime Minister, Kaj Leo Holm Johannesen's, response. First, the Prime Minister's communication adviser states that the Prime Minister is abroad, but that he will return the following day (Radioarchive, 27-10-2014: landsstýrismálanevndin). Then, on October 30, the Prime Minister appears in the media and criticizes the control committee chair for not being able to achieve a unanimous committee conclusion. In response, the audit chair states that it is not possible to force people to agree. In addition, the media informs that two barristers in parliament agree with the committee chair (Radioarchive, 30-10-2014: Ikki full semja).

The media reports on the Vote of No Confidence and follow-up MP questions

On November 3, the audit chair states on the radio news, that as an MP and parliamentary auditor, he finds it difficult not to vote in favor of a No Confidence Vote. Nonetheless, he will not be present for the vote on the following day, since he is on a sick leave abroad. The audit committee chair is quoted on the radio manuscript: "As a lögtingsmaður [MP] and lögtingsgrannskoðari [audit committee member], it would be very difficult for me not to vote in favor of a No Confidence proposal against the Jóhan Dahl [minister]" (Radioarchive, 03-11-2014: Reimund um Johan Dahl).

On November 4, the minister presents a written explanation, in which he argues why the case is not in breach of the ministerial responsibility act (Radioarchive, 04-11-2014: frágreiðing hjá Jóhan Dahl). The media reports on the Vote of No Confidence (Radioarchive, 04-11-2014: Atkvøðugreiðsla misálit).

On November 6, the media reports on the written parliamentary question following the No Confidence Vote, and notes that even after the outvoted No Confidence proposal, the case is still alive in parliament (Radioarchive, 06-11-2014: Høgni spyr Johan um SSL). On November 11, the media reports on the minister's answer to the written question. The radio states, that the minister does not answer the question concerning who the persons that assisted the minister were (Radioarchive, 18-11-2014: Vinnumálaráðið keypti uttanhýsis ráðgeving til SSL málið).

The media reports on agency matters

In August 2014, the radio news recalls previous events in the case. The former company manager was fired because of the budget deficit, and the finance manager received a warning for contacting the finance committee (Radioarchive, 21-08-2014: samandráttur). There are references to the fired company manager in the MP's question from February 7 2014 (written § 52b question, parliamentary year 2013: no. 32). This means that the Transport Company manager resigns before the parliamentary activity in February 2014.

In August 2014, the media reports that in 2014, the Transport Company is also struggling to meet the budget requirements. The minister has asked parliament for a supplementary appropriation. In addition, the media informs that the new company manager fires the company finance manager (Radioarchive, 21-08-2014: samandráttur).

October 23 2014, the media reports that the institution of the Speaker in parliament addresses a request from the audit committee to transfer responsibility for the auditing of the Transport Company to the Audit General institution. The audit chair raises questions such as why the private audit did not comment on the financial challenges sooner. Neither the private audit nor the minister has any comments (Radioarchive, 23-10-2014: grannskoðan).

On September 30 2015, following an election, the former MP and audit chair comments on the new critique of the Transport Company for the 2014 finances, where the expenses exceed the appropriation by almost 10 million DKK. It turns out that there were expenses, which had not been reported by the Transport Company. The Transport Company accounts had since been transferred from the private audit to the Audit General institution (Radio archive, 30-09-2015: "10 mió mangla"). The former audit chair emphasizes the responsibility of the former managers. The media reports that agency mistakes on the Transport Company level have been stated for several years, also before 2013 (Radio archive, 30-09-2015: "Reimund um SSL frágr").

Comments: Overall, for the radio and TV coverage, I find close coverage of the parliamentary activity in the case. The radio covers all stages of the parliamentary activity, the parliamentary questions, the control committee process, the No Confidence Vote as well as the follow up parliamentary questions. The radio also closely follows the process related to the audit committee. In addition, the news closely covers activity from arenas other than the parliamentary arena, such as the minister and the Prime Minister's responses, informal political talks, and different types of agency activity. The news reports on activity; what is happening and the opinions of the different actors. In addition, the media confronts government actors by presenting critical questions and addressing responsibility issues. In other words, the case displays continuous media coverage, covering every step, within and between processes, formulating questions and confronting actors. The fact that the news covers activity from different arenas, not only the parliamentary arena, means that the conditions are in place for media coverage of events and cases to lead to parliamentary activity. It is also clear, however, that parliamentary activity leads to media coverage.

8.2.4 The evidence and the hypothesized conditions

The previous sub-sections have described and analyzed the content of the case-related parliamentary activity and the media coverage. This section considers the overall evidence related to the hypothesized conditions. I have previously formulated that I expect the content of the MP Firefighting to link to the specific criteria for the project's explanatory variables. In other words, I expect MP statements to link to the government-opposition divide, the explosive potential criteria of relevance for the case, and to a lack of damage control. In addition, I expect to find links between formal parliamentary activity and the media coverage of the case.

In the previous sub-sections, I have demonstrated clear evidence of the party position variable. The content of the activity clearly shows that opposition MPs use the case to inflict cost on the minister as well as the government as a whole. I have also demonstrated clear evidence for the importance of the explosive criteria. The relevant criteria for the Transport Company Accounts case is the minister's mistake, the ministry's mistake as well as the policy criteria. MPs make references to the policy implications but put emphasis on the minister's role and mistake. The case reveals clear evidence that MPs very much activate the explosive potential of the minister's mistakes in the case, such mistakes being the explosive criteria available. The case documents show that opposition MPs focus on the minister's role and mistake, downplaying mistakes made by the ministry or the Transport Company. Ministry mistakes

are also an explosive criteria, considering the close relationship with the minister. However, since both the audit committee and the control committee formulate direct critique of the minister, there is no need for opposition MPs to use ministerial mistakes to implicate the minister. Quite the opposite; government MPs have incentives to focus on agency mistakes in order to distance the minister from the case. This is also what I find. In the control committee, government MPs have to comment on the minister, since it is the opposition parties in the complaint that define the focus of the control committee investigation. Nonetheless, in the conclusion, it is the ministry that receives the harsh critique. In the media, government MPs emphasize the Transport Company's mistakes.

The case also reveals evidence for effects of damage control. As previously described, opposition MPs make several references to the minister's offensive strategies related to the control institution's conclusions. To recall earlier details, the minister reformulates the control committee conclusion, writes newsletters etc. The quantitative investigation in the previous chapter (7) showed a significant effect of damage control, but only if the case relates to ministerial departments. Nonetheless, the results were rather insecure, and thereby not so convincing.

This chapter's within case investigation of the Transport Company Accounts case using the process-tracing method provides the opportunity to study the case process in detail. The investigation of the Transport Company Accounts case shows that the damage control changes when the process itself is investigated. First, the minister requests a private audit report, fires the company manager, and acknowledges the critique from the audit committee. The minister thereby clearly demonstrates damage control in trying to clean up the mess. Nonetheless, the minister has already made the important red alert minister mistake by not informing parliament. Instead of acknowledging the minister's damage control effort, the opposition emphasizes the minister's mistake. Following from this, it seems as though the minister changes his strategy once he realizes that the opposition will not stop here. The minister selects a rather aggressive, defensive strategy, demonstrating a lack of damage control. Recalling details presented earlier, the minister states that the audit committee is no court, spends money on case defensive strategies, and in addition, communicates his own understanding of the control committee conclusion (documented in section 8.2.3). The lack of damage control seems to increase the degree of conflict in the case, providing the opposition with more material to use in their critique of the minister and Prime Minister. This means that agencies might change their damage control strategy during a process, which is difficult to capture in a quantitative analysis. Nonetheless, this within-case investigation shows that opposition MPs respond to the minister's

unwillingness to adhere to control institutions' recommendations; not so much as "parliamentarians" but more as "partisans" that use the lack of damage control to increase the focus on the minister in the case. In addition, the opposition uses the activity to involve the Prime Minister, thereby using the case to inflict cost on government as a whole.

The evidence of effects of media coverage on Firefighting is a bit more difficult to assess. The investigation provides evidence that media coverage affects parliamentary activity, but it is also clear that parliamentary activity affects media coverage. There is substantial evidence of media coverage of parliamentary activity. However, there is also evidence of media coverage leading to parliamentary activity. MPs make a few direct references to media coverage. In the audit report, the audit committee makes a direct reference to the minister's statement in the media, and that the statement leads the committee to take an interest in the case. In addition, opposition MPs in the content of the parliamentary activity refer to the Prime Minister's "public approval" of the minister and to newsletters from the minister. Since the media features refer to the minister's newsletters and to the Prime Minister's statement, I consider this as evidence of effects of media coverage. Overall, the description of the media coverage reveals a clear picture of continuous media coverage of parliamentary activity. Therefore, when the media covers cases, MPs expect media coverage if they engage in parliamentary activity. From this, I argue that previous media coverage of parliamentary activity leads to more parliamentary activity. This means, that there are signs of an indirect effect of media coverage as well. I consider the two additional questions, following the outvoted No Confidence Vote, to be an effect of previous media coverage. The argument is that the MP is aware that the media has covered every step in the case, therefore calculating that the media most likely will pay attention to additional parliamentary questions. To hang on to the case is a good opportunity to use media coverage to claim credit by inflicting cost on the government's reputation (Mayhew 1974). Overall, the evidence in the case for media coverage show rather clear signs of a feedback-loop between parliamentary activity and media coverage. The media coverages parliamentary activity, but there are also signs that MPs respond to media coverage, which leads to parliamentary activity. This complex variable relation is illustrated in figure 8.2, considering that the arrows go in different directions. Nonetheless, overall, a higher number of arrows go from parliamentary activity to media coverage.

This section has assessed the evidence in the case, confirming that the content of the Firefighting links to the hypothesized conditions. In the following sub-section, I consider evidence for the mechanism of a reaction-process.

8.2.5 The mechanism triggering MP Firefighting

In the previous sections, I have described the content of the case, the parliamentary activity as well as the media coverage. I have assessed the evidence in the case, in particular focusing on if MP statements in the parliamentary activity link to the hypothesized conditions. In addition, I have used information in the media to support evidence or to supplement the parliamentary information in case of insecurity, and for activity by government MPs, who largely refrain from formal parliamentary activity.

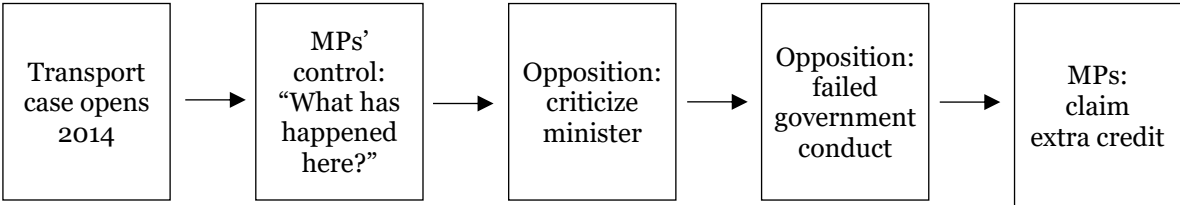
Before the investigation of the Transport Company Account case, I formulated an understanding of the mechanism linking the hypothesized conditions to the Firefighting. I formulated an understanding of the mechanism as a reaction process. The conditions have to be present in order to produce an outcome, but the conditions have to reach MPs attention, to become visible in some way and to develop into a process. In other words, the conditions have to produce a reaction process.

This specific case leaves an interesting question of, how the case process starts. The case concerns the relation between a ministry and an institution answering to the ministry, which means away from the public eye. Eventually, the budget deficit would have become public at some time. Nonetheless, in this case, two events seem to initiate the parliamentary control process. The media coverage refer to an agency leak from the Transport Company to the finance committee in parliament related to the appropriation act for 2014 (see section 8.2.1).⁷⁰ This agency leak to the finance committee seems to lead to questions from the opposition finance committee MP. In the question, the MP hints at contradicting information from the agency compared to the information from the minister. Even though, the MP does not clarify where the agency information comes from, it seems likely that the information comes from the agency. Agencies refer to ministries and ministers answer to and inform parliament. Nonetheless, it is also unclear, who the media's source on this agency leak is. The other activity, the minister's statement in the media on a requested private audit report (see section 8.2.1) activates the audit committee in parliament. The audit report makes a direct reference to this media statement from the minister (see section 8.2.1). This, however, indicates that there is media coverage that I have not found in the archive (for more information on the search strategies, see section 5.4.3). Concluding, the agency leak as well as the minister's statement on the private audit report start the reaction process in this case.

⁷⁰ This information does not figure on the list of documents related to the appropriation act for 2014. Nonetheless, this is a very controversial activity and it would be surprising if I did find it.

Recalling details presented earlier, I also expected a reaction process as the mechanism, linking the conditions to the outcome. Figure 8.1 and 8.2 list the different activities, demonstrating how activity links to other activity, finding a clear link between the different activities, one activity leading to another. In addition, parliamentary institutions link and facilitate this reaction process. First, MPs wait for the audit committee conclusion, and then MPs consider further steps and decide to activate the control committee. Thereafter, they again wait for the control committee conclusion before they take further steps. There is a clear reaction process facilitated by the parliamentary institutions that become more salient because of the continuous media coverage. For an illustration of the overall reaction process in the case, see figure 8.3.

Figure 8.3: Illustration of the reaction process in the Transport Company Accounts case



Overall, the reaction process in this specific case has three phases. The first phase is the MP raising initial questions and the audit committee investigating the case. The second phase starts as a direct response to the audit committee by the activation of the control committee and the focus towards the minister’s responsibility. In the third phase, MPs use the minister’s mistake to implicate government as a whole, by addressing the Prime Minister’s role. In the Vote of No Confidence proposal, MPs use the case to inflict cost on government as a whole. Even though, the proposal is directed at the minister, the arguments are broad and implicate the Prime Minister and thereby government as a whole. The same applies for the aftermath questions, in which one of the two questions directly focuses on the Prime Minister.

This section has conducted a within-case investigation of the selected audit case on the Transport Company Accounts. I have used the process-tracing method to trace in detail the actual process in the case in search for a reaction process that links the theorized conditions to the Firefighting outcome. The following section continues the qualitative investigation by conducting the case study of the Ombudsman case concerning the 2012 Mackerel Allocation.

8.3. The 2012 Mackerel Allocation

This section conducts the investigation of the selected Ombudsman case, the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case. As with the audit case, I use the process-tracing method to trace in detail the process in the case, providing empirical evidence of the mechanisms linking the theorized conditions to the Firefighting outcome. For the process-tracing analysis, I describe the content of the case related parliamentary and media data. However, before I engage in the process-tracing analysis, I present the details of the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case. The case relates to fishery policy, which is a highly controversial policy area in the Faroe Islands. Therefore, before I present the content of the Ombudsman case, I first explain the political context of importance to fishery policy and the case concerning the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case.

8.3.1 The case context

This section explains the political context related to the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case, including the situation between the coastal countries. The 2012 Mackerel Allocation case relates to fishery policy, the controversial policy area par excellence in the Faroe Islands.

In Faroese fishery administration, there have been two dominant steering principles of importance to this project's time-period 2000-2015,⁷¹ according to Legal Act no. 28 from 1994 on commercial fishing. One is that parliament fixes the fishing days for Faroese territorial waters on an annual basis (§ 22, 1). The other is that the minister allocates fishing rights to vessel and vessel fleets according to the aforementioned legal act.⁷² In addition, the minister administers the vessel licenses. Participation in commercial fishing requires a license attached to the specific vessel, signed annually (*Ein nýggj og varandi fiskivinnuskipan fyri Føroyar*, report 2016: 69).

However, another important aspect of fishery policy is international negotiations on different quota shares, and the allocation of these quotas to vessels. Here, the minister has the authority to negotiate. For the allocation of quotas,

⁷¹ Parliament has recently, few days before the January 1 2018 deadline, finally passed a highly controversial reform of the fishery management system, consisting of substantial changes regarding steering principles etc. The governing parties being the 2012 mackerel opposition parties. The legal act, originally from 1994, has been replaced by Legal Act no. 161 from 2017 on the Management of Marine Resources.

⁷² This (previous) legal act also rests on historic conditions. Vessels in the industry before 1994 maintained their fishing rights. In addition, historic rights give actors certain privileges when it comes to allocation (report 2016: 68-69), which is the same practice as elsewhere (report 2016: 71).

achieved through international agreement, parliament has delegated authority for the minister to allocate these quotas. The minister allocates individual quotas, individual year quotas, or joint quotas (§ 26, 1). For mackerel fishing, the use of joint quotas is new in 2012 (report 2016: 70, table 7.1). Overall, it is a rather common assumption that the degree of delegation to the minister on this portfolio area creates a rather powerful minister (report 2016: 69).

The 2012 Mackerel Allocation case relates to quota allocation. The mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*) is a pelagic fish, characterized by its ability to travel long distances (travelling fish stock) as opposed to the bottom fish, which does not. Purse seiner (nótaskip) is the vessel ship type that usually fishes pelagic fish, while long liners (línuskip) usually fish bottom fish.

Usually joint agreements between so-called coastal countries regulate the size of the pelagic fishing quota for each country. However, the situation related to the case is that there is a conflict between coastal countries. From 2010 to 2014, there is no agreement on mackerel fishing (parliamentary report: 4/2014: 24). The Faroe Islands have demanded higher quotas, since they consider previously allocated quota to be unreasonable. There is broad support in the political system for the demand of a higher Faroese share of the quota. When there is no agreement, the countries fix their own quota share and fish the quota in their own sea territory. The Faroe Islands fix their quota share in accordance to higher demands for quota. This means that the political system has new quotas to allocate to Faroese vessel groups. Related to this, in the summer of 2013, the EU implements a boycott directed at the Faroe Islands that responds by raising an arbitration case in Autumn 2013. In 2014, the parties find a solution; the arbitration case is dropped, and on August 20, the EU withdraws the boycott initiative (parliamentary report: 4/2014: 11).⁷³ The 2012 Mackerel Allocation case is a part of a rather long political history. The 2012 allocation follows the 2010 and 2011 mackerel allocations.

