

Undersökningen omfattar samtliga de tio länder i Öst- och Centraleuropa som ansökt om medlemskap i Europeiska Unionen. Undersökningen genomfördes i oktober och november 1997 och utfördes av forskningsinstitut i respektive land under ledning och kontroll av DGX. Undersökningen bestod av personliga intervjuer företagna i hemmiljö och omfattade ett stratifierat stegvis slumpvis urval om ca 1 000 personer i varje land, med vissa urvalsvariationer beroende på ländernas individuella karakteristika och befolkningsstruktur. Maximalt en individ intervjuades i varje hushåll. Det slutliga urvalet av individer var i samtliga länder helt representativt för den vuxna befolkningen, dvs den del av befolkningen som vid intervjutillfället var 15 år eller äldre. Flertalet intervjufrågor upprepades i alla länder, med vissa språkligt betingade variationer.

I föreliggande sammanställning av attitydundersökningen är de resultat som redovisas för populationen som helhet, respektive för subpopulationerna "förstavågsländer" och "övriga länder", viktade med avseende på folkmängd i respektive land enligt följande (befolkning över 15 år):

Bulgarien	6 903 409
Estland	1 188 775
Lettland	1 992 635
Litauen	2 842 640
Polen	29 393 000
Rumänien	17 628 133
Slovakien	4 059 737
Slovenien	1 561 628
Tjeckien	8 150 976
Ungern	8 244 274
Totalt	81 965 207

## Backgrounds of the Committee Chairpersons in the Finnish Eduskunta 1945-1994

### Introduction

Parliamentary committees have existed in legislatures for a long time. In the nineteenth century it became evident that enlarged agendas could not get through unless the use of committees was extended. This early division of labour encouraged by the committee system was created in order to increase the time available to the legislature. The principle for the regular legislative procedure means that issues which are decided in Parliament go through consideration in one of the standing committees. The legislative assembly as a whole takes the final point of view on almost every issue. The functions and the powers of Parliaments are strictly norm-based. The functions of collective organs in Parliament are determined by different procedures and there are inevitable special functions for different organs

in a legislature. This leads to the fact that even if the members of a legislative assembly have same duties and rights, they are selected to sit on the different organs during their mandate periods.

Institutionalisation and legislative efficiency in Parliament require stability and specialisation of a law-making assembly. Some kind of specialisation is a crucial part of collective decision-making because it is impossible for all representatives or the whole legislative body to master all aspects of the law-making process so the legislature must divide its work-load. A strong committee system is combined with strict party discipline and party government in Finland. Committee assignment process is a highly politicised institution placed at the centre of competitive power games in legislatures. Virtually all representatives require committee assignments which are important to each.

The recent increase in research works devoted to the committee assignment process in Parliaments reflects not only the central importance of the committee system for Parliaments as an institution but underscores the significance of this process for the career goals of individual repre-

sentatives (Gertzog 1976: 693-694). Given the importance of committee membership, both in policy making and in determining the success of individual representative's careers, the recruitment process by which members are assigned to committees is of great importance (Rohde & Shepsle 1973: 889). Assignments of the ordinary committee memberships have usually occurred with the help of compromise elections in the Finnish Eduskunta. If Eduskunta cannot unanimously agree on the ordinary members and the deputy members, the membership assignments are made by 45 electors. If the electors cannot reach a consensus on the election of the members of committees, the selection process is conducted by proportional ballot. An unanimous Eduskunta has been able to select committee memberships since 1983. The parliamentary parties determine the composition of the committee memberships.

Political scientists are interested in knowing how and why political tasks are allocated and which kind of representatives are selected to different positions within legislative bodies. Legislators differ in their backgrounds, interests and calculations of where the highest payoffs of the committee assignments for their careers lie. The political system can be pictured as an intricate assemblage of political positions and roles and institutions which assist in defining appropriate political behaviour. This paper includes all committee assignments of the chairpersons at the beginning of the various electoral periods. During the research period from 1945 to 1994 there were 188 chairs assigned. I aimed at finding some answers to questions on which kinds of social and background attributes committee chairpersons had. Similar data were normally used to demonstrate that top political leaders were selected from a narrow social stratum. I focused on the role of environment, the recruitment process of committee leaders, and the institutional structures in the Finnish parliamentary system. The purpose was to make an inquiry into the characteristics of committee chairpersons in the light of following variables: party, election district, gender, age, education, occupation, and parliamentary seniority. Criteria concerning committee assignments of the chairper-

sons in this paper are: age, party, election district, education, occupation, and parliamentary seniority. The above-mentioned variables were chosen to describe which kind of characteristics the selective process with all its components favoured at the time of the actual assignments and how these characteristics had influence on chairpersons' future committee assignments and careers.

### **Committee Assignments: The Strategies of Selection**

Many parliamentary organs or positions are not microcosms of the parent legislature but are biased in one way or another. They do not accurately reflect the full range of interests articulated in the political system or in the parent house. Members have a common desire for uniquely high levels of benefits from policies within their committee's jurisdiction. Perhaps good public policy is more likely to emerge when committees are composed of members who have uniquely strong interests in their committee's work. Students of Parliaments have long held that the organisational structure of the institution is not politically neutral that the committee system in particular produces systematic biases in parliamentary policy making. Within certain important limits members have considerable influence in selecting the committees on which they serve so that, over time, many committees are populated with legislators who have strong interests in matters within their groups' jurisdictions and presumably strong attachments to the programs that the groups oversee. This account has attained the status in some quarters of a stylised fact and provides the foundations for a substantial body of theoretical literature on distributive politics and legislative structure (Hall & Grofman 1990: 1149).

Studying political recruitment has a long history dating back to the origins of the political inquiry. Political recruitment has been defined as the processes through which individuals are inducted into active political roles (Prewitt & McAllister 1976: 105). Leadership is as old as humankind and it exists everywhere, in small or-

ganisations, and in large ones forming a basic feature in all organisations (Blondel 1987: 1). Democratic theory assumes a necessary link between elections and electoral activity, on the one hand, and elite recruitment, on the other (Prewitt and McAllister 1976: 107). The elite studied in this study is an appointed elite from among representatives who are elected in democratic elections every four year.

I take advantage of Jean Blondel's (1987: 2-9) definition of political leadership. Blondel starts from the assumption that leadership is mainly a phenomenon of power. Leadership consists of the ability of the person who are at the top to make others do a number of things that they would otherwise do. Power and leadership have many aspects and there is no need to discuss all of them. The main point is to consider the personal origins of the leader's power, the institutional arrangements that surrounds leaders, and the characteristics of the environment. Instruments for using the power stem from the nature of the institutional structures which leaders can dispose of. These instruments include the legally defined positions that the leaders hold. The position itself means power. A leader is someone who influences a group whether or not he or she happens to be formally at the head of that group (Blondel 1987: 13).