There is already a political conflict related to the 2010 mackerel allocation. An opposition MP, Tórbjørn Jacobsen, from the Republican Party sends a complaint about the minister's administration to the control committee. The MP argues that the minister's administration is not in accordance with the legal act (control committee, parliamentary year 2010: case 18-10-2010, doc. 1). The minister, Jacob Vestergaard, from the People's Party argues that he has the authority to allocate quotas according to the legal act. The minister states that the instrument of an executive order has not previously been used for mackerel allocation (control committee, parliamentary year 2010: case 18-10-2010, doc. 03-01, 10-11-2010: 2). The control committee disagrees with the

⁷³ Extra information: Prime Minister Office newsletter, August 18 2014, www.tinganes.fo.

minister's interpretation. The committee states that according to the legal act, the minister was obligated to draw an executive order to authorize the allocation (control committee, parliamentary year 2010: case 18-10-2010, doc. 11, 18-02-2011). In 2011, the People's Party leaves the left/right mixed government, the so-called ABC government. In the months that follow, the government governs as a minority government supported by some opposition parties. During this period, parliament passes a special legal act for mackerel fishing in 2011, authorizing government to use the auction instrument to sell quotas and apply a mackerel quota tax. In addition, the minister draws executive orders on the allocation as well as for the auction conditions.⁷⁴

In addition, it is worth mentioning that since 2011, parts of the fishing industry have paid resource tax, though in varying degrees. Among this part of the industry is mackerel fishing. In 2012, the resource tax is an extra corporation tax as well as a license tax. The license tax is paid per kilogram of landed mackerel (report 2016: 72-73).

In September 2011, there is a parliamentary election. Fishery policy is high on the agenda and influential when it comes to the election outcome (Skorini 2011, West 2011).⁷⁵ The salience of fishery policy relates to the fact that on January 1 2018, all fishery licenses will be withdrawn. Therefore, actors are waiting for the political parties to reach an agreement on a new fishery reform. The opposition parties in the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case are the losing parties in this election. Following the election, a right-wing conservative coalition government enters office. The People's Party is back in the Ministry of Fishery for the mackerel allocation in 2012. Nonetheless, the party has to replace the first choice of minister because of his family relationship connections to actors in the fishing industry.⁷⁶ From February 16 2012, the People's Party's Jacob Vestergaard is back in office. The right wing government – and the People's

⁷⁴ Legal Act no. 74 from 2011 on special conditions for mackerel fishing in 2011; Executive order no. 85 from June 8 2011; Executive order no. 74 from June 6 2011.

⁷⁵ On the agenda, Skorini (2011) refers to a survey from Fynd (private survey company). On the influence on the election, Skorini (2011) as well as West (2011) make references to the importance of fishery policy for the election outcome. There are no traditions for making election analysis in the Faroe Islands. However, for the 2011 election, a book was published: Reistrup, H. and Skorini, S. ed. (2011): Valið og valdið (The election and the power).

⁷⁶ Source: media cover, the public media institution, Kringvarpið, www.kvf.fo: "The Prime Minister: The minister's lack of competence to act have become too challenging", February 15 2012, time 15:28 (the minister has another version for the resignation).

Party in particular – opposes the auction instrument for quota allocation. Instead, the minister allocates a substantially higher amount of the quota by the use of an executive order.

The new government decides to anchor the political 2012 Mackerel allocation process more broadly in government. Government arranges a political group representing all government parties to follow the process. The group is known as the “Mackerel Group”. In 2012, there are new quotas to allocate according to the minister’s statement in a newsletter (newsletter June 8 2012, in Ombudsman doc. 14/00045-9: 8-9). The government seems to anticipate that it is not enough to deal with the case in regular government meetings in order to secure coalition alignment. However, the case is also addressed at regular government meetings on March 29, April 17, 19 and 30 2012 (Ombudsman doc: 14/00045-9: 3-5 and 7-8).

The political agreement for the 2012 Mackerel allocation is that all vessel groups and all Faroese vessels should have the opportunity to fish mackerel in 2012 (newsletter from the minister of Fishery June 8 2012, in Ombudsman doc. 14/00045-9: 8-9). In total, the minister allocates around 134,000 tons between vessel groups in 2012. The landing value for mackerel in 2012 was 585 million DKK.⁷⁷ Information from the case material reveals a substantial increase in the number of new fishery licenses for pelagic fishing, such as mackerel licenses, in 2012.⁷⁸ The date for the 2012 Mackerel executive order is June 8 2012.

This sub-section has provided information related to fishery policy and the administration of mackerel fishing. In addition, the section has offered information on the political case context. The following sub-section presents the case content.

8.3.2. The case content

This section presents the content of the Ombudsman case concerning the 2012 Mackerel Allocation. The Ombudsman case starts as a complaint on a declined application for a mackerel fishing license in 2012 but evolves into an investigation of the quota division and the mackerel executive order together with an investigation of all applications for mackerel fishing licenses in 2012 (Ombudsman, annual report 2014: 30-32, and Ombudsman doc. 14/00045-9, December 10 2014: 1-32).

⁷⁷ Economic report, Economic Council, spring 2018: 37.

⁷⁸ In 2010: 36, 2011: 62, 2012: 142, 2013: 123. Information from the minister in response to parliamentary question (written § 52 a question, parliamentary year 2013: no. 52, April 10 2014).

On August 4 2012, the Ombudsman receives a complaint from two citizens. On March 7 2012, A and B applied to the Ministry of Fishery for a license to fish 200 tons of mackerel. The ministry declines the application on July 9 2012. The ministry points to the law criteria, which state that applicants must have a fishing vessel. The applicants respond by pointing to the decision to allocate mackerel quota to long liners (línuskip). The applicants argue that they intend to fish the mackerel in collaboration with other actors in the same way as the long liners.

The Ombudsman's conclusion concerning the complaint is that the ministry's first decision does not meet the requirements of the administration act. The Ombudsman states that the decision lacks references to the legal criteria and lacks an investigation of the vessel criteria in relation to the applicants. Nevertheless, after the Ombudsman comments on this, the ministry writes a second letter to the applicants on September 14 2012 of which the Ombudsman approves. The Ombudsman agrees with the ministry that the applicants do not meet the criteria to receive a mackerel license (Ombudsman doc. 14/00045-9: 22-23).

However, when it comes to the investigation of the overall mackerel licenses for 2012, the Ombudsman questions and criticizes the procedures. The Ombudsman states that the criteria for the division of the mackerel quota is unclear. In addition, the Ombudsman sees no trace of the ministry administration in the assessment of the mackerel quota division. Instead, it seems like government's "Mackerel Group" has administered the quota division on its own. The Ombudsman states that there is no hindrance for political participation in an executive order. Nonetheless, an executive order exists under administrative decisions, which means that the administration act applies. The Ombudsman states that there are no written minutes from meeting activity in the "Mackerel group", which the Ombudsman considers a breach with "good governance" principles. However, this means that the Ombudsman has no way of assessing whether the mackerel division is impartial and based on relevant criteria. The Ombudsman states that drawing an executive order requires adherence to administrative criteria in order to meet requirements of impartial and legal administration. In addition, the Ombudsman refers to documents that reveal that the ministry administration does not participate in the work of the "Mackerel group". After the political meetings, the minister informs the ministerial department about the political decisions regarding the quota division. The Ombudsman states that this might be the reason for missing and unclear administrative criteria. The Ombudsman states that the minister is responsible for ensuring that decisions adhere to the administration act and meet requirements of impartial and legal administration (14/00045-9: 23-26).

In addition, the Ombudsman criticizes the quotas allocated to the long liners (línuskip), considering that, the long liners lack equipment for mackerel fishery (long liners fish bottom fish). The Ombudsman finds the ministry's response on long liners unsatisfying. The Ombudsman refers to statistical records for 2012, showing that none of the long liners fished their mackerel quota. Moreover, an overview reveals that the long liners were sold to shipping companies that own industry vessels (ídnaðarskip). The ministry assisted by transferring the licenses from the long liners to the industry vessels, thereby making them able to fish the mackerel quota. Afterwards, the long liners were transferred back to the original owner. The Ombudsman criticizes the allocation of quota for long liners, disagreeing with the ministry's interpretation of the legal act limitations concerning vessels' fishery power, related to the long liners and industry vessels. The interpretation relates to the decision to transfer the long liners' licenses to industry vessels. The Ombudsman criticizes the transfer of fishery licenses, which lack adherence to the defined purpose of this criterion in the legal act (Ombudsman doc. 14/00045-9: 26-32). The Ombudsman ends the part on the long liners in the following way: "I, therefore, assess that the minister did not have authority to transfer the long liners' fishing licenses to the industry vessels, so that the industry vessels for the time they had the long liners' fishery licenses were to be considered long liners, thereby receiving the right to fish the long liners' mackerel quota. In the same way, I assess that the transfer of fishery licenses were not in accordance with the purpose of this provision" (Ombudsman doc. 14/00045-9: 32; author's translation).

Moreover, the Ombudsman comments on the Prime Minister's role in the case. The Prime Minister is a member of the "Mackerel Group" whilst according to the governing rule, is also simultaneously obligated to oversee the minister's administration. The Ombudsman refers to the change in the governing rule in 1994 that changed the system from a collegial government system to a minister responsibility system (for more information on this change, see section 4.1.2). A minister responsibility system contradicts that minister administration is moved to a political group to address informally without documentation (Ombudsman doc. 14/00045-9: 25-26).

During the process, the minister responds to the Ombudsman's question on the criteria for the quota division. The minister responds that the 2012 quota allocation is based on the 2011 allocation. The political goal for the allocation is to limit negative consequences from fishing competition, thereby increasing quota value. Other goals were to place the different actors in the fishing industry on an equal footing and to broaden the income foundation, in particular for the demersal vessels (bottom fish fleet), and to provide the opportunity to try new fishing methods (Ombudsman doc. 14/00045-9: 20-21).

The previous sections have presented the case content as well as the case context related to the Ombudsman case concerning the 2012 Mackerel Allocation. Now, the investigation continues to investigate the parliamentary activity and the media coverage. First, the following section investigates the content of the case related parliamentary activity.

8.3.3. Ombudsman case-related parliamentary activity⁷⁹

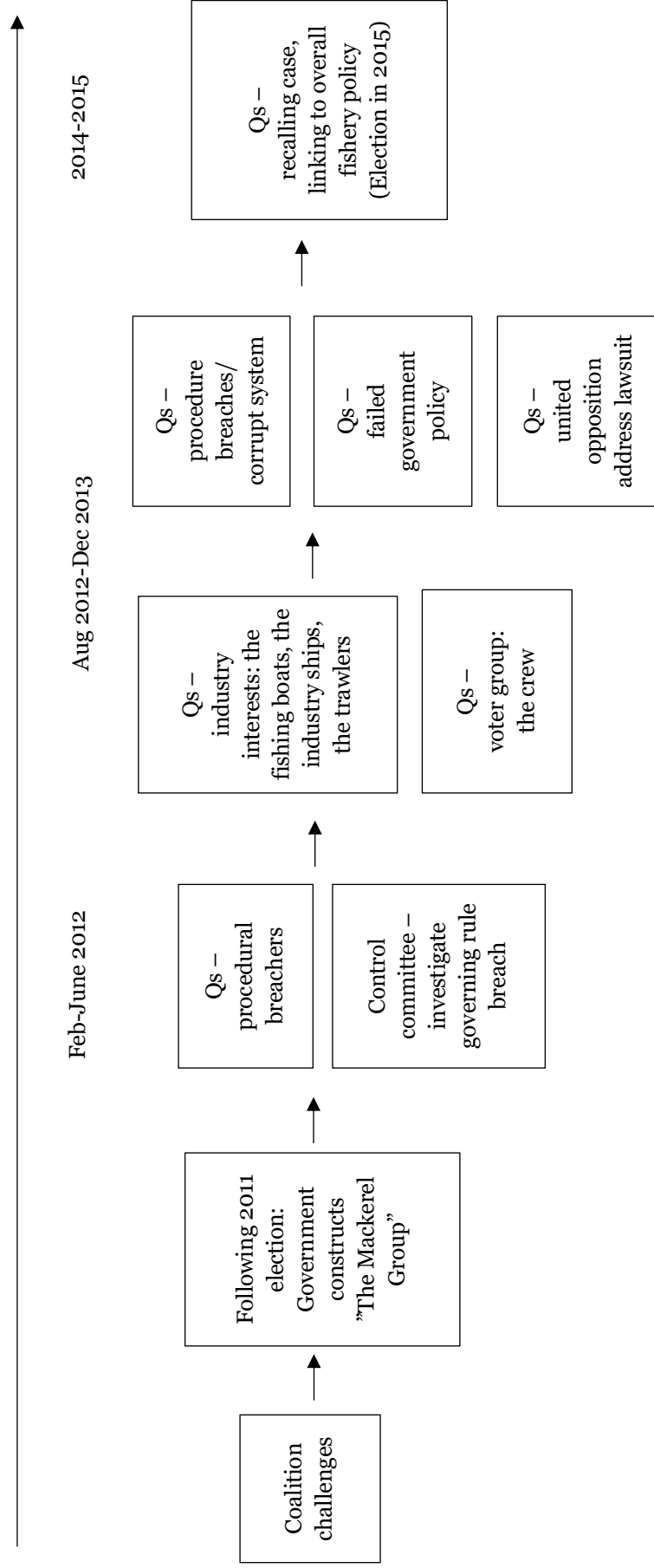
The previous section presented the mackerel case, the history preceding the case as well as the case content. This section presents the content of the parliamentary activity related to the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case.

The parliamentary activity related to the mackerel case consists of several instances of parliamentary activity. The case is an Ombudsman case, which does not require any specific reading in parliament. The case related parliamentary activity consists of 19 parliamentary questions and control committee activity. However, as previously explained, mackerel quotas and licenses have previously been on parliament's agenda. The parliamentary activity presented here relates to the 2012 Mackerel allocation.

The content of the parliamentary activity reveals that in the first phase, MPs focus on different mistakes in government's conduct related to the 2012 Mackerel allocation. Then, MPs use the case to demonstrate interest representation by referring to different industry interest and voter groups. In addition, MPs broaden the focus of government conduct to conclude that government's policy has failed. In the last phase, MPs use parliamentary questions to recall the case by repeating different events in the run up to the 2015 election. For an overview of the case related parliamentary activity, see figure 8.4. The following sub-sections investigate the content of the parliamentary activity.

⁷⁹ The source to parliamentary activity is parliament's archive on www.logting.fo.

Figure 8.4: The parliamentary activity in the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case



MPs focus on government conduct

The first theme for the MP activity is government conduct. In the spring 2012, MPs focus on mistakes and government conduct related to the case.

On February 8 2012, the leader of the Republican Party, Høgni Hoydal, raises an oral question directed at the deputy Prime Minister, Annika Olsen from the People's Party, on the role of the Prime Minister, Kaj Leo Holm Johannesen, in the case. The MP emphasizes the importance of the case, the financial value of the mackerel quota, and problematizes that according to the governing rule, the Prime Minister's role is to oversee the minister, not to conduct fishery administration. In addition, the MP emphasizes that the minister of fisheries is disqualified in most questions (before the change of minister, see section 8.4.1)⁸⁰ (oral question, parliamentary year 2011: February 8 2012).

The second activity is an oral question directed to the Prime Minister from opposition finance committee MP, Kristina Háfoss, from the Republican Party. The MP refers to government members' conflicting statements on the question of public revenue related to fishery resources. The MP refers to statements from the Prime Minister, the finance committee chair, and the Minister of Industry – all from the Unionist Party – that there will be public incomes, while the former and present fishery ministers from the People's Party have stated that incomes should not be expected. The MP wants to know government's expectation for incomes from fishery resources. The MP specifically refers to the 2012 Mackerel quota. In addition, the MP focuses on the allocation of fishery rights, government plans for future fishery administration, including the role of the opposition in these policy negotiations (oral question, parliamentary year 2011: February 22 2012).

On April 18, the party leader from the other main opposition party, the Social Democratic Party, Aksel V. Johannesen, asks the minister an oral question on the mackerel agreement. The MP refers to the radio reporting (from the previous Friday) that coalition parties have reached an agreement on the mackerel allocation. The MP refers to information from the radio on an agreement of public incomes of 120 million DKK. The MP wants to know the calculation behind this figure, and the collection method. For example, is it based on value at auction or as payment related to kilograms? The MP requests information on the allocation between vessel groups, and whether the quotas are allocated as individual or joint quotas. Overall, the MP emphasizes that the minister should inform parliament (oral question, parliamentary year 2011: April 18 2012).

⁸⁰ The People's Party installs a new minister in office February 16 (source: www.tinganes.fo, government overview).

On June 14, the opposition party leader from the Republican Party, Høgni Hoydal, sends a complaint to the control committee concerning the 2012 Mackerel administration. The complaint is about the minister and the Prime Minister's administration of the case. The complaint addresses the question of the executive order; issues such as breaches of principles for executive orders and breaches of the legal act on commercial fishing. In addition, the MP addresses the Prime Minister's obligation to oversee ministers' administration and refers to the governing rule (control committee, parliamentary year: complaint case June 14 2012). The committee initiates the control process and sends the complaint to the minister and Prime Minister to comment, and the committee then informs the MP on the process in the case. However, on May 6 2013, the MP withdraws the complaint. The MP refers to the long process. During this time, the Ombudsman has received a complaint and the court is hearing the case (control committee, complaint case June 14 2012: doc. 18). MPs respond to the case being in court, see the following section.

Comments: The activity presented is opposition activity. The content of the activity clearly demonstrates that opposition MPs use the case to implicate the government as a whole by stressing government's mistakes and criticizing government conduct. This also means that there are clear references to the office criterion for the explosive variable, considering the focus on the minister's and Prime Minister's mistakes. It is also clear, that opposition parties expose coalition disagreements. For instance, when the finance committee MP exploits the government divide on the resource tax question, still framing it as a matter of the national 2012 budget. The activity presented also demonstrates direct evidence of the effect of media coverage, since the Social Democratic party leader refers to information in the media concerning government's policy agreement.

MP interest representation

Following the focus on government conduct, MPs start engaging in interest representation by focusing on different industry interests as well as voter groups. It seems as though MPs want to demonstrate that they represent an alternative to the government's policy.

On July 31, an opposition MP from the Social Democratic Party, Gerhard Lognberg, directs a written debatable question to the minister regarding the sale of mackerel licenses. His focus is on fishery policy as a form of social policy. The MP approves of the quotas for the long liners, as long as the crew receive their share of the revenue. The MP emphasizes that the long liners (línuskip) are having a hard time. In addition, the MP criticizes government

for not giving the group of fishing boats (útróðrarbátar) the same conditions as the long liners, the MP states: “What makes me sad is that the fishing boats have not received this opportunity ...” (written question, parliamentary year 2012: July 31 2012: no.3; author’s translation).

On August 20, a coalition MP from the Center Party, Bill Justinussen, raises a non-debatable written question. The MP directs focus on the evaluation of the minister’s 2012 Mackerel allocation. The MP emphasizes the importance of solving challenges in the 2012 fishery, which is not proceeding as planned. The MP argues for changing the policy related to industry ships (ídnaðarskip), since they could be the solution to this challenge (written § 52a question, parliamentary year 2012: August 20 2012, no. 4).