Leadership can be seen as and determined by positional leadership that means power in a defined range of questions. The environment affects the determination of the power of the leader since the strength of the various leaders changes continuously over time and is different from institution to institution over time. The political system has a number of tasks to take care of. It performs tasks of authoritative resource allocation, solves problems, and settles conflicts. To be viable and to succeed in handling with these tasks, the political system must be institutionalised. Therefore organisations must be created and sustained that are specialised to political activity.

For the purpose of this paper, an institutionalised organisation, committee structure with its assignment process has three major characteristics: 1. It is relatively wellbounded, differentiated from its environment. Its members are

easily identifiable, it is relatively difficult to become a member, and its leaders are recruited principally from within the organisation. 2. The organisation is relatively complex, its functions are internally separated on some regular and explicit basis, its parts are not wholly interchangeable, and for at least some important purposes, its parts are interdependent. There is a division of labour in which roles are specified, and there are widely shared expectations about the performance of roles, and of movement from role to role. 3. Finally, the organisation tends to use universalistic rather than particularistic criteria, and automatic rather than discretionary methods for conducting its internal business.

Political recruitment process is going on all the time. Individuals are constantly preparing themselves for or are brought to top political positions. Because of the centrality of committee system as a part of legislation, its composition is of crucial significance. In the standing committees each party has roughly the same proportion of the members as they do in the floor. Committee membership transfers can be thought of as occurring at the juncture of motivation and opportunity curves. A representative may seek a new committee assignment to gain power and prestige it offers, to serve his constituent's interests better, to exert influence over matters within the legislative body, or to enhance his chances for re-election (Fenno 1973). Opportunities for transfers may be conditioned by parliamentary seniority and electoral security.

Seniority may operate in two opposing fashions. As a representative's seniority increases, his opportunities for transferring expand. Committee representation serves a dual function: transmitting information from committees to the party group and affording the party group a means for expressing its preferences. The centrality of committees in the legislative process makes it advantageous for party groups to be represented on committee handling items of particular interests to party group members. Party group leaders will attempt to ensure that their representation on such committees is uninterrupted. The party group, while serving a number of useful functions, is not so important that committee assignments are made with the sole objec-

tive of promoting its interests. Needs of the individual legislator must also be satisfied. At the micro level, a representative seeks to serve his constituents and his voters, to advance his own political career, and to engage in work that he finds personally stimulating and rewarding (Bullock III 1971: 526).

The selection model of committee memberships and the factors of the assignment process are surrounded by member's own power position in his/her party group. There are four elements in political leadership recruitment: 1. An individual seeking for a position. On the micro level group (electors, party group or party leaders) is charged with allocating the valuable resources (places on committees) of the collectivity (the representatives). Participants in the process are expected to be rational actors. Actors have goals they want to achieve, and who, when confronted with a decision-making situation, examine the available alternatives and choose the alternative which seems most likely to lead to the achievement of those goals. These goals are re-election, influence within Eduskunta and good public policy. How committee slots are assigned is of vital interest to many individuals and groups because those assignments will have an impact on the achievement of their goals within Eduskunta. It is useful to view the assignment process as an institutionalised allocation process involving goal seeking actors, scarce but valued commodities, and behavioural constraints, 2. a leadership position, which determines who can seek for the position and how eagerly, and 3. an individual's motives to desire the position. Mitchell and Mitchell (1969: 446) define political competition as an activity in which two or more persons seek the same object. In such situations, the objects being more or less scarce serves effectively to prevent each competitor from acquiring some or all that he wishes. In this case political competition is between the representatives about leadership positions in committees. The polity in satisfying general wants provides opportunities for those with politically relevant concerns entailing current or expected rewards from political effort. 4. And finally, the selective structure makes the decisions about the committee appointments (Pekonen 1972: 101).

The structural aspects in recruitment of committee leaders dictate in the end who are elected and how the elected are chosen. The selective structure determines the basic group for the position. There are following relationships: The selective system made influence on which positions were regarded as important in the political system. The more important position was at hand, the more it activated the selective system. The selective system determined the basic unit for the position. The more undefined the position was determined, the wider and more heterogeneous basic unit seeking an assignment. A position could act as a different reference to different individuals. The more important the position was, the more representatives seeking an assignment. This diminished the probability of getting an assignment while the qualifying requirement increases. The more important the position was, the fewer got through the recruitment. Because the most important positions were carefully determined, only few careers could lead to the assignment. In a way the selective system favoured self-determined careers and favoured them the more, the more important the position was. (Pekonen 1972: 101-102).

Firstly, the selection process occurred through a variety of channels. Institutional channels directed aspirants for committee membership to reach the place. Secondly, gates and gatekeepers determined how the chosen actually were chosen and who finally got assigned. Thirdly, the selection model pointed out the qualities which successful aspirants had to meet. Recruitment patterns ultimately affected the characteristics of the members and the committee politics.

Laying out some intricate scheme of how members of Eduskunta were chosen to serve on particular committees might help give a basis for answering to this question. The more indefinite the position or the less it is valued the bigger and the more heterogeneous the basic group is. The selection system favours certain groups, roles or legislators with certain careers. The more important the position is the more political it tends to be by nature. The selective system and the recruitment process favour legislators with long political careers behind them. When building a claim to a committee seat a party group may

choose one of several strategies. The techniques used will probably be determined by the desirability of the standing committee. If the committee is highly sought after and there are competing aspirants, the party group will fill the vacancy by rewarding a member with moderate seniority. Senior representatives will rarely be candidates if a new assignment would necessitate loss of valued seniority on another committee. Newcomers will typically have their requests for appointment to good committees superseded by the claims of men with greater parliamentary seniority. After a brief tour for duty on the committee, the newcomer is given a more attractive committee assignment. Perhaps freshmen on such committees got randomly assigned to the vacancies remaining after the desirable committees had been staffed. The parliamentary mandate of a representative is a position in which competence begins at the same time as a person is elected and goes on as long as the next parliamentary election is held.

Political parties can be seen as rational actors. It is assumed that the actors have capability of ranking their preferences and that they act for maximising their own good. The political parties in and outside Parliament try to implement their preferences as much as possible without risking their positions and the possibilities to influence in the future. The process of recruiting committee chairpersons was crucial for parties. In a proportional system of representation the careers of candidates for chairmanship tend to become important as routes to the top. Since the political future of those who make the selection was tied to the success of the party, candidates who have served the party best in lower positions were often preferred. In Finland, the process of committee chairmanship assignments operates within a strict framework of organisational form in parliamentary party groups. Political positions, appointive or elective, seem to be highly contested in the political systems which can be classified as competitive political system. The goal of a party is to achieve and seek position in which it alone can make the authoritative decisions in accordance to its value system. The party tries to achieve such a strong position that it can implement the party programme. This goal

can be divided into three strategic goals: maximisation of votes, maximisation of parliamentary influence, and securing party cohesion. The party seeks to maximising its support in three different arenas: the electoral arena, the parliamentary arena, and the internal arena. In these arenas the party can use three means: standpoints, candidates for political appointments, and propaganda (Sjöblom 1968: 73-75). The common types of political positions in the parliamentary arena are according to Gunnar Sjöblom (1968: 126) members of the Government, commission and committee members, and party representatives in various types of debates. Gunnar Sjöblom's (1968: 140) input-output-scheme refers to Easton's model. The scheme is formulated to apply to the political system that undertakes the authoritative distribution of values for a community. In his scheme a party is seen as a political system that receives a certain input (demands and support), and which gives out an output (standpoints, candidate recruitment to political positions, and propaganda).

Committee assignments are of great importance to an individual representative for it is in the committee that the individual legislator is able to make his greatest contribution and render important service to his constituency and party. All representatives in Eduskunta desire and seek assignment to the most preferred committees that pass the important legislation. By contrast, some representatives seek assignment to committees that enable them to promote the economic interests of their own constituencies and thereby help them to be re-elected at the next parliamentary election. As far as possible party leadership tries to appoint representatives to those committees that promote them to be re-elected. The party leaderships do not only assigns new members to various committees but they take an advantage of old representatives' requests for transfers to more preferred committees. There are never enough possibilities to choose committee assignments or to select preferred assignments but new representatives usually have to take what is left over after senior representatives have been appointed.

## The Finnish Committee System

The Finnish committee system provides an example of a multi-party legislature with an important committee system where compromises occur (Shaw 1990: 246). Government proposals are high priority matters in Eduskunta and they are usually adopted as such. In Finland the legislative power is mainly exercised by Eduskunta with the supervision of the Government that is responsible to Eduskunta and especially to the government parties (Shaw 1990: 251). Before the beginning of every electoral period (before every legislative period) every Eduskunta has some formation functions and some elections of parliamentary organs. Eduskunta appoints at least 45 electors and deputies for them within five days of the opening of the first session of every legislative period. The number of the deputies is at least one third of the number of electors. The electors select the memberships of the standing committees and the other organs. If Eduskunta as a whole cannot agree on the selection of committee members, then the electors select the members and the deputies to standing committees and to the Grand Committee (Noponen 1989: 58).

After the changes of 1983 in Diet Act the standing committees have been appointed for the whole electoral period because a committee term lasted only a legislative period earlier. The committee system of the legislative assembly was consisted of the permanent standing, in the article 40 of the Diet Act mentioned committees and the other, in the Procedure of Parliament mentioned and established special standing committees. The number of the standing committees mentioned in the Constitution was five. The number of the committees that were appointed because of the work-load has regularly varied between six and eight. The Government proposed in the year 1982 that besides the Committee for Constitutional Law, the Committee for Ordinary Law, the Foreign Affairs Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Bank Committee there have to be appointed other standing committees at the start of the first legislative period of the electoral period. A proposal of the Government included that the standing commit-

tees should be appointed within five days after the opening session of the legislative period. In the parliamentary proceedings with the bill the date in question was changed into seven days.

About the other standing committees there are regulations in the Procedure of Parliament (TJ) which can easily be amended or abrogated. The reform of 1983 turned all supplementary and temporary committees into the parliamentary standing committees. This reform included all 13 committees. As far as the continuity principle it turned out to be practical to revise the constitution and to change the committee term into an electoral period. The permanent committees after the constitutional reform of the Diet Act in 1983 are the Committee for Constitutional Law, the Finance Committee, the Foreign Affairs Committee, the Committee for Ordinary Law, the Bank Committee, the Economy Committee, the Law and Economy Committee, the Culture Committee, the Agriculture and Forestry Committee, the Committee for Social Affairs, the Transportation and Communications Committee, the Defence Committee, the Second Committee for Ordinary Law, the Administration Committee, the Committee for Labour Affairs, the Environment Committee and the Grand Committee.

According to the Diet Act there are at least 17 members in the committee for Constitutional Law, the Committee for Ordinary Law, the Foreign Affairs Committee, and at least 21 members in the Finance Committee and 11 members in the Bank Committee. The other standing committees have a membership of at least 11 representatives. Furthermore the number of the deputy members has to be at least one quarter of the number of the ordinary members.

The remaining standing committee in the Finnish Parliament is an upper tier committee known as the Grand Committee. Eduskunta appoints the Grand Committee in the first session of an electoral period (after 1983). It comprise a minimum of 25 members along with a necessary number of deputy members who numbers no fewer than one third of the number of members. The same provisions are applied to the election and the term of members of the Grand Committee as to the permanent standing committees.

Prior the reform of 1990 it had 45 members and it considered all bills reported from the special standing committees and was able to propose amendments of its own.

The preparatory work in committees includes Government proposals, legislative bills, fiscal bills and petitionary bills if they are not rejected out of hand. With the amendment of a bill on the 18 February 1983 also issued decrees and decisions and announcements of the Council of the State and of ministers must be take into consideration in the committees. Almost all matters must be considered in a committee before the final consideration in the plenary session. Before the final consideration in plenary sittings the following matters are prepared in a committee according to Section 62 in the Diet Act: 1. Government proposals, 2. Bills, 3. Budget proposals and petitionary proposals, unless they are dismissed immediately, 4. Decrees, government resolutions and ministerial decisions which have been submitted for the approval of Parliament, 5. Reports, and 6. Matters relating to parliamentary decisions conditionally entered into the budget and not ratified by the President.

Each matter is given two readings in a committee. In the first reading the committee makes a preliminary decision on the content of the report or statement. In the second reading the committee makes the final decisions on the basis of a draft report or statement prepared by the secretary. In both readings, before the beginning of the detailed consideration, each committee member is given the opportunity to express his opinion on the matter as a whole. Expert opinions are heard in the first reading, unless the committee for special reasons otherwise decides. In the first reading, if two committee members request, the matter is deferred once a later committee meeting. At other times the matter may be deferred, if the committee so decides. A protest to be appended to a report and a dissenting opinion to be appended to a statement is announced in the second reading of the matter and given in writing to the secretary within a period determined by the committee. The protest or dissenting opinion corresponds to the position taken by the committee member in the decisive reading.

A member being a minister or one of the three Speakers can not simultaneously sit on the committees. A representative is discharged from the membership when he/she is appointed to cabinet minister. In this case no request from the plenary session for discharging is needed. The article 13 in the Procedure of Parliament stipulates that a representative who have been appointed to serve on two committees or on one committee and as a member of revisor has the right to abstain from the membership in the other committees except for the Grand Committee. During the electoral or legislative period there can be changes in the membership of the committees. It is Eduskunta's duty to consider whether a committee member can be relieved from the membership of the committee. Standing committees should meet within two days of the appointment.