On September 7, the opposition party leader from the Republican Party, Høgni Hoydal, directs 12 questions in a written debatable question to the minister. The tone is rather harsh. In the comments to the questions, the MP uses phrases like: “mess”, “not objective”, “favoritism”, “misleading information to parliament”, “game”, “political horse-trade”, “speculation”, and “creative solutions” (written question, parliamentary year 2012: September 7 2012, no. 12; author’s translation). The question focuses on the quota allocation to the long liners and sale of mackerel licenses, and the precedence this decision creates. The MP clearly indicates that government has misinformed parliament. The MP also asks questions related to the value, and whether ministers or government MPs have relatives benefiting from this decision. In addition, the MP places focus on the crew, and why the fishing boats (útróðrarbátar) did not receive the same conditions as the long liners (línuskip). In other words, the MP maintains focus on the policy conduct and the breaches in office procedures, but also follows the Social Democratic opposition MP by referring to the crew and the fishing boats.

On January 23 and February 27 2013, another opposition MP from the Social Democratic Party, Henrik Old, raises two oral questions. He directs one question to the Prime Minister and the other to the Fishery minister. The MP refers to the “Mackerel Group” and the failed 2012 Mackerel fishery policy. The policy resulted in failing fishing and negative consequences for some vessel groups in particular. The MP emphasizes the concerns for the trawlers (trolari). In addition, the MP wants to know the “Mackerel Group’s” plan for mackerel fishing in 2013 (oral question, parliamentary year 2012: January 23 2013 and February 27 2013).

Comments: This activity demonstrates more opposition activity, though also one example of coalition activity. The activity has clear reference to the importance of the position of the MP’s party as well as the policy criteria of the explosive variable. The case relates to a controversial policy area

and MPs use the case to engage in interest representation and to demonstrate their party's policy alternative to government's policy. MPs refer to three different vessel groups, the fishing boats, the industry vessels, and the trawlers. In addition, MPs refer to vessel crew interests. MPs thereby inform different interest groups that government policy has not served them well. In addition, it is also interesting that the leader of the Republican Party supplements his continuous critique of government conduct by making the same references to the crew and the fishing boats as the Social Democratic MP. Overall, the theme for these instances of MP control activity are interest representation and demonstration of policy alternatives.

MPs broaden focus on government's failed policy

MPs continue to focus on government's policy conduct. However, after the implemented policy in the summer 2012, MPs have the opportunity to evaluate government policy. MPs still focus on mistakes and government conduct, but they broaden the perspective and frame the case as a matter of the government's failed policy.

On September 26 2012, the opposition finance committee MP from the Republican Party, Kristina Háfoss, directs an oral question to the Minister of Finance concerning the public incomes from mackerel quotas. The label is as follows: "The importance of lacking resource incomes for 2012". The MP argues that the minister's policy has failed, referring to stated complications. Time is running out, leaving 50,000 tons left to fish.⁸¹ The MP refers to government statements, among others the finance minister's statement, that the missing revenues are not particularly important. The MP emphasizes that the lack of incomes increases the public deficit for 2012. The minister counter-argues regarding deficit calculations (oral question, parliamentary year 2012: September 26 2012).

On September 28 2012, the opposition MP from the Social Democratic Party, Henrik Old, raises a written debatable question directed at the minister of industry, Jóhan Dahl from the Unionist Party, who is responsible for the ship's register (Skipaskrásetingin). The MP asks how many times fishing vessels were sold in the time period of June 15 to September 12 2012 compared to the same period in 2011. The MP refers to implications of the 2012 Mackerel administration. This way, the MP states that government's policy has failed (written question, parliamentary year 2012: September 28 2012, no. 17).

February 27 2013, the opposition party leader from the Republican Party, Høgni Hoydal, raises three oral questions, two directed at the minister and

⁸¹ The licence tax is paid pr. kg landed.

one at the Prime Minister. The minister is asked to reveal his policy intentions regarding the allocation criteria for the mackerel 2013 fishery. The MP confronts the Prime Minister regarding his responsibility to control ministers being in contrast to his previously self-proclaimed status as chair of the “Mackerel Group”. The MP emphasizes the breaches and asks if government intends to repeat the mistakes. In the other question, the MP confronts the Prime Minister about a statement at a debate arrangement, in which the Prime Minister argued that buying and selling fishery licenses is a necessity in the fishing industry. The MP stresses that this is not legal (oral questions, parliamentary year 2012: February 27 2013).

On April 17 2013, the leader of the Republican Party, Høgni Hoydal, directs another two oral questions at the minister. In one question, the MP criticizes the minister’s administration, which has resulted in actors competing on contacting the minister instead of competing in fishing. In the other question, the MP refers to conflicting statements between the minister and his department leader related to a question about the share of overall quotas allocated by the minister. In the question, the MP denies that he has previously stated that the minister is corrupt, but argues that the system is corrupt (oral questions, parliamentary year 2012: April 17 2013, no. 1 and 2).

December 11 2013, all four opposition party leaders for the Social Democratic Party, the Republican Party, the Progress Party and the Autonomist Party raise a written non-debatable question directed at the Prime Minister. The focus of the question is the lawsuit directed at the Ministry of Fishery. The party leaders stress the seriousness of the case. The company suing the ministry, claims that the ministry’s administration during the past year has been illegal when it comes to allocation of pelagic fishery resources. The opposition party leaders refer to parliament’s present reading of a legal act on the criteria for the 2014 allocation and argue that the political system should await the court’s conclusion. In the Prime Minister’s response, it is clear that the party suing ministry is a fishing boat company (written §52 a question, parliamentary year 2012: December 11 2013, no. 24).

Comments: This activity demonstrates that MPs continue their critique of the minister and government’s mistakes and conduct, but that they broaden the perspective and stress that the government’s policy has failed. In addition, the MPs increase the focus on government as a whole by directing questions to several of the government’s ministers. MPs also include the Minister of Finances and the Minister of Industry in their questioning activity, in total including four of the government’s ministers. The content of the activity demonstrates the same importance of the position of the MP’s party and the office and policy criteria of the explosive variable

as the previous activity. However, the tone in this activity is very harsh, referring to illegality and a corrupt system and demonstrates that the opposition not only broadens but also intensifies the critique of government. In addition, this activity demonstrates co-operation between opposition parties, considering that all opposition parties raise a question together.

MPs remembering the case

In 2014 and 2015, MPs still refer to the 2012 Mackerel case. Two MPs raise questions in parliament, where they recall the case events.

On April 9 2014, an opposition MP from the Republican Party, Páll á Reynatúgvu, raises a written debatable question on the administration of the fishing industry in general. The MP criticizes the government. In one of his 11 questions, the MP specifically asks for the impartial criteria for allocating mackerel licenses, not expecting a better turn out this year, considering the extreme high values at stake and foreign interest actors knocking on the minister's door. The same MP also raises the other type of written question to the minister on April 10 2014. In this question, the MP requests information on vessels and pelagic fishing licenses, the number, who they are, allocation in relation to districts, and the development since 2010. One of the seven questions specifically addresses the mackerel licenses. The MP states that it is important to inform parliament and the public on developments in the fleet (written question, parliamentary year 2013: April 9 2014, no. 33; written § 52 a question, April 10 2014, no. 52).

On February 12 2015, the MP from the Autonomist Party, Kári P. Højgaard, raises the final case related parliamentary activity, a written debatable question. This is the only parliamentary activity following the Ombudsman report. The question consists of 18 questions under the headline "administration and allocation of fishery licenses". In question 10 and 11, the MP asks for the specific legal authorization, which led to the decline of applications from long liners (línuskip) in 2010, and to the granting of applications from long liners in 2012. The MP refers to the many questions related to the procedures for pelagic fishing in the preceding years. Nonetheless, the MP makes no direct reference to the Ombudsman's conclusion (written question, parliamentary year 2014: February 12 2015, no. 42).

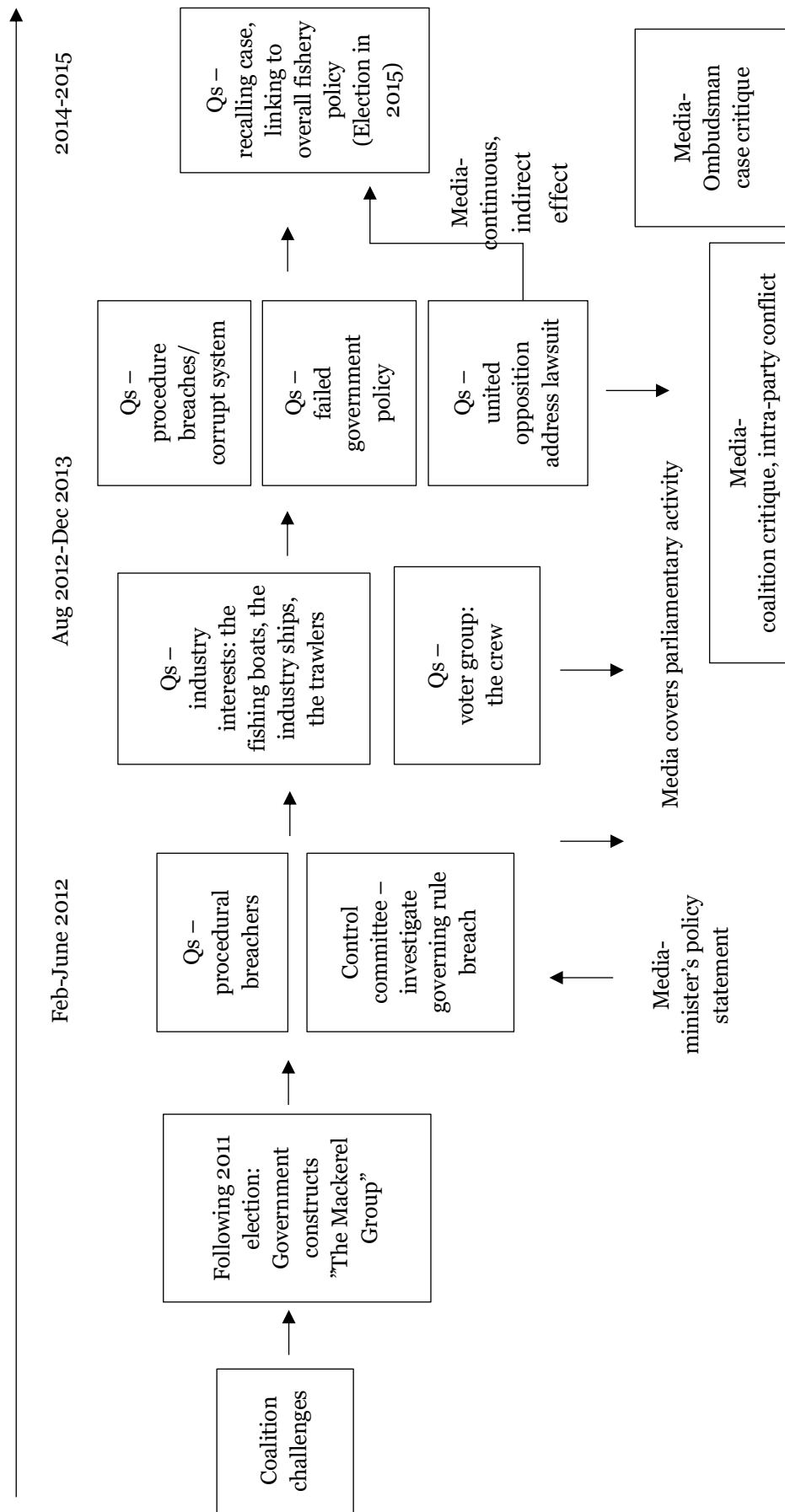
Comments: The parliamentary questions presented demonstrate more opposition MP activity. The MPs use parliamentary questions to recall the case events, relating the case to the question of the overall fishery policy. The 2015 election is approaching and fishery policy is highly salient, be-

cause that the previously mentioned January 1 2018 deadline is also approaching, at which time all fishery licenses will be withdrawn. Again, there are clear references to the importance of the position of the MP's party and the policy criteria for the explosive variable.

8.3.4. Ombudsman case-related media coverage

The previous section presented the content of the parliamentary activity related to the Ombudsman case, the 2012 Mackerel Allocation. This section presents the content of the media coverage related to the case. The media covers mackerel allocations for several years, covering different events within and outside of parliament. The result is a substantial level of media coverage. In the quantitative investigation in the previous chapter (6), the case is registered as one of the 50+ media coverage cases. However, the media coverage consists of several hundred instances. For more information about the search and data collection strategy, see section 5.4.3. The data collection strategy was to collect media instances that cover a broad range of events in the cases. The overall result of the investigation of the media coverage in the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case is presented in figure 8.5. The following sub-sections offer more detail on the media coverage.

Figure 8.5: The media coverage related to the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case



Media reports on parliamentary activity

Overall, the media covers parliamentary activity related to the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case.

The radio news reports on the first parliamentary question presented in the case. This occurs on February 8 2012, when the leader for the Republican Party, Hogni Hoydal, confronts the deputy Prime Minister (Varalögmaður), Annika Olsen, on the Prime Minister's role in the case. Interestingly, the radio news reports on this oral question both before and after the question has been presented (Radioarchive, February 7 2012: varalögmaður, and February 9 2012: undirgrava stýrisskipan). On August 1 2012, the radio news reports on the MP's oral questions on the allocation of mackerel licenses, focusing on the fishing boats (útróðrarbátur). On September 6, the radio news reports on the agenda for a control committee meeting. One of the cases on the agenda is the complaint from the Republican party leader. The radio news reports on the process in the case (Radioarchive, August 1 2012: Javnaðarmenn spyrja um makrel, and September 6 2012: landsstýrismálanevndin).

On October 23, the radio news reports on mackerel questions in parliament: the Republican party leader's 12 questions in a written question to the Prime Minister from September 7. However, not until this day does the Prime Minister answer the questions and the answers still lack detail. The radio news reports that the Prime Minister has surpassed the deadline and refers to the answers as poor. The opposition is not satisfied and raises issues of government's information being in contrast to the empirical reality in the summer of the same year. Here, the opposition refers to the sale of vessels related to the 2012 Mackerel fishing. Both opposition and government MPs present their critique on the radio. The radio news states that the word justice was frequently being used in parliament (Radioarchive, October 23 2012: makrelfyristing, lögmaður í tinginum). On October 24, the radio focuses on the Prime Minister and his lack of response to four of the 12 questions, such as, for instance, how much the allocated mackerel quotas can be sold for. The minister's response to these four question is quoted by the radio manuscript: "The minister has not the material available for this question, since the question has not been part of the case" (Radioarchive, October 24 2012: Ónøgd við svarið). The Prime Minister's defense is that the information is not available. The radio news quotes the Prime Minister: "I feel that I answered the best way I can" (Radioarchive, October 24 2012: Kaj Leo longri samrøða). An opposition MP from the Republican Party, Páll á Reynatúgvu, argues that the Prime Minister violates question procedures in parliament and will raise the case with the Speaker. In addition, the Republican party leader argues that the

Prime Minister's lack of answers is a breach of the ministerial responsibility act (Radioarchive, October 24 2012: Ónøgd við svarið).

Media reports on coalition and intra-party disagreements

On the radio on October 25 2012, a government MP from the Unionist Party, Helgi Abrahamsen, states that the procedures must be improved before the allocation of mackerel licenses the following year. The criteria must be clear. The radio news also makes references to a similar critique from the Fishery Board in the hearing related to the 2012 Mackerel executive order (Radioarchive, October 25 2012: vantandi gjøgnumskygni).

On August 21 2014, the radio news reports on intra-party disagreement in the minister's party, the People's Party. The former minister and MP, Jákup Mikkelsen, wants a report from the minister on how fishery licenses in the South Pacific have been changed to mackerel licenses in Faroese waters. The minister refuses to produce a report. The MP emphasizes that the minister has to give an explanation or he will raise the question in parliament. The media reports that the party will hold a meeting on the case. The radio news reports on dissatisfaction among both opposition and government MPs. In other words, the coalition is still struggling with alignment challenges (Radioarchive, August 21 2014: Mikkelsen krevur framvegis svar).

The media addresses the construction of the "Mackerel Group"

On May 17 2014, the radio addresses questions related to the "Mackerel Group". The group deals with and administers enormous values related to the allocation of mackerel. A lawyer involved in the work with the governing rule comments on this practice, criticizing the practice and comparing it to devastating political decisions in the collegial government system in the 1990s, before the new governing rule and minister responsibility was implemented. The radio hears the minister on the critique. The minister refers to the critique as political and states his ministerial responsibility, but that government has to have political discussions. In addition, the radio refers to the harsh political tone, relating the rhetoric to the crucial approaching date of January 1 2018 and the lack of political agreement (Radioarchive, 17-05-2014: Makrelbólkurin uttan fyrri lóg og rætt, and 17-05-2014: Vestergaard verjir makrelbólkin).

Media coverage following the Ombudsman report

On December 12 2014, the radio news reports on the conclusion of the Ombudsman's case, on the serious critique related to the proceedings in the Ministry of Fishery and the practice of the Mackerel Group. The radio news reports

on the members of the group: The Prime Minister, Kaj Leo Holm Johannesen and finance committee chair, Bárður Nielsen, both for the Unionist Party; the Minister of Fishery, Jacob Vestergaard and the party leader and Minister of Finance, Jørgen Niclasen, both from the People's Party; the Minister of Interior; Kári P. Højgaard, from the Autonomist Party, and the MP and leader of the Center Party, Jenis av Rana. The radio news reports in detail on the Ombudsman report, the discussion of the complaint and the discussion of the 2012 Mackerel administration. The radio also reports on the government documents, enclosed in the Ombudsman report (Radioarchive, December 12 2014: LUM og makrelur, and 12-12-2014: Makrelbólkurin skotin niður).

On December 12 2014, the TV news covers the Ombudsman's report and conclusion. The ministerial department is confronted on their role in the case. The TV news covers different views among MPs, referring to comments from opposition as well as government MPs. The TV news refers to the Prime Minister, who is due to comment on the case later (TV archive, 5084: 12-12-2014).

On December 15 2014, the radio news focuses on the part of the Ombudsman report regarding the quota allocated to the long liners and the events following this decision (Radioarchive, 15-12-2014: LUM og línuskip).

On December 16 2014, the radio news addresses the role of the Speaker institution, considering the critique from the Ombudsman. The Speaker institution has addressed the case in a meeting. The Speaker states that it is up to parliament and the Prime Minister to handle the case. The Prime Minister is abroad but will make public comments later in the week. The radio news also reports on previous comments from the ministerial department leader and the minister, who state that the procedures that were in place in 2012 were changed the following year. In addition, the radio news reports on the critique from certain politicians directed at the Ombudsman. The Speaker emphasizes the importance of responding to fellow MPs as well as parliamentary institutions with respect. The Speaker institution has had a meeting (Radioarchive, 16-12-2014: Jógvan á Lakjuni, and 16-12-2014: Jógvan á Lakjuni TIGN).