The first meeting is convened by the most senior member in years. He/she conducts the meeting until a chairperson of the committee has been elected. The committee chairperson and the deputy chairperson are elected from among the membership in the first meeting. The most senior ordinary member receives an extract from the record of Parliament for the first meeting. The extract is consisted of the assigned ordinary and deputy members. The position of the chairperson or deputy chairperson of a standing committee is not accurately regulated in the Diet Act or in the Procedure of Parliament. Chairpersons or when they are prevented, the deputy chairpersons call the meetings. If chairpersons or deputy chairpersons are disqualified to take part in the discussion of a issue or both have a longer hindrance and a committee must submit urgent issues for discussion, the oldest committee member calls the meeting of the committee in order to elect a temporary chairperson who takes the chair at the meeting in which the issue concerned comes up. The result of the election of the chairperson and deputy chairperson on the committee is counted by simple majority. After the chair of the committee is chosen the poll to elect a deputy chairperson is organised under the chairperson's direction. These two election results are immediately announced to Eduskunta.

The power position and functions of the chairpersons or the deputy chairpersons of the stand-

ing committees in Eduskunta are inaccurately regulated in the Diet Act and the Procedure of Parliament. But one can conclude that the position of the committee chairpersons is one of the most important power and prestige positions in the Finnish Eduskunta. At the request of the Speaker, the chairperson of a committee presents the Speaker's Council with an account of the process of a matter under consideration in the committee. The chairperson of a committee has the right to have the floor before the other representatives when he presents a committee report. The Speaker of Parliament, The Deputy Speakers and the chairperson of the committees form the Speaker's Council. There are regulations about the Speaker's Council in the Section 29 of the Procedure of Parliament. The Speaker's council makes proposals on the organisation of parliamentary work, issues general instructions for the work of the committees, approves regulations for the secretaries of the committees, makes a proposal to appoint a temporary committee, and makes a statement on initiatives of a representatives concerning an amendment to the Procedure of Parliament. A committee can by itself discharge the chairperson or the deputy chairperson during the term and choose a new chairperson or deputy chairperson. The issue must be announced to Secretary General of Parliament who declares it further to Eduskunta. It is Eduskunta's duty to discharge the member of the committee from the membership.

## Analysis

### Party Affiliation

The pervasive factor in the organisation of the legislature is party affiliation. It is assumed that random appointments would result in a party group having a share of the seats on committees roughly approximating its share of the party's chamber membership. Hence, to be appointed as a committee member a representative needs to receive support for an assignment from the party of his/her own. The task of the parliamentary groups is to handle all the matters that are considered in Eduskunta and on which the party

groups can influence. The party groups deal with concrete legislative issues, intern elections, elections of the electors, and committee members, attitudes to government, and important political basic issues on the agenda. Each representative receives his committee assignments from his party. All members support party representatives in attempting to control the organisational structure. The party group meetings take up matters that are considered in standing committees. Representatives could exert an influence over their committee assignments, and it opened up the chance for representatives to make committee careers. Therefore, the committee assignments themselves could be seen as an indication of representatives' power position in their own party groups. Parliamentary groups of the political parties consist of 200 representatives. According to the Diet Act and the Procedure of Parliament the cabinet ministers (VJ 44) and the Speaker of Parliament can not be assigned to parliamentary committees. Due to these regulations committee assignments concerned between 182 and 187 representatives during the legislative or electoral period at the same time. Committee chairpersons were selected from among these representatives.

The Finnish Eduskunta is divided into policy-oriented special standing committees. Parties selected their representatives to standing committees and some of these representatives chaired standing committees. Parties were directly involved in the recruitment process of the chairpersons by selecting own candidates for chairmanship positions. Parties had different motivations and resources for reaching goals as they made committee assignments from parliamentary party groups. Parties and party leaders wanted to control policy decisions and legislation in committees and on the floor. This made parties chose committee chairpersons that were loyal to a party line. In this sense the committee chairpersons were crucial for parliamentary parties. Chairmanships in the standing committees should reflect the left-right balance of the parliamentary seats. The memberships in committees should reflect the election results in parliamentary elections. Party groups used to agree on the committee positions so that political balance



persisted. Thereafter parties nominated their own candidates within the party (Nousiainen 1977: 252).

The most important committee assignments and positions, as committee chairpersons concentrated on the largest parties in Eduskunta. It was much more difficult for smaller party groups to get attractive committee positions, especially this applies to committee chairmanship assignments. Election support and gained seats by parties in the parliamentary elections determined positions of the parties when they were negotiating committee assignments. Especially the left-right balance was adhered to when committee positions were allocated to party groups. The leftist parties gained a majority of seats twice, after the 1958 and 1966 parliamentary elections in the Finnish Eduskunta after World War II. In the 1958 parliamentary election the left gained a narrow majority with 101-99 in seats. This victory did not reflect in committee chairmanships so that the left would have had a majority of committee chairmanships but the leftist parties received six of 13 committee chairmanship assignments. In the parliamentary election of 1966 the left gained a narrow majority of 103 parliamentary seats which also reflected in assignments of committee chairpersons. After the 1966 election the leftist parties received seven committee chairpersons since the parliamentary election of 1970. A distribution of standing committee chairmanship assignments by party is shown in Table 1.

There have been no significant changes in support between political parties but electoral support has been considerably stable after the Second World War. The most significant phenomena have occurred in three parliamentary elections (1970, 1972 and 1983) when the Finnish Rural Party became a central political power figure. SMP obtained committee leadership assignments after these elections. The smallest parties have had it much harder to gain any leadership assignment at all. The Liberal People's Party, the Swedish People's Party, and the Finnish Rural Party have obtained one leadership assignment, each. LKP has not received any committee leadership assignment after the parliamentary election of 1975, SMP has got an as-

signment when it has reached an election victory. The central party in Governments, RKP has been more successful when committee chairmanship assignments have been allocated. It has received more chairmanship assignments than its share of parliamentary seats would have given an indication of. The party has always obtained one chairmanship assignment after the Second World War. The four biggest parties have gained 85 % of the committee leadership assignments. Over one fourth of committee chairpersons came from the Social Democratic Party. The Centre Party, another important party in Governments came in a good second. It has gained over 22 % of committee leadership assignments. The share of committee chairmanship assignments gained by the People's Democratic League (SKDL) and the National Coalition Party was little below 20 %. Distribution of committee chairmanship assignments has not fully reflected parliamentary majority, however.

Twice in the 1970s (1972 and 1975) the leftist and rightist parties hold seven chairmanships, each although there was a narrow right-wing majority in Eduskunta. The Finnish Eduskunta has had mostly right-wing majorities and right-wing parties have had a majority of committee leadership assignments. The leftist parties have on an average gained 5-6 committee chairmanship assignments whereas the right-wing parties have gained 7-8 assignments. After the election of 1983 the rightist parties had substantially more chairperson assignments than the leftist parties. The Left-wing Alliance (VAS) has received one chairmanship assignment after the election of 1987. The Social Democratic Party, the Centre Party, and the National Coalition have each gained 3-4 committee chairmanships regularly. The parties that have gained chairmanship positions in the committees are illustrated in the columns and the electoral period in the rows. There were by attractivity and by work-load differently ranked and valued standing committees in the Finnish Parliament.

Chairmanships in some committees have been in the hands of the same parties during a long period. I shall analyse the assignment cases of the chairpersons drawn from my sample both by tabulation and historically. I begin by presenting

Table 1. The Chairpersons by Party in the Standing Committees, 1945-1994. (Abbreviations, see appendix)

Electoral Period	SKDL	SDP	SMP	KESK	ED	RKP	KOK
1945	pu,si,so	ta,ul,va	-	li,mm,su	la	pa	lt, pe
1948	pu,si	so,ta,ul,va	-	li,mm,su	-	pa	la,lt,pe
1951	pu,si	so,ul,va	-	li,mm,su,ta	pa	la	lt,pe
1954	pa,si	so,ul,va	-	li,mm,su,ta	pa	la	lt,pe
1958	pa,si,su	so,ta,ul,va	-	li,mm,su	-	la	lt,pe
1962	li,pa,si	so,ta,ul	-	mm,su,va	pu	la	lt,pe
1966	li,si,su	so,ta,ul,va	-	lt,mm	pu	la	pa,pe
1970	li,pa,si	so,ta,ul	su	lt,mm	pu	la	pe,va
1972	li,si,su	pa,so,ta,ul	ii	lt,mm	pu	la	pe,va
1975II	li,si,su	pa,so,ta,ul	-	lt,mm	pu	la	ii,pe,va
1979	si,su	pa,so,ta,ul	-	li,lt,mm	-	la	ii,pe,pu,va
1983	li,si	pa,so,ta	su	li,lt,mm	-	la,ul	pe,pu,va
1987	li	pa,so,ta,ul	su	li,lt,mm	-	la	pe,pu,si,va
1991	ym	so,ta,ty,ul	-	ha,li,mm,va	-	la	pe,pu,si,su

purely tabular data on the party affiliation of the committee chairpersons between 1945 and 1994. A representative from the National Coalition party has always sat as a leaderperson of the Committee for Constitutional Law. The National Coalition Party has also in many cases taken charge of the Law and Economy Committee. A representative from the Social Democratic Party has mostly assumed the leadership of the Economy Committee and Foreign Affairs Committee at the beginning of the new electoral period. A representative from the Centre party has often been assigned to the Agriculture and Forestry Committee. The only committee leadership assignment of the Swedish People's Party has been the Committee for Ordinary Law. The important committee assignments, as assignments to the Finance Committee have been allocated to Social Democratic Party until the diet of 1970. However, from 1970 until the election of 1991 the chairperson of the Finance Committee has come from the National Coalition Party. At this moment the Finance Committee was chaired by a representative from the Centre Party. A representative from the Finnish Rural

Party has sat on the Second Committee for Ordinary Law and thirdly on the Grand Committee. The Finnish People's Democratic League has obtained only chairmanships with low importance and attractivity.

### Demographic Background

How do party groups allocate committee assignments to their representatives? The factor that seemed first and foremost to be decisive would be parliamentary seniority of each representative. But also age, occupation, and education of each representative combined with an interest in matters of a committee had an influence on allotting of committee positions. All these factors shall be examined in the following seven chapters. Demographic features were described as an inborn part of social background of the chairpersons, as age and gender. Traditionally, there have been three different ways to describe representatives' age and seniority in parliamentary and committee research literature (Anckar 1972): 1. Physical age before assignment, 2. Parliamentary experience, which means the

number of a representative's legislative periods before assignment, 3. Committee experience in the same committee before assignment to a different position, i.e. as a chairperson.

It was certainly true that the chairpersons were older than their colleagues although not as markedly as is commonly believed but the committee chairpersons have been older on an average than the deputy chairpersons or the ordinary members. During the examination period the difference between the age structures has shown a decrease while the average age of the assigned representatives has also diminished, however. The chairpersons have been well over 50 years old until the 1960s. But the average age of the deputy chairpersons has shown a decrease after the first electoral periods. Instead the average age of the ordinary members has been relatively stable during the examination period. The representatives who received chairmanship assignments had an average age of 51. The deputy chairpersons were at the age of 50 and ordinary members at the age of 47 on an average. Although the chairpersons were older than their colleagues a number of younger representatives was singled out for chairmanships. When committee members, deputy chairpersons, and chairpersons were divided into age classes, it could easily be seen that committee chairpersons often came from age classes 40-49 and 50-59. Below 10 % of the committee chairpersons were below 30 years of age. About 20 % of the deputy chairpersons were below 40 years of age. The majority of them were between 40 and 59 years of age. The ordinary members in the standing committees were clearly younger in physical age: about 24 % of them were younger than 39 years of age. This all gave an indication of a clear difference between different committee post measured in physical years. The committee chairperson used to be a little older than other position holders. This illustrated that parties when making important chairmanship assignments, laid stress on the age of representatives. Of course, there were some exceptions, but the trend was obvious. When different committees were examined separately, the highest average age of the chairmanships was in Law and Economy Committee (59). The Second Committee

for Ordinary Law (55 years) and the Grand Committee (55 years) came next. The average age of the committee chairpersons has been higher than that of the deputy chairpersons or that of the ordinary members in almost every standing committee. The chairpersons have been well advanced in years in the Grand Committee, the Committee for Constitutional Law, the Defence Committee, and the Finance Committee. The ordinary members have been older than the chairpersons in the Defence Committee.

### Gender

The Nordic countries have served as a model for the rest of the world as gender issues and equality are concerned. It could be stated that the share of female committee chairpersons would have been equal to their share of representatives in the whole Eduskunta. The share of female representatives has always been below 50 %. The lowest share was after the Second World War (8.5 %) but the share has increased steadily. After the last election of the research period it has reached the level of 38.5 % (77/200). There were 13 female representatives assigned as initial assignments to the leadership positions of the parliamentary committees. Four of the 13 female chairpersons come from the right-wing parties. There were no female committee chairpersons in ten committees (ha, li, lt, pa, pe, pu, ta, ty, va, ym), but there were female chairpersons in seven committees (ii, mm, la, ul, su, so, si). The share of female committee chairpersons was at its highest after the 1983 elections when four standing committees (the Culture Committee, the Committee for Ordinary Law, the Second Committee for Ordinary Law, and the Foreign Affairs Committee) received female chairpersons and the share of them has seemed to increase during the recent electoral periods. Female chairpersons have been assigned the most usually to the Culture Committees (1945, 1948, 1962, 1966, 1983, 1991). After the parliamentary elections of 1951, 1954, 1958 1970 and 1975 there were no initially assigned female committee chairpersons in the Finnish Eduskunta. The distribution of the committee chairmanships by gender was strongly biased to the

benefit of male representatives. 91 % of the committee chairpersons have been male by gender, as illustrated in Table 2. Only 17 female representatives have initially been assigned as committee chairpersons. However, there are a few female chairmanship assignments in consequence of committee reassignments.