On December 16 2014, the TV news focuses on the critique of the transfer of licenses from long-liners to industry vessels. The minister, Jacob Vestergaard, and the Republican party leader, Høgni Hoydal, appear and discuss the Ombudsman critique. The minister is confronted by questions relating to the long liners (línuskip), the transfer of licenses, the department's participation in this, and on the consequences following the case. The TV setup, however, is rather remarkable since the Republican party leader in some sense ends up with the role of representing the Ombudsman critique of government's conduct and mistakes (TV archive, 5086: 16-12-2014).

On December 19 2014, the TV news reports that the Prime Minister has stated that he has adhered to his control obligations. The Prime Minister comments on the case (TVarchive, 5086: 16-12-2014). The Prime Minister also comments on the Ombudsman critique on the radio. The Prime Minister refers to the “Mackerel Group” as a political reference group. The radio quotes from the Ombudsman’s conclusion, referring to possible violations of the governing rule. The Prime Minister states that this is not correct and denies that he has failed to meet his control obligations. On December 20 2014, the Prime Minister states that there will be no consequences for the minister (Radioarchive, 19-12-2014: Løgmaður um LUM, and 19-12-2014: Løgmaður broti stýrisskipanarlógina, and 20-12-2014: Løgmaður LUM Makrelur).

On December 20 2014, the radio news reports on the critique from the previous minister, Kári P. Højgaard, from the Autonomist Party, who was a member of the “Mackerel Group” that oversaw the 2012 Mackerel licenses. Already in 2012, he stated his dissatisfaction with the allocation, because fishery licenses were transferred from ships. Therefore, he wrote a letter to the minister, stating the discrepancy between information received in meetings and the practice of private sale of licenses (also the Ombudsman report refers to this letter). The previous minister, now a MP, comments on the radio (Radioarchive, 20-12-2014: makrelbýtið 2012 Kári P).

On December 22 2014, the radio news reports on a newsletter from the minister dated June 8 2012 stating that the minister wanted to prevent private sale of quotas. The radio news reports on the discrepancy between the newsletter and the practice in 2012. The radio news refers to an example, in which the ministry informed lawyers and companies on how to transfer fishing licenses from the company long liners to another of the company’s pelagic vessels. The radio news states that the Prime Minister refused to comment on this (Radioarchive, 22-12-2014: Jacob Vestergaard um makrelsøluna).

On December 22 2014, the radio news reports that the opposition party leader for the Progress Party, Poul Michelsen, criticizes that the mackerel allocation is used as financial support to the fishing industry. The MP refers to the system as sick (Radioarchive, 22-12-2014: Poul Michelsen).

On December 23 2014, the radio news quotes an associate professor who states that the work of the political “Mackerel Group” looks like administration, considering the details of the decisions, and that the administration seems to legitimize political decisions, instead of providing counsel ahead of such decisions (Radioarchive, 23-12-2014: líkist fyrisiting).

January 6 2015, the radio news reports on actors providing comment on the steering of the mackerel fishery. A marine biologist compares the case process to political joint decisions in the 1980s (when the government acted as a

collegium, see section 4.1.2). An industry representative, the chair for the Association of Faroese Shipowners (Reiðarafelagið) partially agrees. A ship owner calls for clearer procedures for this part of the vessel fleet (Radioarchive, 06-01-2015: áveg aftur í 80'ini).

Comments: The data for media coverage shows that the media reports on events, the different actors and specific activity and statements related to the case. The media focuses on the formal parliamentary arena by reporting from parliamentary questions as well as the control committee activity. The media also reports on activity outside of parliament. It reports on intra-party disagreements in the minister's party, the People's Party, and disagreements between the government's coalition parties, which are less visible in the questioning activity. The media focuses on what is happening and the opinions of the different actors. In addition, the media also confronts government actors by presenting critical questions and addressing responsibility issues. The radio/TV covers the case process and continues to cover the case after the Ombudsman reports on the case.

8.3.5. The evidence and the hypothesized conditions

The previous sub-sections have presented the content of the parliamentary activity as well as the content of media coverage, including assessments of the specific evidence in relation to the project's variables. I have investigated how MPs use the parliamentary control institutions related to the case. This section conducts an overall assessment of the evidence in relation to the hypothesized conditions.

Recalling details presented earlier, I expected the content of MP Firefighting statements to link to the specific values for the hypothesized conditions for the case. This means that I expect MPs' statements to link to the position of the MP's party, the explosive potential criteria of relevance to the case, and to a lack of damage control. In addition, I expect to find links between media coverage and MPs' parliamentary activity.

In the parliamentary activity, I find clear links to the position variable, considering that opposition MPs conduct all but one of the parliamentary activities in the case. The content of the activity clearly demonstrates that MPs use the case to implicate the minister and the government as a whole. MPs use the case to inflict cost and damage government reputation. The opposition coherence is strong, since all opposition parties engage in the Firefighting related to the case. However, MPs conduct the activity as single MP activity, since there is only one example in which all opposition parties raise a parliamentary question together. In addition, the content of the activity shows that

the opposition exposes coalition disagreements, for instance when the opposition finance committee MP exploits the division within government on the resource tax question. Although the government has alignment challenges, there is only one question from a coalition MP in parliament. However, the data for the media coverage show additional examples of disagreement within government. In other words, although government MPs refrain from engaging in formal parliamentary activity, they still might voice their disagreement in the media.

The government construct of the “Mackerel Group” seems to limit the formal coalition activity in parliament. However, at the same time the construct itself implicates the government as a whole from the beginning of the case. The opposition is able to frame the case as the responsibility of the government from the beginning, causing the Prime Minister to be more exposed. In addition, the opposition MPs to some extent also try to drag the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Industry into the case.

The previous sections have demonstrated clear links to both the office and the policy criteria for the explosive variable. The activity clearly demonstrates that MPs focus on the mistakes and conduct of the minister and government. MPs criticize the government’s handling of the 2012 Mackerel allocation. The opposition refers to the same minister and Prime Minister mistakes as the Ombudsman. The case has a very clear reference to the policy implication. MPs use the case to engage in interest representation and present policy alternatives to the government’s policy. MPs make direct references to three different vessel groups and the vessel crew, indicating that the government policy has not served them well. MPs also try to relate the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case to a question of the overall fishery policy.

For the importance of media coverage, the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case leaves direct as well as indirect evidence of an effect of media coverage on MP Firefighting. In one of the MP questions, the Social Democratic party leader refers to information in the media on the government agreement on the 2012 Mackerel Allocation, demanding that the minister informs parliament directly. In this one instance, media coverage leads to parliamentary activity. In addition, the case demonstrates that continuous media coverage leads to additional MP activity, where MPs hang on to cases, because they most likely expect media coverage. However, there are considerable more instances, where parliamentary activity leads to media coverage.

The 2012 Mackerel Allocation case is a case registered as lacking damage control. According to the response to the application for access to documents, there were no documents following the Ombudsman critique for this case. The content of the parliamentary activity shows no reference to a lack of damage

control. MPs focus on the mistakes and responsibility of the minister and government. However, much as found in the audit case, the investigation of the content of media coverage reveals a more complex impression of the damage control in the case. The media files reveal that the minister and ministerial department argue that they did make changes in line with the critique for the mackerel 2013 allocation. However, this allegedly damage control activity does not mean that MPs lose interest in the case, considering the continuous parliamentary activity. However, the media coverage also reveals some contradiction and even critique of the Ombudsman institution from government MPs, which hardly resembles damage control. Therefore, the impression is that MPs only respond to a lack of damage control if the activity is useful in strengthening the critique directed at the minister.

To sum up, the investigation of the Ombudsman case shows very similar results to the audit case concerning the Transport Company Accounts. The parliamentary activity clearly links to the position variable, demonstrating how opposition MPs attempt to use the case to implicate the minister, but also the government as a whole. This also means that the content of the MP activity contains clear references to the office criteria. However, for the Ombudsman case, there is a stronger link between the content of the parliamentary activity and the policy criteria for the explosive variable. In addition, although media coverage seems to a great extent to follow from parliamentary activity, much as for the audit case, this case demonstrates both direct and indirect evidence that media coverage also leads to parliamentary activity. For the damage control variable, the investigation demonstrates a complex picture, when considering the mix of ministerial and agency strategies. However, when it comes to MPs, they only seem to respond to a lack of damage control if it is useful for strengthening the critique of the minister or government. Therefore, both the investigation of the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case and the Transport Company Accounts case seem to support the result from the quantitative investigation of an interaction effect between damage control and the office criteria for the explosive variable.

8.3.6. The mechanism triggering MP Firefighting

The previous section assessed the evidence in the case in relation to the theorized conditions, focusing on whether MP statements in the content of the parliamentary activity link to the hypothesized conditions. The result showed very similar results compared to the audit case.

Before the within-case investigation, I formulated an understanding of the mechanism linking the hypothesized conditions to the Firefighting. Recalling details presented earlier, I expect the mechanism to be a reaction process. The

theorized conditions have to become visible to some extent and develop into a reaction process, linking the theorized conditions to the Firefighting outcome.

In the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case, there is a history preceding the case, see section 8.3.1. In addition, all but one of the parliamentary activity instances occur before the Ombudsman's conclusion. The allocation of mackerel quota is high on the political agenda, and MPs follow government policy conduct closely. The two main opposition parties also want to make sure that they do not lose the approaching election based on fishery policy, as it is likely that this was the case in the previous election. In other words, opposition parties have strong incentives to conduct oversight of government in this case.

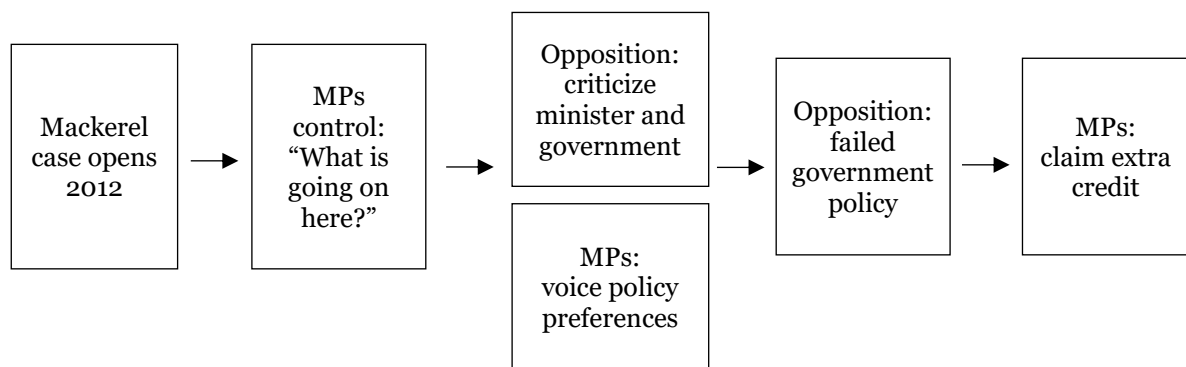
Although the process is less gradual, the process in the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case is quite similar to the process in the Transport Company Accounts case. From the start, the opposition directs focus not only at the Minister of Fishery, but also at the Prime Minister. The government's decision to construct the "Mackerel Group" is in some sense an invitation for the opposition to implicate the government as a whole. The opposition's broad focus is demonstrated by MPs also raising questions to the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Trade. Nevertheless, the Ombudsman case demonstrates a similar a reaction process, in which focus increasingly broadens together with increasing in intensity.

The opposition in the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case is coherent, since all opposition parties engage. However, the opposition activity in the case consists more of single MPs raising parliamentary questions, and less of co-operation between opposition MPs. This indicates that opposition MPs are more competitive when it comes to the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case. This is, however, not so surprising, considering the salience of the policy issue. This case might resemble the classic dilemma for coalition party systems; although, parties need to cooperate, they run for elections separately (Martin and Vanberg 2014). Even though all opposition parties are active, the Republican Party dominates the parliamentary activity. However, the lower level of activity from the other main opposition party, the Social Democratic Party, might rest on intra-party alignment challenges when it comes to fishery policy (Skorini 2011).

Overall, the case demonstrates a clear reaction process, considering the framing of the questions and escalation of opposition activity. From the parliamentary activity, it is clear that the opposition utilises different angles in their continuous efforts to inflict cost on government for their conduct and for the implications of their fishery policy. As previously explained, the focus is already broad in the first phase, considering the focus on the minister as well as the Prime Minister. However, the content of the critique in this phase is

more limited. In this first phase, the opposition focuses on mistakes and government conduct. In the second phase, following the policy implementation, MPs follow two tracks. MPs focus on interest representation by demonstrating policy alternatives to government policy. However, MPs also increase their focus on the government’s mistakes and conduct, but rather aggressively frame it as a question of the government’s failed policy. In the same way as in the audit case, the third phase demonstrates that MPs hang on to the case and claim extra credit in relation to the government. In the two aftermath questions, MPs recall the case and link it to overall fishery policy, which seems to link to the crucial 2015 election. For an overview of the reaction process in the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case, see figure 8.6.

Figure 8.6: The reaction process in the 2012 Mackerel Allocation case



8.4. Conclusion and chapter summery

This chapter has conducted the qualitative within-case investigation of the two selected institutional Fire Alarm cases; the cases concerning the Transport Company Accounts and the 2012 Mackerel Allocation. The process tracing method has been used to search for empirical evidence of the causal processes playing out in the two cases, linking the theorized conditions to the MP Firefighting outcome.

Overall, the project’s theoretical model explains MP Firefighting as a question of MPs’ incentives and different roles in parliament. MPs primarily adhere to the role of “partisan” and engage in Firefighting in order to inflict cost and damage government reputation, but also in order to position themselves and obtain attention of value for an up-coming election. The theoretical model explains MP Firefighting as a question of the position of the MP’s party in the opposition or government, the explosive potential of the institutional Fire Alarm case, the media coverage of the case, and the case-related damage control. In addition, this chapter has formulated the understanding of the mech-

anism linking the theorized conditions to MP Firefighting as a reaction process. The theorized conditions have to be present in order to produce an outcome, but the conditions have to create a process.

The 2012 Mackerel Allocation case and the Transport Company Accounts case are different cases that relate to different policy areas. In addition, one case is an audit case related to an appropriation matter, while the other case is an Ombudsman case related to policy administration. Nonetheless, both cases relate to minister mistakes.

The investigation of the two cases demonstrate similar results. Both cases demonstrate evidence of the importance of the position and the explosive variable. The content of the opposition activity clearly shows that MPs use cases to inflict cost and damage government reputation, where the activity is directed at individual ministers but also government as a whole. The content of the activity demonstrates that MPs focus to a great extent on the ministers' mistakes in the cases. This means that the investigation clearly demonstrates effects of the explosive variable when it comes to the office criterion. Moreover, the investigation offers evidence of the importance of the policy criterion. MPs make direct references to policy implications in both cases. The extent of the focus on policy implications is, however, stronger in the Ombudsman case, which is not so surprising since the case directly concerns policy administration, while the audit case only indirectly relates to policy administration.

For the effects of media coverage, the overall result is that both cases demonstrate a complex feedback loop relationship between parliamentary activity and media coverage. Both cases demonstrate that the media covers parliamentary activity a high degree. However, both cases also demonstrate effects of media coverage on MP Firefighting. Both cases demonstrate parliamentary activity in which MPs make direct references to media coverage. In addition, there are examples in which MPs refer to public statements, which one might assume refer to media coverage. Moreover, both cases show that the continuous media coverage of parliamentary activity causes MPs to maintain focus on cases. MPs seem to engage in formal parliamentary activity because they expect media coverage, considering Firefighting as a good opportunity to inflict cost and claim extra credit. In other words, both cases show an indirect effect of media coverage on parliamentary activity, where previous media coverage leads to additional parliamentary activity. Nevertheless, both cases show a higher degree of parliamentary activity leading to media coverage than media coverage leading to parliamentary activity (see figure 8.2 and 8.5 for an illustration, notice the different directions of the arrows). In addition, for both cases, the results for the media coverage show that coalition MPs voice their disagreement to a greater extent in the media than in formal parliamentary activity.

For the damage control, both cases show a complex picture of damage control activity. For the quantitative investigation, both cases are categorized as cases lacking damage control. The qualitative investigation has demonstrated that the damage control strategy might change during a control process. In the audit case, the minister first demonstrates a damage control strategy, while later in the process he changes his strategy and actively starts contradicting conclusions from control institutions. In the Ombudsman case, the strategy is more passive. The case documents leave the impression that there is no response, while the media files state that the minister changes his policy conduct following critique, while government MPs seem rather unhappy about the Ombudsman's conclusion. Nevertheless, the two cases demonstrate similar reactions from MPs in relation to a lack of damage control. MPs only seem to take an interest in the lack of damage control activity in the audit case because the activity of the minister and ministerial department strengthens the case against the minister and government. In the Ombudsman case, there is no lack of damage control activity to use in order to implicate the minister further. In the Ombudsman case, the opposition focus on the original mistake of the minister and government. The results from this qualitative investigation, therefore, support the result from the quantitative investigation of an interaction effect between the damage control variable and the minister/office criteria for the explosive variable (see section 6.5).

Regarding the question of the mechanism, both cases demonstrate similar reaction processes that link the hypothesized conditions to the Firefighting outcome. The audit case demonstrates more variation in the use of parliamentary instruments and stronger opposition co-operation. MPs gradually build the case and apply increasingly weightier parliamentary institutions. In the Ombudsman case, the dominant activity pattern is single MPs making use of parliamentary questions. Nonetheless, considering the policy issue, it makes sense that MPs use parliamentary questions, since it is a good instrument for MPs and political parties to present policy alternatives in relation to voters at the same time as engaging in control of government (Wiberg 1995). Nevertheless, if one considers the framing of the questions, the Ombudsman case also demonstrates a gradual process, in which MPs build up the case in much the same way, by broadening their focus in terms of implicated ministers as well as the focus of their parliamentary activity. First, they focus on the specific policy conduct, and then they use the case to present policy alternatives whilst simultaneously broadening the focus and framing the case as a matter of the government's failed policy. Finally, both cases demonstrate that MPs hang on to cases by raising additional questions recalling prior events in order to claim extra credit in relation to government.

The quantitative investigation from the previous chapter (6) demonstrated significant bi-variate correlations between the project's dependent variable, MP Firefighting, and the project's independent variables. In addition, the multivariate analysis demonstrated a high degree of confidence in the theoretical model, but insecurity on the effects of the separate individual explanatory variables.

This chapter's qualitative investigation supports the quantitative investigation by demonstrating a mechanism of a reaction process that links the theorized conditions to the Firefighting outcome. This means that the investigation strengthens the indications from the quantitative investigation of a causal relationship between the explanatory variables and the Firefighting outcome. Moreover, the qualitative investigation has added information on the relative importance of the individual explanatory variables. This chapter's investigation offers rather strong evidence of the importance of both the opposition and the explosive variable. Opposition MPs use cases to inflict cost and damage government reputation by focusing on the explosive criteria, in particular ministers' mistakes and policy implications. In addition, the investigation offers information on the direction of the causality between media coverage and Firefighting, demonstrating that media coverage does in fact lead to Firefighting, but that the relationship is complicated by a feedback-loop. Regarding the effects of damage control, the investigation demonstrates that a lack of damage control has an effect, but that opposition MPs only use a lack of damage control in order to strengthen their critique of the minister. If this is not possible, MPs pay no attention to damage control. Therefore, the damage control seems to link to the explosive criteria of the minister implication.

Overall, this chapter's qualitative investigation supports the results from the quantitative investigation, namely that MPs adhere to a great extent to their role of "partisans" when they engage in Firefighting. Primarily, opposition MPs use institutional Fire Alarm cases and engage in Firefighting in order to inflict cost and damage government reputation. However, the previous chapter (6) also demonstrated an effect of the institution on MP Firefighting. Therefore, the following chapter returns to the question and focuses on the project's fifth and final hypothesis concerning institutionalization effects. The following chapter investigates institutionalized MP Firefighting.

Chapter 9: Institutionalized MP Firefighting

Chapters 6 and 8 have conducted a quantitative as well as a qualitative process-tracing investigation of MP Firefighting. The purpose of the investigations has been to investigate what triggers MP Firefighting in parliament when the Ombudsman or audit institutions raise institutional Fire Alarms of government mal-administration. In other words, focus has been on explaining when cases from decentral parliamentary control institutions activate central control institutions within parliament.

The results of the previous investigations show that MPs respond to and use cases for partisan purposes. Primarily, opposition MPs engage in Firefighting in order to inflict cost on government and damage government reputation. However, the previous chapter (6) also demonstrated an effect of the institution on MP Firefighting. The results showed that there is less MP Firefighting for the audit institution compared to the Ombudsman institution.

In the Faroese case, the Ombudsman and the audit institution are different in terms of degree of institutionalization. There is a higher degree of institutionalization related to the audit institution compared to the Ombudsman institution. The results demonstrated in chapter 6, showing a lower level of activity for the audit institution means that there is less MP Firefighting associated with the institution in which there is higher degree of institutionalization.

However, an institutionalized process calls for MPs to engage in institutionalized Firefighting as a part of the process. Institutionalized Firefighting is different from the previously investigated optional Firefighting, since the institutional process guides and instructs the MP activity related to the institutional Fire Alarm cases. MP Firefighting is optional parliamentary activity based on MPs' own initiative to engage. Therefore, this chapter returns to the institutional question and focuses on the project's fifth and final hypothesis concerning institutionalization effects. This chapter conducts an investigation of the institutionalized process and institutionalized MP Firefighting.

Recalling the institutionalization hypothesis, the expectation is that a higher degree of institutionalization related to the control institution provides additional support for the MPs' role as "parliamentarian" at the expense of the "partisan" role. Rules and specific procedures that regulate activity strengthen the expectation that MPs engage in control of government as "parliamentarians". MPs have to respond to institutional Fire Alarm cases as part of the institutionalized process. This way an institutionalized process strengthens

MPs' obligation to conduct oversight of government activity. I have previously stated that opposition MPs have the incentives to engage in control and for them there is no conflict between the role as "partisan" and "parliamentarian", while government MPs find themselves in a role conflict. Government MPs need additional institutional support in order to engage in Firefighting. I consider an institutionalized process as additional institutional support that leads to more Firefighting from government MPs.

The investigation of the institutionalization hypothesis exploits the project's selection of two cases of decentral parliamentary control institutions, which vary in the degree of institutionalization. The chapter conducts a comparison of the institutionalized process for the two institution cases and investigates institutionalized MP Firefighting related to the audit institution. The chapter investigates the extent to which government MPs participate in institutionalized Firefighting. In addition, the chapter investigates if MPs display more "parliamentarian" behavior in institutionalized Firefighting compared to optional MP Firefighting.

The chapter will proceed as follows: First, I present the institutionalized process related to the audit institution and compare this to the Ombudsman situation. Second, I present an investigation of institutionalized MP Firefighting related to the audit institution.

9.1. The institutionalized process

This section describes the institutionalized process related to the audit institution and compares it to the Ombudsman situation.

An institutionalized process offers rules, procedures and established routines that imply a higher degree of institutionalization of expectations for a certain kind of behavior. The higher the degree of institutionalization of expectations, the less room for "partisan" considerations. MPs who refuse to adhere to highly institutionalized expectations risk public demands for explanations. Institutionalized processes, therefore, support the "parliamentarian role" and challenge the "partisan" role in case of role conflict. As previously mentioned, government MPs experience such a role conflict. An institutionalized process makes it therefore more likely that government MPs also engage in Firefighting (for more information on the institutionalization hypothesis, see section 3.5.5).

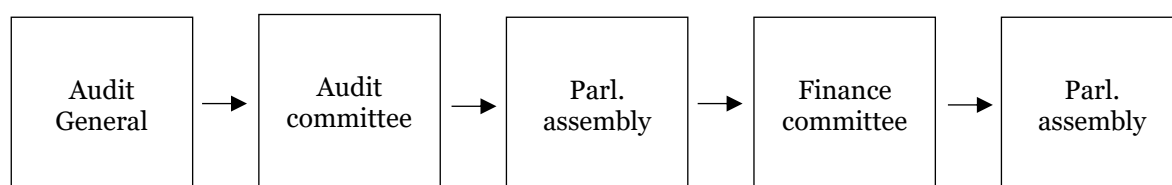
In the Faroe Islands, a far more institutionalized process follows the audit institution compared to the Ombudsman institution. Specific legislation defines the institutional characteristics for the two institutions. For the audit institution, it is the legal act on the auditing of the country accounts (no. 25 from

1999) and for the Ombudsman institution, it is the legal act on the Ombudsman institution (no. 60 from 2000). Moreover, when it comes to the audit institution, the governing rule also states the main rules (§ 45 in legal act no. 103 from 1994).

The legal act on the audit institution states the role of the Audit General institution as well as the audit committee in this process. Empirically, for the time-period 2000-2015, the rules related to the process were as follows.⁸² Within six months of the closing of the financial year, the minister reports the account figures to parliament and Audit General institution (§ 11). Then the Audit General institution conducts the audit of the accounts, hears agencies, and within 10 months reports the result of the auditing process to the audit committee in parliament (§ 12, 2). Then, within 14 months, the audit committee informs parliament by presenting a decision proposal on the results of the auditing process together with the audit committee's comments (§ 19). According to parliament's (Løgting) standing orders, a decision proposal receives two floor readings (§ 49), and as for other parliamentary matters, committee discussion between parliamentary readings (§ 24, 2).⁸³ The finance committee reviews the audit report between parliament's two readings.

In the audit committee, MPs review the audit annual report and decide on comments and which cases raise critique. From 2013, the committee has applied a list of comments, which has formalized the ranking of the degree of critique (www.lg.fo, note on the audit committee's classification of comments and critique, February 18 2013). However, it is clear from the audit reports that the committee uses the different labels before 2013. Nevertheless, this formalized list means that there is additional institutional support for the audit committee's work. See figure 9.1 for an overview of the audit related institutionalized process.

Figure 9.1: The institutionalized process related to the audit institution

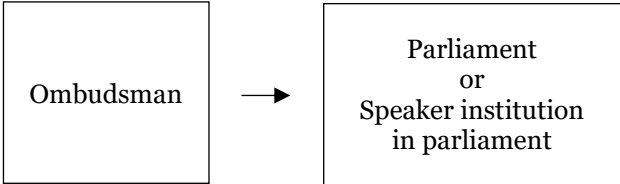


⁸² In Legal Act no. 33 from 2015, the 6 months in § 11 was changed to 5, the 10 months in § 12 was changed to 8, and the 14 months in § 19 changed to 11.

⁸³ Policy proposal receive three reading. Committees typically write reports to all decision and legal proposals.

The legal act on the Ombudsman states clear reporting requirements. First, the Ombudsman has to give parliament an annual report about the Ombudsman’s work. This annual report has to be made public before July 1 (§ 11). Second, if the Ombudsman formulates serious critique in a case, the Ombudsman must report to the Speaker institution in parliament specifically on the case (§ 10,1). Third, the Ombudsman also reports to parliament in case of flaws in legal framework or administration (§ 12). However, aside from the legal reporting requirements, there are no legal requirements for parliament’s reading of the reports from the Ombudsman. This means that there is not so much a process in the Ombudsman case, only reporting requirements. Thus, there is no additional structure provided for parliamentary processes related to the Ombudsman institution. For an illustration of the process related to the Ombudsman institution, see figure 9.2.

Figure 9.2: The process related to the Ombudsman institution



However, in spite of the lack of legal requirements for an institutionalized process in the Ombudsman case, parliament has still attempted to create a similar process for the Ombudsman institution. In the parliamentary years from 2008 to 2011, parliament did address the Ombudsman annual reports for 2007 to 2010.⁸⁴ For these four annual reports, the process was similar to the audit process according to figure 9.1, but instead of the finance committee, it was the legal committee that conducted the committee discussion. Recently, parliament has again started to address the Ombudsman annual reports (parliamentary matter 13/2016). These events indicate that a lack of formal requirements leaves unstable or changing parliamentary processes, not really an institutionalized process. In addition, the first time reading of the annual report for 2007 reveals institutional insecurity, in particular when it comes to the reports to the Speaker in the serious critique cases: “The Speaker’s task is to make sure that parliament’s work is arranged and works well, but the Speaker has no further control obligations related to the administration than what Løtting [parliament] and løgtingsmenn [MPs] have. Therefore, the Speaker

⁸⁴ The Speaker institution in parliament presented a decision proposal (d.p.) in parliament, which received the standard floor reading and discussion in the Legal Committee (d.p. 18/2008, d.p. 15/2009, d.p. 13/2010, d.p. 42/2011(changed to d.p. 83/2011 following an election).

can't do anything about this reporting. This has often been discussed in the communication between the Ombudsman and the Speaker" (Parliamentary matter: 18/2008: 2; author's translation). In addition, the committee report comments on procedures in other countries and on the differences between the audit institution and Ombudsman institution when it comes to rules on parliamentary readings. Overall, the institutional insecurity is clear, since the content of the committee report is to a greater extent about whether and how parliament should address the Ombudsman report than actually about the content of the Ombudsman report.

This section's description of the processes related to the two control institutions – the audit institution and the Ombudsman institution – demonstrates that there is a clear difference in the institutional requirements related to the two institutions. On the one side, there is the audit institution case, in which formal rules define and institutionalize a process. This means that MPs have to pay attention to defined procedures and structure for activity. On the other side, there is the Ombudsman institution, in which the formal requirements only encompass the Ombudsman's reporting obligation, while there are no formal requirements for parliament to address the reports. In addition, for the audit institution, the design of the institutionalized process supports the institution. Therefore, I expect an effect of the institutionalized process on MPs activity as part of the process.

The following section presents institutionalized MP Firefighting conducted as part of the institutionalized process.

9.2. Institutionalized MP Firefighting

The previous section demonstrated a difference in formal requirements for parliamentary processes related to audit cases compared to Ombudsman cases. Only the audit institution has an institutionalized process following the reporting activity. This section focuses on the parliamentary activity as part of an institutionalized process. This means that the section focuses on institutionalized MP Firefighting.

From the previously presented institutionalized process, MPs institutional Firefighting takes place in the audit committee, the parliamentary assembly, and the finance committee. In the audit committee, MPs have to decide whether to comment on different cases in the audit report. In the parliamentary assembly, MPs consider the decision proposal from the audit committee concerning the annual report, including the audit committee comments, while in the finance committee, MPs consider the proposal from the audit committee and write a committee report to parliament, stating the finance committee's proposition in the case.

The MP activity in the institutionalized process has far more structure compared to the more optional MP Firefighting investigated in chapters 6 and 8. The institutionalized activity serves itself to MPs; the cases land on their plates, so to speak. The previously investigated Firefighting is activity in which MPs have decided to initiate the activity. In other words, the activity investigated in chapter 6 and 8 was self-served, so to speak. The question is how this difference in conditions between optional and institutionalized Firefighting affects MPs' behavior; do MPs display a different type of behavior in institutionalized Firefighting than they do in optional MP Firefighting? The expectation, as previously mentioned, is that an institutional process makes it more difficult for MPs to use cases for partisan purposes. The institutionalized process is expected to support MPs' role as "parliamentarians".

The following section investigates institutionalized Firefighting related to the audit institution.

9.3. Investigation of institutionalized MP Firefighting

This section presents the investigation of institutionalized MP Firefighting. The following sub-sections present the results for the investigation of institutionalized MP Firefighting in the audit committee, the finance committee, and the parliamentary assembly.

The data for the investigation of institutionalized MP Firefighting is information from interviews and parliamentary data for institutionalized activity. The documentary parliamentary material relates to the previously stated institutionalized audit process. Institutionalized MP activity takes place in the audit committee, the parliamentary assembly, and the finance committee. Parliamentary data on the audit committee is the decision proposal presented to parliament, in which the committee comments on the audit report and formulates critique. Parliamentary data on the finance committee is the committee report, in which the committee states its position, and which also reveals committee unity or division. Parliamentary data on the assembly reading is voting results (parliament has to vote to approve the auditing process), and MP speeches from the parliamentary reading. The interview material is from interviews with a former audit chair MP and the present Audit General. For more information about parliamentary data and the collection process, see section 5.4.2, and on the conducting of elite interviews, see section 5.4.5, in chapter 5 on the overall research design.

The following sub-section presents the results of the investigation of institutionalized Firefighting in the audit committee.

9.3.1. Institutionalized activity in the audit committee

Following an election, parliament proportionally elects four parliamentary auditors.⁸⁵ The Faroese party system has four main parties and three minor parties. This means that in the Faroese political system, the four main parties receive one seat each (on the Faroese political system, see section 4.5). The largest party gets the audit chair, since the chair is the first to be elected (§ 1). The largest party often ends up in the government coalition. This means that the audit chair most likely is a government MP, or even an MP from the Prime Minister's party. This is an atypical audit committee characteristic, since it is more typical that the audit committee chair is an opposition MP (see section 2.6.2). However, the number of four audit committee members means that at least one or two of the members come from opposition parties. There is no example of a coalition consisting of all four main political parties

It is not a formal institutional requirement that the audit committee agrees on the comments. According to the legal act, single MPs have the right to make individual comments to minutes from audit committee meetings as well as in the audit committee report (§ 2,5). This means that institutional setup facilitates the opportunity for a committee divide, since MPs have the option to formulate majority and minority critique points in relation to the audit report.

In spite of the institutional opportunity, I find no example of an individual MP comment or a government/opposition divide in the audit committee comments. The parliamentary decision proposals related to audit reports leave no traces of any majority/minority divisions. I find no example in which MPs state a minority view, for instance stressing the importance of cases covered up by government MPs in the audit committee. In addition, in the interview the Audit General states that there is no example of minority comments. The practice is that the audit committee comments on cases unanimously (Interview, Audit General: Beinta Dam, October 6 and November 14 2017).

The previous audit committee chair offers an explanation of the results of strong audit committee unity. The former audit committee chair states that MPs "take off their partisan glasses" when they discuss cases in the audit committee (Interview, former audit chair: Reimund Laangaard, November 22 2017). The fact that some of the selected audit cases implicate ministers, and that in spite of this the government MPs and the opposition MPs in the audit committee agree on the critique, supports this statement. Thus, the audit committee seems to function as one institution, since MPs across opposition and government state the same position. In other words, the MP behavior in the

⁸⁵ In the project referred to as the Audit Committee, which also is the stated English title.

audit committee resembles “parliamentary” behavior. The following section investigates if the same pattern applies for the finance committee.

9.3.2. Institutionalized activity in the finance committee

This sub-section investigates the institutionalized MP Firefighting in the finance committee related to the proposals from the audit committee.

According to the institutionalized audit process, illustrated in figure 9.1, MPs in the finance committee address the decision proposal following parliament’s first reading. The finance committee addresses the parliamentary matter and writes a report in which MPs state the committee’s position.

In the Faroese case, according to parliament’s standing orders, committee members have the option to write minority reports to committee reports in all standing committees. In other words, the institutional set-up facilitates partisan behavior in terms of government-opposition divides. The seats in the Faroese finance committee are attractive positions, and figure high on MPs’ preference list when it comes to the allocation of committee seats.⁸⁶

There are no further instructions for the finance committee’s discussion of the decisions proposal from the audit committee. In the finance committee report, the committee has the option to formulate more overall comments to the whole audit report, or to select specific audit cases for further comments. In addition, the committee has the option to formulate united comments or to divide and make majority and minority comments.

Overall, the finance committee reports show that the committee seems to take the results of the auditing processes seriously, since the report is on the agenda for several meetings, yet varying from two to seven meetings, see table 9.1. When it comes to the content, the reports show that the finance committee formulates general endorsements as well as comments on specific audit cases. For instance, the committee offers general support declarations on the audit committee comments, urging agencies and government to adhere to the critique and make amends. One example of a general supporting comment is: “The finance committee finds that lögmaður [Prime Minister] should make sure that ministries prioritize resources to the matters pointed to by the Audit General and audit committee and get matters straight” (parliamentary matter: 68/2014, committee report: 1; author’s translation).

In addition, there are also examples, in which the committee comments on specific audit cases.⁸⁷ One example is the following comment: “The audit

⁸⁶ A common Faroese assumption, which the previous MP audit chair also states in the interview, November 22 2017.

⁸⁷ It is a rather new practice that the finance committee comments on specific cases, according to the previous MP audit chair (Interview, November 22 2017).

committee harshly criticizes that the case regarding government’s communication expenses still is not solved, even though the Audit General has pointed to the lacking legal authority for 10 years. It should not be necessary for the audit committee to criticize this harshly. The majority finds that lögmaður [Prime Minister] must solve the case now” (Parliamentary matter: 75/2010, committee report: 1; author’s translation).

This specific quote relates to a committee split, since only the majority supports this and some other comments. However, this is the only example among the eleven committee reports, in which the finance committee is divided. For nine of the committee reports, the committee is united. For one of the reports, the committee writes no report. However, when it comes to the one example of a committee division, the report offers some general comments, which a united committee supports. Thereafter, the report lists some specific comments, among other quoted comments. The investigation shows that for the specific comments, the committee is divided. The majority supports the specific comments. However, the divide is within parties in government as well as opposition. The odd division splits two parties, one opposition and one government party, where the two members for each party take different stands in the committee report. For an overview of the finance committee position in the 11 audit committee decision proposals, see table 9.1.