The share of female committee chairpersons has risen so that 21 % of the committees have received a female chairperson in the committee assignments after the election of 1991. Generally speaking, female representatives have been underrepresented in chairmanship positions. The legislative elite has been strongly dominated by male representatives, who have gained the overwhelming majority of preferred positions, as committee chairpersons.

### Regional Representativeness

Studying a regional division of committee chairmanship assignments throws to some extent light on political situation in the Finnish Parliament and gives some complementary notes to it. In parliamentary elections of 1945-1991 Finland was divided into 12-18 election districts. The regional division of the parliamentary seats was reflected in committee chairmanship assignments when the balance of regional representativeness was considered. The largest number of the chairpersons stemmed from the election district of Uusimaa. The number of the assigned chairpersons from Uusimaa was 26 (13.8 %) during the whole research period. The number of the elected representatives from that election district used to be 27 which corresponded with 13.5 % of all elected representatives to Eduskunta. The proportionality in chairmanship assignments was in the case of Uusimaa followed in a considerably exact manner during the research period. The election district of Kymi received the next largest number of chairmanship assignments (20/188, 10.6 %). Its share of the representatives used to be 7.0 % in the parliamentary elections. The election district of Kymi gained more chairmanship positions than its proportionality share of parliamentary seats gave an indication of.

In working out the patterns of committee chairmanship assignments, certain limitations had to be observed by those who made the assignments. They had to be guided by the number of vacant positions after the parliamentary election and by the number of applications for committee movements. When distributing chairmanship assignments between parties and individual representatives care was also taken of attaining a geographical distribution of the assignments. Attention was paid to group desires and desires of individual representatives, and to the experience and training of legislators. Committee assignments were often made on a regional basis but also with member interest and experience. The desire to recognise geography was shown by the results of this paper with considerably exact regional proportionality. Many chairpersons can have been seen as representatives of election districts of their own. The representation of own election district with vested interests in the course of jurisdiction of a committee was valued by some representatives. This position of some representatives was understood by party groups. Some chairmanship assignments reflected this factor over the years. However, careful attention was paid to the geographic balance factor and care was taken not to overload positions as committee chairpersons with too many members from same election district. Beyond this, member interest was taken into account. If a representative had a deep and immediate interest in the substantive jurisdiction of a committee, this often weighted heavily.

In sum, a relatively exact regional proportionality was observed in chairmanship assignments during the examination period. particular regions, except the election district of Kymi did not gain more chairmanship assignments than their proportional numbers of elected representatives showed. When committee leadership positions were allocated, the regional balance of chairmanships reflected the proportions of membership region by region and election district by election district. It did not turn out to be so that those areas electing over time the largest number of members would stand the best chance of gaining committee posts but committee lead-

ers represented election districts of traditional party strength.

### Socioeconomic Background

In connection with the 1906 parliamentary reform adopted proportional representation gave the electorate a chance to choose a group of candidates that would reflect the whole people and all political opinions as well as possible. Political leadership has in all political systems been recruited predominantly from the upper social strata. It would seem that a candidate with respected social strata would have a better chance to climb to institutional power positions (Pekonen 1972: 99). The social background of political decision-makers has attracted researchers' attention widely since 1950s. The backgrounds of political leaders explain to some extent the behaviour of political elite. The composition of parliamentary committees can be examined in terms of their social structure. The committee assignments and careers can not be wholly described unless social backgrounds of the chairpersons were taken under examination. The social compositions of the committees help us to find out which kind of social interests committee chairmanships represented. The long time perspective gives also a chance to examine how the social structure of the standing committee changed over time as far as committee chairmanships were concerned. The concept of social background has turned out to be problematic to define, especially from a point of view of a target area and classification criteria. One cannot point the finger at limits of social background. In research literature the social background has been seen in a conceptually wide scope (Noponen 1989: 117).

The concept of social background can be used in a broad or narrow sense. Narrowly defined it only includes social status, origin of birth, and demographic features. In a broad meaning the social background features were consisted of education, occupation, elected confidential posts, turnover of membership, and career elements (Noponen 1989: 117). In most research work the concept has been defined so that it has also included social activity in the form of

elected positions in the pre-parliamentary stage. Researchers have examined political career patterns, paths to different positions, and political activities in party organisations. Most researchers have taken social status and social origin or socioeconomic features as a starting point. They have tried to point out which kind of social background features selected candidates have had. On the other hand it had been examined how and on which kind of political and social pathways those selected have advanced to the political leaderships, in other words how political leaders were recruited to different posts. Social background features have been examined as a part of the recruitment process of the political leaderships. In this paper socioeconomic background of the committee chairpersons was considered with the help of occupational status and educational level.

In the following, a general presentation of occupational status of the committee chairpersons will be given. Attention will therefore be paid to their pre-legislative occupations. A classification according to occupational status has earlier been used in order to describe those elected and those not elected candidates in parliamentary elections. Occupational status has been used to describe the social status of the committee chairpersons. 68.1 % of the committee chairpersons came from the leading position. The committee chairpersons were mainly assigned from among the representatives with leading position. When the representatives were elected they were to a greater extent recruited from high social strata of society. The under-representation of the workers or the working-class in Eduskunta was not confined which was noteworthy because the strength of the two leftist parties. The share of the seats held by the labour parties has generally been between 40 % and 48 %. In the chairperson assignments the share of representatives from the working-class was clearly under-represented.

Social status of candidates was emphasised already at the recruitment stage and the parliamentary election itself emphasises this further. In the same way the social status of representatives was one recruitment criterion in appointment of committee chairpersons. The share of farmers

Table 2. Gender Representativeness, 1945-1994. (Abbreviations, see appendix)

Electoral Period	Number of Male Chairpersons	Number of Female Chairpersons	Committee with Female Chairperson
1945	12	1	si
1948	12	1	si
1951	13	0	.
1954	13	0	.
1958	13	0	.
1962	12	1	si
1966	12	1	si
1970	13	0	.
1972	13	1	su
1975II	14	0	.
1979	12	2	so, su
1983	10	4	si, la, ii, ul
1987	11	3	la, so ii,
1991	11	3	si, ul, mm
Sum	171 91.0 %	17 9.0 %	

was 14.9 % and the share of workers 10.1 %. All 19 committee chairpersons which have had working background were left-wing representatives. The committee chairperson in the most attractive committees came without exception from leading positions. It was noteworthy that the chairpersons of the Agriculture and Forestry Committee were farmers with four exceptions which illustrated the role of that committee in the Finnish political system. The share of the right-wing committee chairpersons that came from leading positions was 76.1 % and the share of representatives from leading positions in the left-wing parties was 57.8 %. The number of representatives from leading positions was much higher in the right-wing parties than in the leftist parties. The share of the white-collar employees remained quite little. The number of the white-collar employees was only 10, eight came from the leftist parties and two from the rightist. These committees were the Agriculture and Forestry Committee, the Committee for Social Affairs, the Culture Committee, the Transportation

and Communications Committee, and finally the Grand Committee. On an average nine committees have had chairpersons from leading positions. The data on occupational status gave a clear indication of the fact that the recruitment process at the commencement of each new Eduskunta favoured the representatives from the leading positions and higher social strata.

### Education

It is a common knowledge to say that an elected body never mirrors the social composition of its constituency. Such groups as higher classes or better educated strata as well as men were over-represented in elected bodies compared to the electorate. The average educational background of the parliamentary representatives has always been considerably higher than the average educational level of the electorate. The educational levels of the committee chairpersons have been coded by using three different levels. 53.7 % of the committee chairpersons have an academic

education. 38.3 % of the chairpersons have not any education after the first level at all. It was clear that chairpersons were selected from among those with higher education or those with no special education at all, on the other hand. The leftist chairpersons have to a great extent only attended the lowest educational level. By contrast, 75 % of the right-wing chairpersons have taken a university degree. All committee chairpersons in the Committee for Ordinary Law and those in the Committee for Constitutional Law have passed an academic education. After the 1991 parliamentary election 85.7 % of all committee chairpersons were academically educated. Only two committees (the Transportation and Communications Committee and the Committee for Labour Affairs) selected the chairpersons from the lowest educational level. The lowest share of academically educated chairpersons was after the 1962 and 1966 elections. The share was at that time 38.5 %. The highest share of the lowest educated (57.1 %) was after the 1975 election when Eduskunta was dissolved.

The share of committee chairpersons having an academic degree has risen. 75.2 % of the chairpersons from the right-wing parties had a academic degree whereas the leftist parties did not appreciate academic education and on the other hand there were not so many academically educated among the leftist representatives at all. Between 1945 and 1994 only one fourth (26.5 %) of all committee chairpersons stemming from the left had an academic degree. The committee chairpersons have usually a sector relevant education in subject-matter oriented standing committees or a long committee experience in a given committee. 46.8 % of committee chairpersons were not academically educated at all. Every fifth of the chairpersons had taken a degree in legal studies. The chairpersons in the Committee for Constitutional Law and Committee for Ordinary Law had nearly without any exceptions have studied law at the university. 7.4 % of the chairpersons have studied political science and humanities before the assignments. The chairpersons sitting on the Agriculture and Forestry Committee had mostly studied in the faculty of agriculture and forestry. The chairpersons in this committee had often been farmers

and then they have not had any academic degree at all. There have been two academic chairpersons (1962 and 1966) with theologic degrees in the Defence Committee. Eleven chairpersons assigned after the parliamentary election of 1991 had passed an academic education. To sum up, the share of academically educated representatives in important committee posts has risen over the years. After the 1991 election four of eleven committee chairpersons had taken a judicial degree.

### Parliamentary seniority

Competitiveness of the representative is determined mainly by his/her political knowledge, experience, and expertise (Hagevi 1993: 16). The parliamentary experience of the representatives is according to Dag Ankar (1972: 7-8) a good indicator of political experience and competence. Politically experienced representatives are assigned to more important committees and committee positions because party leaders want to avoid failures in the committee work (Hagevi 1993: 10). Experienced committee members guarantee the party standpoints at the committee stage. Less experienced representatives were therefore assigned to less important committees and committee positions to get more political experience for subsequent assignments. Parliamentary seniority plays an important part in the appointment process of the representatives to different committee posts. An external sign of seniority or of recognition by the parties is the gradual progress of representatives from the back bench towards the front row in Parliament. Under the custom of seniority, often referred to as the rule of seniority in the U.S. Congress houses, members of each party are ranked in standing committees according to their length of continuous service on a given committee. The senior member of the majority party was selected as a chairperson of the committee. Under the rule of seniority members of standing committees continue to serve on same committees as long as they remain in Congress unless they seek assignment to another committee. Through long service on the same commit-

tees they became experts on the subject-matters of legislation (Harris 1967: 61-68).

To receive a committee assignment a representative prefers most, he/she must compete over assignments with other representatives. Representatives compete with political knowledge and experience, expertise in politics as well as competence or expertise in subject-matter (Hagevi 1993: 16). When party groups made committee assignments of representatives, they paid attention to representatives' parliamentary experience and their abilities in and knowledge of the mandates of the committees in question. Importance of representatives' parliamentary experience to working of the legislative body was essential. This same subject matter was closely connected with political careers, also parliamentary experience and legislative careers with the help of committee assignments. The parliamentary experience was one of the most important features affecting parliamentary work because through parliamentary experience representatives' expertise and chance to get politically more important posts grew. At the same time representatives appeared in publicity and established a friendship with prominent people. This promotes representatives' own careers and parties' own goals. When parliamentary experience grew, representatives made their own careers in different tasks in legislative organs, for example in standing committees, in the Speaker's council, in own parliamentary groups and in the Cabinet. That was why the enduring parliamentary mandates made it possible for representatives to get parliamentary experience in the legislative work and go on with their parliamentary and committee careers.

Anckar (1972: 7-8) found that representatives' parliamentary experience was a good indicator of political experience and competence. Party leaders laid stress on political experience and competence when they made assignments of representatives to standing committees. This resulted in the fact that representatives with high parliamentary experience were assigned to the most important committees. The functions of the Eduskunta as an effective legislative organ require experienced and skilled representatives. The importance of parliamentary experience

was twofold. On the one hand experience in parliamentary work affects representatives' own careers and on the other hand individual representatives, experience was of great importance to the different functions of Eduskunta which was very crucial at the beginning of every new electoral period when Eduskunta starts its legislative work (Noponen 1989: 148). Hence, a turnover of representatives and membership stability in organs affected how workable Eduskunta was.