Table 9.1: Overview of the finance committee position in the 11 decision proposals from the audit committee

Parliamentary mater, ID (no. and parliamentary year)	Committee meetings on the matter (no.)	Finance committee position (unity)
1. 72/2008	4	Yes
2. 69/2008	2	Yes
3. 96/2009	...	No report
4. 75/2010	4	Yes and No
5. 132/2011	2	Yes
6. 85/2012	5	Yes
7. 81/2013	4	Yes
8. 68/2014	7	Yes
9. 61/2015	4	Yes
10. 39/2016	4	Yes
11. 41/2016	4	Yes

These results demonstrate a high degree of committee unity for the finance committee when it comes to scrutinize audit reports. There is one example of a committee divide, however it is rather an odd exception and not an example of an opposition-government divide. This means that the finance committee also demonstrates behavior resembling a unitary actor, in which MPs across political parties demonstrate a similar pattern of behavior, and in which government MPs support the critique of government.

The following section continues by investigating institutionalized MP activity in the parliamentary assembly, where the focus is expanded to the content of the MP activity.

9.3.3. Institutionalized Firefighting in the parliamentary assembly

This sub-section investigates MP institutionalized Firefighting in the parliamentary assembly by investigating the content of MP speeches.

The audit committee informs parliament on the results of the auditing process together with the audit committee's comments by presenting a decision proposal that receives two parliamentary readings. In the parliamentary assembly, MPs from both the opposition and the government have the opportunity to take the stand and give a speech, and thereby engage in institutional Firefighting related to the audit report.

There are different ways for the MPs to conduct this activity. MPs might demonstrate "parliamentarian" behavior and support the audit institution or use the opportunity for "partisan" behaviour (see chapter 8).

In order to investigate the institutionalized activity in the parliamentary assembly, I investigate the parliamentary debate related to the audit reports. The debates offers information on who participates in the debates – opposition or government MPs – and on the content of institutionalized MP Firefighting, since MPs' statements and reactions to audit reports reveal if and how MPs use information from the audit institution.

For the investigation, I focus on the speeches from the party representatives in order to investigate the importance of the position of the MP's party for institutionalized Firefighting. I use parliament's first reading, since MPs typically present the party's position in the first reading. I use debates for eight annual reports for the investigation of the content of institutionalized MP Firefighting.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ In the previous section, the overview shows 11 reports. However, for two of these debates, there is no documented debate (no audio files). There are debates for 8 annual reports and one debate related to a report on a public fund. Since the debate on the public fund is rather different, I only use the debates for the annual reports.

For parliament’s reading, the Speaker requests party representatives and gives the stand to parties ordered by party size (Standing orders: §69). Party representatives receive 10 minutes for their initial speech. Additional MPs that take the stand receive five minutes for their speech. In addition, MPs can decide to comment on speeches (Standing orders: appendix).⁸⁹

The purpose of the investigation is to find out whether MPs in institutionalized Firefighting demonstrate more “parliamentarian” Firefighting compared to the “partisan” optional Firefighting. The institutionalization hypothesis states that institutionalized processes lead to more Firefighting among government MPs. Therefore, one indicator of “parliamentarian” Firefighting is if government parties participate in the debate. The collection for party representatives (only one for each party) that take the stand reveals that government parties are indeed represented in the debates to a great extent. Government MPs do not seem to leave the stand for opposition MPs to address audit reports. The total number of collected speeches is 41, 20 speeches from opposition MPs and 21 from government MPs, see table 9.2.

Table 9.2: The number of collected speeches from opposition and government MPs

Audit report no.	Opposition parties	Government parties
1	2	2
2	2	3
3	2	3
4	2	2
5	3	3
6	2	2
7	4	3
8	3	3
Total	20	21

Table 9.2 shows that both MPs from government and opposition parties participate in the debates. However, this does not necessarily mean that all of

⁸⁹ In case of lacking party representatives on the speech list (10 minute speech), instead, I collect the first additional MP from the missing party that takes the stand (5 minute speech). However, I do not consider comments from MPs to speeches from other MPs as party representative speeches. For some debates, some party representatives are missing, often from the smaller parties.

them participate by supporting “parliamentarian” institutionalized Fire-fighting. Therefore, the investigation continues by conducting a content analysis of the speeches in the debates. The question is whether government and opposition MPs present the same type and strength of critique. Another question is whether MPs use the audit reports for other partisan purposes, such as presenting the government’s favorable policy or the opposition’s policy alternatives.

For the investigation, I formulate codes for MPs’ focus and references. I distinguish between a “parliamentarian” focus, in which MPs support the audit institution, focus on the audit report and address government’s responsibility, and “partisan” references, in which MPs use cases for partisan purposes. Opposition partisan references are if MPs use cases to implicate government and damage government reputation. Signs that opposition MPs use the audit reading to make use of “partisan” references are if MPs related to the audit report name government parties, make direct references to the coalition or name ministers. In addition, opposition MPs might use the opportunity to demonstrate “partisan” policy preferences, such as if MPs present their party’s policy position or evaluate the government’s policy. Moreover, government MPs might also use “partisan” references by using the opportunity in parliament to promote the government’s policy or to compliment the government’s achievements. However, in case of a coalition conflict, government MPs might also use the opportunity to criticize another coalition party. For an overview of the codes, see table 9.3.

Table 9.3: Overview of codes and the definitions

Codes:	Definition:
”parliamentarian” focus	”parliamentarian” critique – support of audit process, audit related critique of government, focus on audit cases, and government responsibility to make amends
”partisan” references (opposition)	”partisan” critique of government – names parties, coalition or ministers “partisan” policy presentation – presenting the party’s policy position and critique of government’s policy
”partisan” references (government)	“partisan” defense of government actions ”partisan” praise of government’s achievements “partisan” coalition references – critique and implication of another coalition party

Following the definition of codes, I apply the codes and conduct the investigation of the collected MP speeches, consisting of 20 from opposition MPs and

21 from government MPs. The results for both the opposition and the government MPs is that all have a “parliamentarian” focus. MPs from both government and opposition declare general support to the Audit General institution and the audit committee, complimenting the comprehensive report and good work. In addition, most MPs, from opposition as well as government, select some of the audit cases and make extra case specific comments.

The “parliamentarian” focus is remarkably similar across opposition and government parties. The speeches start by acknowledging the work by the Audit General and the audit committee. Then MPs – including government MPs – continue and stress that government should take cases seriously. In addition, most MPs comment on specific cases; some choose to focus on a few specific cases, while others make a few comments on several cases.

However, the investigation also shows examples of “partisan” references. Both opposition and government MPs add “partisan” references to their “parliamentarian” focus in their speeches. This applies for 11 of the 20 opposition MPs and eight of the 21 government MPs. Opposition MPs make use of partisan references in order to implicate government and make use of different policy statements. Some MPs evaluate some of the government’s policy decisions, while other MPs use the opportunity to present some of their party’s policy positions. Some government MPs’ “partisan” references are about promoting government’s policy or praising government’s achievements. Others are more defensive comments related to certain critiques from the opposition. In addition, two of the government “partisan” references consist of coalition critique, in which the MP criticizes a coalition partner.

To illustrate the “partisan” references, I will present some examples. One example is when in the (68/2014) debate, the Social Democratic party representative, Eyðgunn Samuelsen, refers to the government’s decision to decentralize elderly care, thereby leaving the financial challenges to the municipalities to deal with. Here, the MP offers a clear, negative policy evaluation and an attempt to implicate government. Another example is when in the (41/2016) debate, the leader of the People’s Party, Jørgen Niclasen, refers to fictive incomes in the government’s proposal for the 2017 appropriation. The MP thereby criticizes the government’s financial policy. One example, in which MPs use the opportunity to present their party’s policy position is when in the (75/2010) debate, in relation to his comment on social policy expenses, an MP from the Center Party, Bill Justinussen, presents his party’s decision proposal to implement a poverty limit. An example of a “partisan” reference from a government MP is when in the (132/2011) debate, the MP from the People’s Party, Jákup Mikkelsen, acknowledges the government’s progress in correcting mistakes and the increased control of the more challenging accounts. In the same way and in the same debate, Reimund Langgaard, from the Unionist Party,

acknowledges the government’s progress and promotes one of the government’s policy achievements related to public procurement (innkeypspolitik). For an overview of the results of the coding of MPs speeches, see table 9.4.

Table 9.4: Results of the investigation of “parliamentarian” focus and “partisan” references in MPs speeches related to annual audit reports

Report no. (parliamentary ID)	Opposition MPs		Government MPs	
	Parliamentarian focus	Partisan references	Parliamentarian focus	Partisan references
Government: Unionist Party, People’s Party, Social Democratic Party				
1: (96/2009)	2	1	2	1
2: (75/2010)	2	2	3	2
Government: Unionist Party, People’s Party, Center Party, Autonomist Party				
3: (132/2011)	2	2	3	3
4: (85/2012)	2	0	2	0
5: (81/2013)	3	2	3	1
6: (68/2014)	2	2	2	0
Government: Social Democratic Party, Republican Party, Progress Party				
7: (61/2015)	4	1	3	1
8: (41/2016)	3	1	3	0
Total:	20	11	21	8

Following the debates, MPs vote on the decision proposal at the end of parliament’s second reading (S §49). For the investigation, I have also collected the voting results. The records show that the overall pattern is that both government and opposition MPs vote in favor of the proposal, which means that they approve the result of the auditing process.

However, related to the audit report for 2008 (ID 96/2009), there is a low turnout and a relatively high number of MPs that vote against. The votes against come from opposition MPs, while several government MPs are not present for the vote. This is the same year in which there is no finance committee report (stated in table 9.1). The content of speeches related to this report reveal that MPs do not want to signal acceptance of spending that has exceeded the appropriation. The debate reveals that there is a conflict between parliament and government on some statements from the Prime Minister related to ministers and exceeding budgets. Both the opposition and the govern-

ment MPs criticize the Prime Minister's statement and demonstrate supporting "parliamentarian" institutionalized MP Firefighting. Nevertheless, the case also indicates that even though government MPs might voice their dissatisfaction, they will not vote against government. In case of conflict, they prefer to abstain.

To sum up, this last sub-section has demonstrated that government MPs engage in institutionalized Firefighting by making speeches in the parliamentary reading of audit reports. Moreover, the content analysis demonstrated a "parliamentarian" focus in the speeches from both government and opposition MPs. However, the investigation also showed that institutionalized Firefighting still leaves room for additional "partisan" references.

9.4. Conclusion and chapter summary

This chapter has investigated the effects of institutionalization on MP Firefighting. It has conducted a comparison of the institutionalized process for the two institutions, the Ombudsman and the audit institution, and investigated institutionalized MP Firefighting related to the audit institution. For this, the chapter has investigated whether MPs display a different type of behavior in institutionalized Firefighting compared to optional MP Firefighting, and whether government MPs engage to a greater extent in institutionalized Firefighting when there is additional institutional support available.

The multivariate analysis presented in chapter 6 demonstrated a difference in the mean effects between the two institution cases. There is more MP Firefighting for the Ombudsman institution than for to the audit institution. In other words, when it comes to optional MP Firefighting based on MPs' own initiative, there is less activity related to the more institutionalized institution. Therefore, this chapter returned to the question of the effects of the institution on MP Firefighting.

The chapter's investigation of the institutionalized process demonstrates that compared to the Ombudsman institution, the audit institution relates to a much more institutionalized process. For the audit institution, MPs engage in institutionalized Firefighting in the audit committee, the finance committee and the parliamentary assembly. MPs participate in institutionalized Firefighting when in the audit committee, they decide on comments and critique of audit cases reported by the Audit General institution; when they address reports in the finance committee, and when they debate and vote on the results of the auditing process in the parliamentary assembly.

The chapter has demonstrated that there is strong audit committee unity, since there is no example of a committee division. There is also a high degree of unity in the finance committee when it comes to the discussions of audit

reports. This means that it is not only opposition MPs, but also government MPs, who support the audit critique. Moreover, the investigation of MPs speeches in the parliamentary debates shows that government MPs engage in institutionalized Firefighting. In addition, the content analysis shows that both government and opposition MPs demonstrate a “parliamentarian” focus in their speeches. MPs from the both the opposition and government demonstrate a “parliamentarian” focus in their speeches related to the reading of audit reports.

Government MPs formulate critique of government agencies together with opposition MPs in the audit committee and support the critique in the finance committee as well as in their speeches in the parliamentary assembly. Government MPs stress government responsibility and comment on specific cases. This means that this chapter’s investigation supports the project’s institutionalization hypothesis. An institutionalized process offers additional institutional support and supports MPs’ “parliamentarian” role. An institutionalized process leads to more Firefighting from government MPs.

However, the chapter’s investigation also shows that in their speeches, MPs make use of “partisan” references in the institutionalized Firefighting. Although, an institutionalized process strengthens MPs’ role as “parliamentarians”, there still is room for “partisan” behavior in institutionalized Firefighting.

Chapter 10: What we have learned about MP Firefighting

MP Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarms has been the specific focus of this project. The Ombudsman and public audit serve as Fire Alarm institutions (McCubbins and Schwartz 1984) initiating MP Firefighting in parliament. The overall theme is that when MPs engage in parliamentary control they hold government accountable. The project's motivation is the importance of accountability for the quality of modern democratic systems (e.g. Schedler et al. 1999, Diamond and Morlino 2005, Olsen 2013).

The project's overall result is that MP Firefighting is primarily "partisan" activity. Opposition MPs dominate the Firefighting activity, as demonstrated in the quantitative investigation. Moreover, opposition MPs engage in Firefighting in order to inflict cost on government and damage government reputation, as demonstrated in the qualitative investigation. However, the project's results also show that additional institutional support in the form of an institutionalized process leads to more Firefighting from government MPs and to more "parliamentarian" Firefighting. The investigation of institutionalized Firefighting shows that government MPs participate to a high degree, and that both government and opposition MPs demonstrate a higher degree of "parliamentarian" Firefighting compared to the optional Firefighting based on MPs' own initiative.

This final chapter evaluates the project's findings, addresses the question of whether control has any effect on the government, and addresses the issue of generalizability of the project's findings. First, I discuss what we can learn about MP Firefighting from the project's findings. Second, I continue to consider the effects of control on government. The question is whether a control process leads to changes or a result, thereby having an effect. Third, I address the question of the generalizability of the project's results within the Faroe Islands case as well as to other empirical country contexts.

10.1. Evaluating the project's results

The overall lesson from the project's findings is that MPs' role as "partisan" is highly influential when it comes to control activity. Although MPs might argue that as "parliamentarians" they raise questions or initiate investigations, this project's finding shows a clear "partisan" pattern. MPs engage in Firefighting

when it serves partisan interests. The dominant Firefighting pattern is opposition MPs engaging in parliamentary activity in order to inflict cost and damage government reputation.

The project's title links MP Firefighting to the MPs' task of holding government to account. The discovery of a dominant pattern of "partisan" Firefighting raises the question of whether "partisan" Firefighting contributes to accountability, or whether accountability rests on "parliamentarian" Firefighting. One could argue that MPs engaging in Firefighting in order to inflict cost and damage government reputation is providing fuel to rather than extinguishing the fire. In other words, is Firefighting really Firefighting? To this, I argue, in the context of a Fire Alarm case, fuel means that focus and attention on the case increases, which leads to a higher level of pressure on the government to make amends and correct mistakes. Apart from the ultimate instrument of the Vote of No Confidence, opposition MPs have limited power to force government to correct mistakes. Therefore, a way to make government respond (and to feed media interest) is to add fuel to the fire. In other words, I argue that "partisan" Firefighting contributes to accountability in democratic systems, even though the contribution to accountability is a side effect. Although MPs engage in Firefighting in order to achieve "partisan" benefits, there is nonetheless a side effect in the form of parliamentary oversight of government actions. Following from this, I therefore stress that this project's investigation demonstrates that optional Firefighting, based on MPs' own initiative, depends to a great extent on the presence of party competition

There are, however, also negative side-effects related to "partisan" Firefighting. The party competition means that government parties will avoid admitting to mistakes because they fear the opposition's pursuit of the government. In the same way, party competition means that the opposition will exaggerate focus on cases, which could have been resolved more efficiently had they not being politicized. In addition, the investigation shows that more than half of the cases have no related Firefighting. The investigation shows that these cases typically lack or have a degree of explosive potential that is too low to implicate government. This raises the question of what happens in this type of case. Do government agencies still correct mistakes, or does this finding identify a lacking accountability mechanism? Nevertheless, I argue that we need further research to answer the question related to the no Firefighting outcome cases and whether an accountability mechanism is missing.

However, the project's findings also demonstrate "parliamentarian" Firefighting, where MPs engage in direct support of control institutions in the critique of government agencies. The project's findings demonstrate that an institutionalized process, defining and instructing MPs' control activity, provides additional institutional support for MPs' role as "parliamentarians". The

findings thereby also show that under certain conditions, even government MPs engage in parliamentary control. This finding for institutionalized Firefighting demonstrates a more direct contribution to accountability in the political system. Based on the project's results, one might consider whether a higher degree of institutionalization, which leads to a higher degree of "parliamentarian" oriented behavior, would dampen the "partisan" control, thereby reducing the extent of negative side-effects.

In addition, the project's finding of a higher degree of "parliamentarian" Firefighting in institutionalized Firefighting compared to optional Firefighting means that this project provides some evidence of an effect of institutions on MP behavior. I have previously argued that we still know little about the relationship between institutions and behavior (Sieberer 2011). Previous research primarily focuses on variations in institutional settings (for instance Sieberer 2011, Garritzmann 2017, Bergman et al. 2003, Andeweg and Nijzink 1995), but not so much on if and how these differences can explain differences in MPs' behavior. This project's result shows that a typical "non-party" institutional mode does not seem to make MPs more "parliamentarian" in their behavior. However, under conditions of additional institutional support in the form of an institutionalized process which defines and instructs MP activity, there is an effect in the direction of a higher degree of "parliamentarian" Firefighting, whilst still allowing room for a certain degree of "partisan" behavior in institutionalized Firefighting. In other words, what we have learned from this project is that MPs' role as "parliamentarians" requires additional institutional support.

10.2. Effects of a control process related to government

The qualitative investigation provided evidence of a reaction process linking the theorized conditions to the Firefighting outcome. Moreover, the investigation showed that during a control process, MPs gradually build up a case by broadening their focus and use of parliamentary control institutions. The project's demonstration of a control process raises the question of whether the process leads to some kind of result or change. Is there an effect on government related to the control process? This question also relates to the project's motivation on accountability. If a control process leads to no changes, then it is difficult to argue that MP Firefighting and the control process contributes to accountability in the political system.

I will respond to this question by recalling the example from the project's introduction. The example was an Ombudsman case from 2010 about a group

of accountants who had received the advanced state-authorized public account license in conflict with Faroese legislation. Following the Ombudsman critique, MPs in parliament initiated a control process. The result of this process was the withdrawal of the allocated audit licenses, though without consequences for any of the decision makers. On the one hand, this specific control process led to a correction of the mistake, which I would argue strengthens accountability in the political system. On the other hand, the process ended without any conclusions or statements regarding who was responsible for the decision in the first place. The minister received no formal critique or sanction, which one could argue did not strengthen accountability. However, in addition, one might argue that the control process had an indirect effect in the form of “anticipated” effects. One might expect that decision makers will be careful not to repeat the mistake in order to avoid a similar control process.

The “law of anticipation” is a result of ex-post control mechanisms and means that rational agents (in government) anticipate the preferences of their principals (in parliament) and adjust their behavior (Weingast 1984, Lupia and McCubbins 2000: 301, Pollack 2002). In the Transport Company Account case, one might argue that the minister anticipates that a control process will follow the conducted mistakes. Therefore, the minister implements sanctions related to the Transport Company in an attempt to satisfy his principals in parliament. That the minister is less successful in his attempt is another story (see section 8.2). Moreover, although the minister escapes the No Confidence threat in parliament and receives no formal sanction, he nonetheless implements several changes to make amends. Therefore, I argue that the project findings show that control processes lead to changes. The findings indicate that there is most likely some effect or some result related to a control process. Nevertheless, the question of specific accountability effects, and how to measure such effects requires careful considerations regarding measurement and research-design. This, I leave for future research projects.

Another issue related to effects and parliamentary control processes is the issue of different coalition systems. Previously in this project, I addressed the difference between minority and majority coalition systems. In the section 4.7, I presented certain references, which indicate that minority governments strengthen parliamentary control. I concluded, however, that we still know very little about how and to what extent this difference in government coalition systems affects parliamentary control. Moreover, I argued that I do not expect the difference between a majority and a minority system to play a major role in parliamentary control processes.

This project’s investigation is conducted in a political system, which has strong traditions for majority coalition governments. The investigation clearly demonstrates intense control processes in the Faroese system. This means

that the investigation supports that MPs in majority coalition systems also engage in parliamentary control processes. Nevertheless, one might speculate whether the lack of minister responsibility statements in the Faroese case relates to the condition of a majority system. In other words, the minister seats may be safer in a majority than in a minority coalition system. However, I still argue that we need more research to clarify the question of how the difference in government coalition systems affects parliamentary control.

10.3. Do the findings travel?

This final section focuses on the generalizability of the project's results; the issue of external validity. The issue of generalizability related to this project raises two questions. The first question is whether it is possible to generalize the project's findings concerning MP Firefighting to other audit and Ombudsman cases as well as to other types of parliamentary control activity in the Faroese case. The second question is whether the project's findings on MP Firefighting can be transferred to other empirical contexts, to other countries' political systems.

To the first question on generalizability of the project's findings within the Faroe Islands case, I find no reason to expect different results for other Ombudsman and audit cases. The project's selected cases are the most critical or serious cases. The argument for this selection criteria was to ensure enough Firefighting outcome cases among the selected cases (for more information on the case selection, see section 5.2). From this argument follows an expectation of a relatively lower share of Firefighting outcome cases among the total population of Ombudsman and audit cases. However, I do not see how this difference could influence the results for other cases. I still expect the project's explaining variables to demonstrate the same patterns for MP activity for other audit and Ombudsman cases.

Continuing to answer the first question on generalizability within the Faroe Islands case, I also expect the project's findings to apply to other types of parliamentary oversight. By this, I mean, that MPs take an interest in parliamentary control if it serves "partisan" interests. One example is control activity in the control committee. Here, I expect the project's findings to be useful in understanding MPs' use of the control committee. For instance, I expect MPs to consider the explosive potential of the case before they activate the control committee. In addition, I also expect the findings to apply for MP Firefighting related to Fire Alarms from different third parties, such as organized interests. However, a Fire Alarm from a third party is by definition explosive, considering that third party interests are one of the criteria for the explosive variable. Nonetheless, third party Fire Alarm cases still might vary related to

the degree of explosive potential, media cover and damage control. However, I refrain from comparing this type of parliamentary oversight to MPs' scrutinizing activity of legal acts, since this is a different type of parliamentary control activity, conducted before parliament passes legislation. Although, I expect this project's results to be transferrable within the Faroese context, I still recommend more research in parliamentary control activity. For instance, this project indicates that the degree of committee coherence is stronger for the audit committee than for the control committee. One interesting research question is which factors influence committee coherence.

Finally, I address the question of the generalizability of the project's findings to other empirical contexts. I only see limited reasons for why these results should not apply for other empirical contexts as well. My reservation on this question is the small size and lack of state status related to the Faroe Islands case. The Faroe Islands case is a rather unusual case choice. The argument for the selection of the case is the "de facto" independence of the political system and the need for research in political institutions.

Related to the issue of size, scholars tend to disagree on the question of the effect size has on political institutions. The disagreements relate to different issues. One issue is the effect of size on the functioning of democracy (Dahl and Tufte 1973, Newton 1982, Veenendaal 2013, Erk and Veenendaal 2014). Another issue is disagreements on different dimensions when it comes to homogeneity in small units, influencing the functioning of democracy (Dahl and Tufte 1973, Anckar, D. 1999). A third disagreement is whether high democracy ratings for small units in fact are based on the remoteness of islands (Diamond and Svetlana 1999, Anckar, C. 2008, Ott, D. 2000). In addition, even the assessment of small is not so simple and is based on several different criteria (Anckar 1999). Overall, the issue of size and effects on political institutions is controversial. Therefore, I argue that we need more research to clarify this question. However, this project offers a contribution to this debate, since the project tests universal theories about political institutions and political actors in a micro system setting. Since the project's hypotheses are confirmed, the project's findings indicate that universal theories about "partisan" behavior and party competition also apply for micro settings.

For this project's investigation, I have carefully assessed the different institutional settings in the Faroe Islands case. The result of this assessment is that the Faroe Islands case is a typical case related to this project's focus. The Faroe Islands has typical parliamentary system settings; overall, a strong parliament empowered to conduct oversight of government actions. Moreover, the Faroe Islands has typical Ombudsman and audit institutions. In addition, the role of political parties is typical for a parliamentary system, considering that parties control to a great extent MPs' goals. However, the administrative

resources and level of activity in the Faroese case are comparatively low. Following from this, the status as a typical case supports the argument that the project's findings are transferrable to other empirical contexts. Nevertheless, it is important to stress that this also depends on the status of other empirical cases; whether such cases are typical or in some way extreme. For instance, I have previously defined the Swedish Ombudsman institution as an atypical institution, which does not fit this project's ideal-typical description of decentral accountability institutions. Following from this, I argue that the question of generalizability to other empirical contexts depends on the institutional settings in these countries. It is important to assess if the settings change the conditions for institutions that facilitate parliamentary activity as well as MPs' incentives in ways that contradict this project's theoretical model. However, if the conditions of a parliamentary system, the presence of decentral parliamentary control institutions, an empowered parliament in form of control institutions, and political parties that control MPs' goals exist, I argue that this project's findings most likely will apply. This means that I expect the results to apply for typical Western democratic systems that meet the institutional conditions presented in chapters 2 and 3.

Overall, this final chapter has focused on what we have learned about MP Firefighting from this project. This chapter has evaluated the project's findings, addressed the question of whether a control process has effects on the government, and assessed the generalizability of the project's findings. To sum up, from this project, we know that MP Firefighting is primarily "partisan" activity, but also that an institutionalized process supports MPs' role as "parliamentarians". Following from these results, the project argues that MP Firefighting contributes to accountability in modern democratic systems, although one has to consider possible negative side-effects of "partisan" Firefighting. Moreover, the project shows that universal theories of political behavior and political competition also apply for the micro settings of the Faroe Islands.

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- Interview, former Danish Ombudsman: Hans Gammeltoft-Hansen, May 24 2017.
- Interview, constitutional expert, Prime Minister’s office, Sjúrdur Rasmussen, December 7 2017.
- Interview, former audit chair: Reimund Langgaard, November 22 2017.

Appendix 1: Case overview

This appendix presents an overview of the project's 52 cases, the 25 Ombudsman and 27 audit critical cases. The Ombudsman critical cases are from the time-period 2000-2015. The audit critical cases are from the time-period 2007-2015. The Ombudsman critical cases are specifically reported to parliament. The audit cases are first reported to the audit committee. The audit committee ranks the cases, hereby defining the critical cases, and reports to parliament. Typically, the critical audit cases are reported to parliament together with other cases in annual reports.

Case no.	Institution	Year (reporting)	Description
1	Ombudsman	2002	Ministry of Trade fires the Landsverk (infrastructure institution) manager because of structural changes. The political intention is to fuse Landsverk and the Transport Company (public transport institution). The case implicates the minister. Later, the minister lets go of his policy intention. Ministry of Trade announces the position as manager for the Landsverk institution. The Ombudsman only handles the inauguration process, because the initial event happened before the establishment of the Ombudsman institution.
2	Ombudsman	2002	The case relates to the Ministry of Fishery's administration of fishery licenses. Two citizens make a private arrangement related to sale of fishery licences. However, this requires the ministry to transfer the fishery licence from one boat to another, (to register a so-called authority limitation). The case develops into a strife between the two citizens, and the Ombudsman is not satisfied with how the ministry decides to handle the case.
3	Ombudsman	2002	Ministry of Education, Culture and Research formally is responsible for hiring teachers at the upper secondary school in Tórshavn. An applicant formulates a letter of complaint concerning the inauguration process for 2000 and 2001. The Ombudsman states grave mistakes.
4	Ombudsman	2002	A teacher applies the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research to increase his marks for two students by one mark, because of a mistake. The ministry bluntly refuses.

5	Ombudsman	2003	A reporter makes a request to the Ministry of Fisheries for access to documents. The documents relate to an investigative committee, whose conclusion lead to the minister's resignation. Not until the Ombudsman has initiated the control process, the reporter receives the requested documents.
6	Ombudsman	2004	Since 1996, an applicant annually has applied for support from the Leisure Fund, but without receiving any response/decision from the fond. Even though the fond on June 11 1999 decided not to grant the application, as late as June 2004 the applicant receives an answer. The members of the board come from different external organizations, while the Ministry of Trade has the secretary function. .
7	Ombudsman	2004	The case is about a breach with citizen's right to access documents from Tórshavn municipality. The documents concern a construction work conducted in a neighbourhood. Tórshavn municipality has not responded to the application or to any of the citizen's reminders.
8	Ombudsman	2004	A reporter from the public radio applies for access to documents from Tórshavn municipality. The documents concern the case of the manager for the incinerator, who temporarily is dismissed from his job. The reporter receives a confirmation of the application, but after that, the reporter receives no response.
9	Ombudsman	2005	The case concerns the Ministry of Education's employment of a teacher in needlework and forming at the teacher seminar school. The ministry decides to hire the applicant, who is the complainer in the case. However, the ministry decides on temporary terms for the appointment, since the ministry questions the status of the applicant's educational degree.
10	Ombudsman	2005	The case is about an inauguration process related to the manager position at the leisure school in Tvøroyri municipality. In addition, the case addresses the minister's role in the case. The minister of Social Affairs controls the municipalities related to the legal act on daycare. The union for pedagogues (Pedagogfelagið) is the complainer in the case.
11	Ombudsman	2005	The case concerns the decision from an external complaint board to confirm the decision from the

			office for employment (ALS) to cut the complainer's unemployment benefits. The Ombudsman states that the decision is wrong, but the complaint board refuses to consider the case again.
12	Ombudsman	2005	The case concerns an inauguration process for engineer positions at the Fishery control institution.
13	Ombudsman	2006	The case concerns an inauguration process in the office for unemployment (ALS). The institution is a labour marked institution.
14	Ombudsman	2006	The case concerns the handling or lack of handling of a tax remission application from a citizen in the municipality of Vágur.
15	Ombudsman	2006	The case concerns the Land Registry Office's dismissal of three handicapped employees. In addition, the case relates to the Ministry of Interior's process of a complaint related to the decision. The union for clerks (Starvsmannafelagið) is the complainer.
16	Ombudsman	2004 2007	The case relates to the Industry school (Vinnuháskúlin) and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research. The case consists of two cases related to the same employee. One case concerns an application for part time work because of sickness. The other case is about an application to access documents. The case links to a political conflict related to the position as school manager, a decision that implicates the minister.
17	Ombudsman	2007	Tórshavn municipality hires an environmental manager for the municipality incinerator. The case is about the inauguration process and decision.
18	Ombudsman	2007	Tvøroyrar municipality hires a fire brigade officer. The case concerns the inauguration process.
19	Ombudsman	2008	The case relates to an institution for handicapped persons. A group of employees formulates a letter of complaint about the institution's leader to the Ministry of Social Affairs. The union for pedagogues (Pedagogfelagið) is the complainer.
20	Ombudsman	2009	The case is about the Ministry of Interior's process of a complaint of Fuglafjørður municipality's decision to dismiss the harbour master. In spite of reminders, the ministry does not respond to the complaint.
21	Ombudsman	2009	The case concerns the inauguration process for the position as Head of Department at the Prime Minister office. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

			handles the case, because of disability challenges in the Prime Minister office (gegni). The case documents link the case to a political conflict in the previous government constellation period.
22	Ombudsman	2010	The case concerns an application for access to documents in the municipality of Hvalba.
23	Ombudsman	2010	The case concerns the registration office's decision to give a group of accountants the expanded audit authorization. The application process implicates two ministers, the Ministry of Trade, and the Ministry of the Interior.
24	Ombudsman	2012	The case concerns the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' dismissal of employees.
25	Ombudsman	2014	The case is about the 2012 Mackerel allocation. The case concerns the administration of fishery policy, and the case implicates government (the minister and the Prime Minister) and the Ministry of Fisheries.
26	Audit	2009 2010 2011	The case concerns a lack of regulation/rules for so-called "certain expenses" related to public employees, like use of telephones, bonus points related to travelling etc. The Minister of Finance refuses to prioritize this work.
27	Audit	2009	The case concerns issues related to administration of value added tax. In addition, the Ministry of Finance and the tax institution do not respond to letters from the Audit General institution.
28	Audit	2009	The case concerns the auditing of the Ministry of Fisheries' accounts. In addition, there is critique of the ministry's response to questions from the Audit General institution.
29	Audit	2009 2010 2011 2012 2013	The case concerns a lack of regulation and updates related to the social service and benefit act (Forsorgarlógin). In particular, the lack of rules for social rehabilitation benefits is criticized, since rehabilitation benefit spending is high. This challenge has been addressed for several years.
30	Audit	2009 2014 2016	The case concerns the public fond on mortgage loan (Húsalánsgrunnur) and some additional funds on isolation support and apartments. The critique relates to the legal framework. The focus is on the mortgage loan fond. Related to the steering of the fond, a board has considerable influence. In addition, the critique addresses the problem that the funds are not included in the annual appropriation act. In 2016, the mortgage loan fund has a loss of 4 mio. DKK.

31	Audit	2010	The case is about the helicopter service and stated violations in the contract between the Ministry of Fishery and Atlantic Airways (Faroese airline company). In addition, the critique addresses the response time from the Ministry of Fishery, and that the ministry refrains from answering most of the questions from the Audit General institution.
32	Audit	2010	The case relates to the art collection gallery (Listasavnið), figuring under the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research. Private audits audit the institution's accounts. The critique addresses the lack of a formal agreement about the division of the profits (ársúrlit). The problem has been addressed for several years.
33	Audit	2011	The case concerns a lack of regulation from the Prime Minister Office. The ministry still has not solved the problem of a lack of legal authority for the coverage of government's communication expenses.
34	Audit	2012	The case concerns grave mistakes in the Consumer Ombudsman's (Brúkaraumboð) accounts.
35	Audit	2012	The case concerns grave mistakes in the accounts for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
36	Audit	2013	The case consists of an overall critique of the ministries in the central administration. The critique addresses the lack of adherence to several legal requirements related to accounting principles, goal and result steering, and legal technique related to the ministries legal act preparation work.
37	Audit	2013	The case concerns the overall annual public accounts. The critique addresses examples of public activity and public property, which are not visible in the public annual accounts. This contradicts the governing rule as well as other legal acts. The critique is directed at government as a whole.
38	Audit	2013 2014 2015 2016	The case relates to the school of music. The procedures in terms of the role of the municipalities and the role of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research contradicts the legal framework. This inconsistency has been criticized for several years.
39	Audit	2013	The case relates to the infrastructure institution (Landsverk). The institution has conducted changes in procedures and capitalization principles in an inconsistent way. This means that the accounts presented to parliament are not correct.

40	Audit	2013	The case consists of critical investigations of several public building projects. The audit committee requested the investigation, and the Audit General institution has conducted the investigation.
41	Audit	2014	The case concerns public spending related to health services. The accounts state deviations between the appropriation and the expenses, in particular large deviations for special health treatments abroad. In addition, the critique addresses contradictory information from the minister.
42	Audit	2014	The case concerns practices related to registration of employee resources in public institutions. Lacking employee time registration in ministries and institutions, and flex balances are not in line with the regulation. In addition, the critique addresses the lack of control related to employee administration.
43	Audit	2014 2015	The case concerns technical data security related to the public tax institution. The critique points to a lack of adherence to technical inspection recommendations. Following from this, the critique addresses issues of data safety.
44	Audit	2014	The case concerns a mistake related to the administration of retirement payment for health- and homecare helpers. Although, the mistake was stated three years ago, the mistakes are still not corrected.
45	Audit	2014 2015 2016	The case is about the Transport Company accounts. The institution's spending has exceeded the budget. Focus is on the minister's role and lack of information to parliament. The audit committee requests a report from the Audit General institution related to the Transport Company accounts (Strandferðslan).
46	Audit	2015	The case concerns stated deviations between appropriation and expenses related to health services. The case specifically addresses the general practitioner system's (Kommunulæknaskipan) exceeding of the budget. In addition, the critique addresses the role of the minister of Finance, who refused to send an application of supplementary appropriation to parliament.
47	Audit	2015	The case concerns the use of appropriations for public works (løgujáttan). The critique addresses the tendency that appropriations for public works, which have not been used, are transferred to following years. The result of this practice is

			that the annual appropriation does not reflect the real activity for the respective year.
48	Audit	2015	The case concerns a mistake in the appropriation for public works (løgújáttan) related to the Transport Company. The mistake is that the costs for motors were not included in the request for appropriation.
49	Audit	2015	The case relates to the University of Faroe Islands (Fróðskaparsetrið) accounts. A new legal act for the university was implemented in 2008, but there is still activity, which the annual appropriation act does not reflect.
50	Audit	2016	The case concerns sale of public buildings. The case consist of a general critique. The assessment of the buildings' values lack realistic expectations. In addition, the critique addresses the poor descriptive work in preparation work.
51	Audit	2016	The case concerns the overall annual accounts, which is incomplete, since not all institutions are included in the annual accounts. The case consists of a general critique.
52	Audit	2016	The case concerns the institution for infrastructure (Landsverk). The institution certifies and pays expenses to itself. In addition, the critique focuses on the manager, who has granted expenses to an education for himself.