In American literature seniority is often measured by means of committee seniority. Committee seniority is referred to representatives' continuous membership in given committees before they get assigned as committee chairpersons (See Hinckley 1976: 384; Harris 1967: 61-68). Parliamentary seniority was operationalised in this paper with the help of parliamentary experience or prior service in Eduskunta. It was clear that parliamentary experience of the assigned representatives decreased in exceptional social circumstances which society was faced with. When parliamentary experience of all representatives in the assembly decreased, also parliamentary experience of the committee leaders showed a decrease. Hence, a high turnover of representatives in Eduskunta affected experience of committee members. The chairmanship assignments of the Finnish standing committees shall be discussed in greater detail below but for the moment the tabulation may be revised to obtain a more accurate view of the role of the parliamentary seniority based on both historical and statistical data. The parliamentary experience of the representatives from the Finnish People's Democratic League was at its lowest after the parliamentary election of 1975. However, the experience rose without exception until 1979. After that election the parliamentary experience of the committee chairpersons from SKDL has fallen again. The representatives of the Social Democratic Party have been the most senior during 1945-1991. The representatives of the Social Democratic Party have had on average experience in 13 diets when assigned as committee leaders. However, after two parliamentary elections, 1970 and 1979, the average parliamentary experience of assigned representatives was low



which was caused by high turnover of representatives and march of freshmen into Eduskunta. The average experience of the representatives from the Agrarian Union/the Centre Party has varied from 8 to 19 diets. It reached its peak immediately after the Second World War and after the parliamentary election of 1970. The average experience of the elected representatives from the National Coalition Party has varied even more. The experience varied from 4 to 21 diets. It reached its peak at the beginning of the research period. At the end of the 1980s parties parliamentary experience has risen above the average value. Hence, it would be concluded that the National Coalition Party appreciated positions of committee chairmanships. It usually nominated the most experienced representatives to committee chairmanship posts. This occurred as the National Coalition Party became an important political actor in the 1980s.

I tried to answer the questions of the role of the parliamentary seniority in committee chairmanship appointments. I had to rely solely on the tabular data since historical information was too limited to provide any comprehensive basis for comparisons. In general, my statistical data offered that there was a direct relationship between the political or legislative importance of a standing committee and reliance on seniority at the time of appointments. The parliamentary experience of the committee chairpersons has risen steadily until the parliamentary election of 1962 (the election of 1948 made an exception). The average experience of committee chairpersons has varied from 9 to 14 diets. It reached its peak after 1972 and 1975 parliamentary elections. At its lowest it was after the parliamentary election of 1979. The average parliamentary seniority of the representatives in the whole Eduskunta varied 5.8 to 7.9 diets between 1958 and 1987 (Noponen 1989: 156). The parliamentary experience changed a lot from period to period. The most experienced committee chairpersons sat on the Finance Committee and the Grand Committee. The chairperson in the Agriculture and Forestry Committee were also relatively experienced in every period of examination. Whereas, the average parliamentary experience of Foreign Affairs Committee and the Committee for Con-

stitutional Law has fallen below the average value. The committee assignments in 1966 and 1975 were gained by the representatives with the highest parliamentary seniority.

## Conclusions

This was an article about 188 committee chairmanship assignments covering 127 individual representatives. The committee assignment process involved a blending of personal, regional, partisan, and seniority factors. The proportion of committee positions gained by each parliamentary party was determined beforehand by party groups which to a great extent attempted to mirror the proportion of party seats in Eduskunta when making these allocations. The most important findings of this paper can be summarised as follows. The study of the chairmanship assignments revealed the tendency to appoint experienced representatives as chairpersons to the top standing committees in the prestige continua. There were 36 committee chairmanship assignments to the four most important standing committees and two of them were female by gender. Ulpu Iivari (SDP, in 1991) and Jutta Zilliacus (RKP, in 1983) gained initial chairmanship assignments to the Foreign Affairs Committee. There were no initial female chairmanship assignments in the Committee for Constitutional Law, in the Bank Committee, or in the Finance Committee. Five of them were below 40 years of age when they were assigned. Ben Zyskowicz was the youngest chairperson assigned at the age of 24 to the Committee for Constitutional Law. Usually assigned representatives had been representatives for over one electoral period.

The highest average seniority of was found in the Grand Committee and in the Finance Committee. The higher the parliamentary seniority in standing committees increased the more attracted and important committees became. The most important standing committees were chaired by men of long parliamentary seniority. Representatives with the highest parliamentary seniority got often assigned as committee leaders to the most important and demanding com-

mittees. Average membership duration was the longest and membership stability the most stable in the most prestigious committees and that the most attracted and important standing committees in Eduskunta had the lowest turnover of their memberships. Because there were standing committees with higher and lower rankings in Eduskunta representatives sought assignments to high-ranked committees at the beginning of the electoral periods. Prior service (parliamentary seniority) in Eduskunta was separated from committee seniority which was defined as representatives' consecutive serve on given standing committees. Especially in subject-related committees committee seniority increased. The higher committee seniority rose the higher membership stability became. When representatives served on given standing committee they became more familiar with the jurisdiction of those committees. Committee seniority increased but representatives made no real committee careers. There were also movements from committee to committee or from position to position. Since the division of labour between the standing committees called for high expertise requirements memberships in the committees became quite stable. One could also conclude that parliamentary seniority and gender were the principal criteria for recruitment of the chairmanship positions to the most important standing committees. It referred to the fact that representatives often had to wait a long time to gain chairmanship assignments and it was also stated that some representatives had never possibilities to gain chairmanship assignments during their committee careers.

Timo Forsten

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- ii = The Second Committee for Ordinary Law (toinen lakivaliokunta 1968-1969 and 1971-1990)
- li = The Transportation and Communications Committee (kulkulaitosvaliokunta -1972 and liikennevaliokunta 1973-)
- lt = The Law and Economy Committee (laki- ja talousvaliokunta -1990)
- mm = The Agriculture and Forestry Committee (maatalousvaliokunta -1964 and maa- ja metsätalousvaliokunta 1965-)
- pu = The Defence Committee (puolustusasiainvaliokunta -1990 and puolustusvaliokunta 1991-)
- si = The Culture Committee (sivistysvaliokunta)
- so = The Committee for Social Affairs (työväenasiainvaliokunta -1961, sosiaalivaliokunta 1962-1990 and sosiaali- ja terveystalousvaliokunta 1991-)
- su = The Grand Committee (suuri valiokunta)
- ta = The Economy Committee (talousvaliokunta)
- ty = The Committee for Labour Affairs (työasiainvaliokunta 1991-)
- ym = The Environment Committee (ympäristövaliokunta 1991-)

### The Finnish Parliamentary Parties, 1945-1994:

- DEVA = The Democratic Alternative  
 ED = The Progressive Party  
 KESK = The Centre Party  
 KOK = The National Coalition Party  
 KP = The People's Party  
 LKP = The Liberal People's Party  
 ML = The Agrarian Union  
 RKP = The Swedish People's Party  
 SDP = The Finnish Social Democratic Party  
 SKDL = The Finnish People's Democratic League  
 SKL = The Finnish Christian League  
 SMP = The Finnish Rural Party  
 TPSL = The Social Democratic League  
 VAS = The Left-wing Alliance  
 VIHR = The Greens

## Appendix

### The Standing Parliamentary Committees, 1945-1994:

- la = The Committee for Ordinary Law (lakivaliokunta)
- pa = The Bank Committee (pankkivaliokunta -1990)
- pe = The Committee for Constitutional Law (perustuslakivaliokunta)
- ul = The Foreign Affairs Committee (ulkoasiainvaliokunta)
- va = The Finance Committee (valtiovarainvaliokunta)
- ha = The Administration Committee (hallintovaliokunta 1991-)