Appendix 2: Overview of government constellations 1998-2015

This appendix presents an overview of government constellations for the time-period 1998-2015. The overview presents the government, the time-period, the government parties, the number of government seats in parliament, and the opposition strength ratio.

Government	Period	Government parties	Government seats in parliament	Opposition ratio (opposition seats/total seats)
The independence government	1998-2002	People's Party Republican Party Autonomist Party	18	14/32 = 0.44
The independence government II	2002-2004	Republican Party People's Party Autonomist Party Center Party	17	15/32 = 0.47
The ABC government	2004-2008	Social Democratic Party People's Party Unionist Party	21	11/32 = 0.34
The CHE government	2008-2008	Social Democratic Party Republican Party Center Party	17	16/33 = 0.48
The ABC II government ^{a)} :	2008-2011	Unionist Party People's Party Social Democratic Party	20	13/33 = 0.39
Conservative government ^{b)} :	2011-2015	Unionist Party People's Party Center Party Autonomist Party	19	14/33 = 0.42
Leftist government ^{c)}	2015-	Social Democratic Party Republican Party Progress Party Ind. candidate	17	16/33 = 0.48

a. From April 6 to November 14 2011, the People's Party leaves government. In this time-period, government governs as a minority government.

b. The Autonomist Party leaves government on September 5 2013. Yet, the government still has a majority share of the seats in parliament.

c. Minority government that receives support from individual candidate.

Appendix 3: Additional tables and figures

Figure A.1: Lvr2plot, a leverage versus residual squared plot

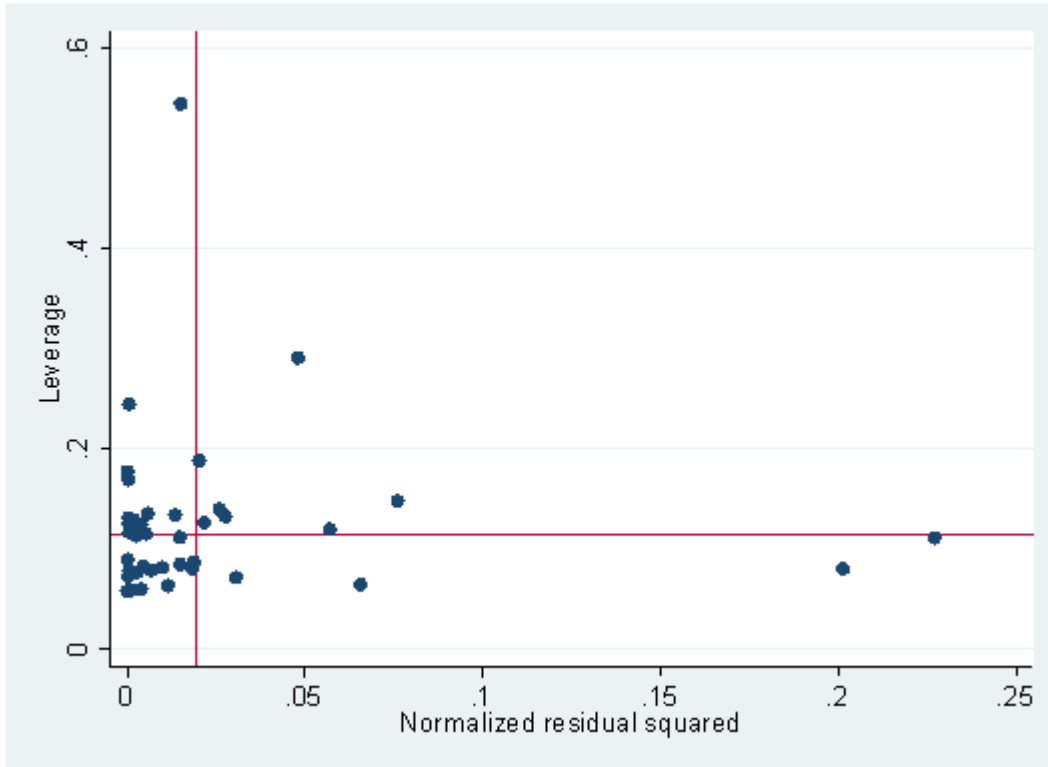


Table A.1: Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance values (1/VIF)

Variable	VIF	1/VIF (tolerance)
Explosiveness	2.89	0.35
Media coverageage	2.22	0.45
Opposition	2.09	0.48
Damage control	1.22	0.82
Institution	1.15	0.87
Mean VIF	1.91	

Table A.2: Correlations^{a)} between independent variables in the multivariate model

	Explosive	Media	Opposition	Damage control	Institution
Explosive		0.74***	0.63***	0.14	-0.20
Media			0.55***	0.10	-0.02
Opposition				0.25*	0.03
Damage control					-0.31**
Institution					

*** (p < 0.001), ** (p < 0.01), * (p < 0.05).

a. The correlation test Pearson's r is applied if both variables are on the interval level, which is between the explosive and the media variable. For the other correlations, I use tau-b (Møller Hansen and Hansen 2012:375-383).

English summary

Accountability is important for the quality of modern democratic systems. The job to secure accountability related to elected political representatives is primarily vested with the voters. However, in parliamentary systems, the voter only indirectly elects government. Parliament delegates executive power to government. Therefore, government answers to parliament. This dissertation focuses on political representatives' use of institutional control devices in oversight of government actions.

Even though parliamentary control is of great importance to the securing of accountability, we still know very little about to when and to what extent MPs in fact engage in parliamentary control. This dissertation investigates under which circumstances MPs use information from independent control institutions, the Ombudsman and the public audit, and engage in control of government by activating control institutions within parliament. Decentral parliamentary control institutions serve as Fire Alarm institutions initiating MP Firefighting in parliament. The project presents a refinement of McCubbins and Schwartz's (1984) distinction between Police Patrol and Fire Alarm control.

Primarily, the project's expectation is that as "partisans", MPs engage in Firefighting. Opposition MPs engage in Firefighting, since the activity contributes to their goal to gaining control of government positions. However, they will only engage if the Fire Alarm has the potential to implicate the government. Overall, Firefighting depends on the importance of the case, the target of the Fire Alarm critique and the attention the case receives. Nevertheless, the project expects an institutionalized process in terms of rules and procedures to dampen the "partisan" activity and lead to more "parliamentarian" Firefighting in general and a higher degree of control activity from government MPs in particular. The project's empirical investigation is conducted in the micro settings of the Faroe Islands country case. The project applies a mixed method research-design.

First, the project conducts a medium-N quantitative investigation of patterns of MP Firefighting. Focus is on patterns of co-variation between the project's dependent variable, MP Firefighting, and the project's explanatory variables. The results show that MP Firefighting is to a great extent "partisan" activity. MPs from opposition parties dominate the parliamentary control activity. MPs engage in Firefighting related to institutional Fire Alarm cases that have the potential to damage government reputation and receive media coverage. In addition, MPs engage where there is a lack of effort from ministers and government to handle the problem. Overall, the quantitative investigation

supports the theoretical model but does not allow for further understandings of how MP Firefighting plays out in practice.

The investigation continues by selecting specific institutional Fire Alarm cases for a qualitative within-case investigation using the process-tracing method. The focus of the qualitative investigation is to trace the mechanism that links the theorized conditions to the Firefighting outcome. The results show that MPs use cases to inflict cost on government and damage government reputation. MPs focus on the ministers' mistakes in the cases and on policy implications. Moreover, the investigation demonstrates a complex feedback loop between parliamentary activity and media coverage, and a complex picture of the response from ministers and governments that might change during a control process. The two investigated cases demonstrate similar reaction processes that link the hypothesized conditions to the Firefighting outcome.

Finally, the project investigates whether MPs display a different type of behavior related to institutionalized Firefighting than to optional MP Firefighting based on MPs' own initiative. The results show that government MPs engage in institutionalized Firefighting to a greater degree. Moreover, both government and opposition MPs demonstrate a higher degree of "parliamentarian" behavior in institutionalized Firefighting, compared to the dominant pattern of "partisan" behavior present in optional Firefighting.

Dansk resumé

Ansvarliggørelse er vigtig i forhold til at sikre kvaliteten af moderne demokratiske systemer. Det er især vælgeren, der ved at afgive sin stemme på valgdagen har til opgave at sikre ansvar i forhold til valgte politiske repræsentanter. Ikke desto mindre er det sådan i parlamentariske systemer, at vælgeren kun indirekte vælger regeringen. Parlamentet delegerer udøvende magt til regeringen, og derfor står regeringen til ansvar overfor parlamentet. Denne afhandling fokuserer på valgte politiske repræsentanternes brug af institutionelle instrumenter til at udøve kontrol af regeringens handlinger.

Selvom parlamentarisk kontrol er afgørende for at sikre ansvarliggørelse, så ved vi meget lidt om, i hvilken udstrækning og hvornår MF'er engagerer sig i parlamentarisk kontrol. Afhandlingen undersøger, under hvilke omstændigheder MF'er bruger information fra uafhængige kontrolinstitutioner, Ombudsmanden og Rigsrevisionen til at aktivere kontrolinstitutioner i parlamentet og herved udøve kontrol af regeringen. Decentrale parlamentariske kontrolinstitutioner fungerer som *fire alarm*-institutioner der igangsætter MF *firefighting* i parlamentet. Projektet præsenterer en videreudvikling af McCubbins and Schwartz's (1984) skelnen mellem *police patrol*- og *fire alarm*-kontrol.

Den primære forventning er, at MF'erne som partirepræsentanter engagerer sig. MF'er fra oppositionen engagerer sig i *firefighting*, fordi aktiviteten bidrager til deres mål om at opnå kontrol over regeringsmagten. Men MF'er vil kun engagere sig, hvis *fire alarm*'en har potentialet til at implicere regeringen. Samlet set afhænger *firefighting* af sagens betydning, målet for *fire alarm*-kritikken og opmærksomheden, som sagen får. Ikke desto mindre forventes en institutionaliseret proces i form af regler og procedurer at dæmpe den partipolitiske konkurrence og føre til mere "parlamentarisk" adfærd, observeret som mere kontrolaktivitet fra MF'er fra regeringspartier. Den empiriske undersøgelse foretages i mikroforholdene i Færøerne, som er projektets landecase. Projektet anvender et undersøgelsesdesign, der gør brug af kvantitative og kvalitative metoder.

Der udføres først en medium-N kvantitativ undersøgelse af mønstre for MF *firefighting*. Fokus rettes mod samvariation mellem projektets afhængige variable, MF *firefighting* og projektets forklarende variabler. Resultaterne viser, at MF *firefighting* i høj grad er en partipolitisk aktivitet. MF'er fra oppositionens partier dominerer kontrolaktiviteten. MF'er engagerer sig i *firefighting* relateret til institutionelle *fire alarm*-sager, som har potentiale til at skade regeringens omdømme, og i forhold til sager, der får opmærksomhed i medierne. Desuden engagerer MF'er sig i *firefighting* relateret til sager med

manglende indsats fra ministre/regering til at håndtere problemet. Samlet set understøtter den kvantitative undersøgelse den teoretiske model, men undersøgelsen forklarer ikke, hvordan MF *firefighting* udspiller sig.

Derfor fortsættes undersøgelsen, og der udvælges to specifikke institutionelle *fire alarm*-sager til en kvalitativ undersøgelse, der gør brug af metoden *process-tracing*. Formålet med den kvalitative undersøgelse er at spore mekanismen, som forbinder de teoretiske forudsætninger til *firefighting*-resultatet. Resultaterne fra undersøgelsen viser, at MF'er bruger sager til at påføre omkostninger og skade regeringens omdømme. MF'erne fokuserer på ministrenes fejl og på implikationer af regeringens politik. Herudover viser undersøgelsen et komplekst tovejsforhold mellem parlamentarisk aktivitet og mediedækning, og et komplekst billede af ministerens/regeringens håndtering af sager, i og med at strategien ændrer sig undervejs i sagens forløb. De to undersøgte sager viser sammenlignelige reaktionsprocesser, som forbinder de teoretiske forudsætninger til *firefighting*-resultatet.

Afslutningsvis undersøges, om MF'er udviser en anden type adfærd i forbindelse med institutionaliseret *firefighting*, hvor aktiviteten er defineret og følger instrukser, sammenlignet med mere valgfri MF *firefighting* baseret på eget initiativ. Resultatet viser, at MF'er fra regeringspartier i højere grad engagerer sig i institutionaliseret *firefighting* sammenlignet med valgfri *firefighting*. Desuden viser resultaterne, at MF'er fra regerings- såvel som oppositionspartier udviser mere parlamentarisk *firefighting* i institutionaliseret *firefighting* sammenlignet med det dominerende partipolitiske mønster for valgfri *firefighting*.

Føroyskur samandráttur

Tað er umráðandi við ábyrgd (*accountability*) fyri at tryggja dygdina av nútíðar demokratiskum skipanum. Tað er serliga veljarin, sum við at atkvøða á valdegnum, hevur til uppgávu at tryggja ábyrgd í mun til politisk vald umboð. Tó er tað soleiðis í parlamentariskum skipanum, at veljarin einans óbeinleiðis velur stjórnina. Parlamentið delegerar útøvandi vald til stjórnina, og tískil stendur stjórnin til svars yvir fyri parlamentinum. Henda ritgerð setur sjóneykuna á, nær tingfólk hava eftirlit við virksemin hjá stjórn.

Vit vita framvegis ikki so nógv um, nær tingfólk sýna áhuga fyri eftirliti, hóast parlamentariskt eftirlit er ein týðningarmikil liður í at tryggja ábyrgd (*accountability*). Henda ritgerð kannar, hvørjar umstøður eru galdandi, tá ið tingfólk nýta vitan frá óheftum eftirlitsstovnum, Umboðsmanninum og Landsgrannskoðanini, í eftirlitsvirksemi í parlamentinum og hervið fremja eftirlit. Tað vil við øðrum orðum siga, at ritgerðin kannar nær miðspjadd parlamentarisk eftirlitsamboð virka sum *fire alarm* stovnar, ið seta gongd á *firefighting* hjá tingfólki í parlamentinum. Verkætlanin, sum ritgerðin lýsir, mennir sostatt upprunaligu tilskilanina hjá McCubbins and Schwartz's (1984) millum tvey sløg av parlamentariskum eftirliti, *police patrol* og *fire alarm*.

Høvuðsvæntanin er, at tingfólk luttaka í eftirliti sum umboð fyri politiskar flokkar. Tingfólk frá andstøðuflokkum luttaka í *firefighting*, tí at eftirlitsvirksemi stuðlar teirra endamáli, ið er at røkka stjórnarvaldinum. Tó er væntandi, at tingfólk einans vilja luttaka í *firefighting* um *fire alarm* málið er av slíkum slag, at tað kann nýtast til endamálið. Harumframt er tað av týðningi, hvør fær *fire alarm* átaluna og uppmerksemi, sum málið annars fær. Men um mál verða viðgjørd sambært eini institutionaliseraðari tilgongd við reglum og mannagongdum, so er væntandi, at partapolitiska kappingin verður tálmað. Í staðin vilja tingfólk í størri mun sýna parlamentariska atferð, og eisini tingfólk úr samgonguflokkum vilja væntandi luttaka í eftirlitsvirksemi. Empiriska kanningin er gjørd við Føroyum sum landa dømi. Verkætlanin nýtir eitt kanningsnið við bæði kvantitativum og kvalitativum háttalagi.

Verkætlanin kannar fyrst, hvørji mynstur eru fyri *firefighting* hjá tingfólki. Tað verður kannað við at nýta kvantitativt háttalag (miðal-n). Dentur verður lagdur á at kanna um samsvar er millum virðir fyri treytaða variabulin, tingfólka *firefighting*, og frágreiðandi variablarnar. Úrslitini vísa, at tingfólka *firefighting* í stóran mun er partapolitiskt virksemin. Tingfólk frá andstøðuflokkum seta dóm á eftirlitsvirksemi. Tingfólk luttaka í *firefighting* í sambandi við *fire alarm* mál, ið eru til ampa fyri stjórnina, og í sambandi við mál, sum fjølmiðlar umrøða. Harumframt luttaka tingfólk í *firefighting*, tá ið landsstýrisfólk ella stjórn mangla at fremja átøk og handfara ávísta

trupulleikan. Samanumtikið so stuðlar kvantitativa kanningin ástøðiligu væntanirnar, men kanningin kann ikki ávísa, hvussu tingfólka *firefighting* fer fram. Tískil verður kvalitatívt háttalag eisini nýtt.

Tvey *fire alarm* mál eru vald burturúr til kvalitativa kanning við *process-tracing* háttalagi. Endamálið við hesi kanningini er at ávísa mekanismuna, ið knýtir ástøðiligu fortreytirnar til *firefighting* úrslitið. Úrslitini frá kanningini vísa, at tingfólk nýta eftirlitsvirksemi til at finnast at stjórnini. Andstöðu tingfólk leggja dent á skeivleikar hjá landsstýrisfólkum og á neiligar avleiðingar av politikkinum hjá stjórnini. Harumframt ávísir kvalitativa kanningin eitt samansett tvívegis samband millum parlamentariskt virksemi og fjølmiðlaumrøðu. Kanningin vísir eisini eina torgreidda mynd av, hvussu landsstýrisfólk/stjórn handfara *fire alarm* mál, í og við at framferðarhátturin broytist meðan málið er í gongd. Yvirskipað so vísa bæði *fire alarm* málini líknandi *reaction-processir*, ið knýta ástøðiligu fortreytirnar til *firefighting* úrslitið.

Triðja og seinasta kanningin snýr seg um hvørt tingfólk sýna øðrvísi atferð, tá ið talan er um institutionaliseraða *firefighting*, tvs. at eftirlitsvirksemi í størri mun er stýrt av reglum og mannagongdum, og hervið øðrvísi enn meiri sjálvboðin *firefighting*. Úrslitini frá hesi kanning vísa, at tingfólk frá samgonguflokkum í størri mun taka lut í institutionaliseraðari *firefighting* samanbórið við sjálvbodna *firefighting*. Harumframt vísa úrslitini, at tingfólk frá bæði samgongu- og andstöðuflokkum í størri mun sýna parlamentariska atferð í institutionaliseraðari *firefighting* samanbórið við flokspolitiska mynstrið, ið ger seg galdandi fyri sjálvbodna *firefighting*.