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Five Shades of Loyalty

How Party Representatives Navigate Intra-Organisational Misconduct

2026

Working paper series 2026:8

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WORKING PAPER SERIES 8

QoG THE QUALITY OF GOVERNMENT INSTITUTE
Department of Political Science
University of Gothenburg
Box 711, SE 405 30 GÖTEBORG
2026
ISSN 1653-8919
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Abstract

Misconduct within organisations threatens organisational integrity, accountability, and democratic legitimacy. Although political parties occupy a pivotal role in democratic governance, little is known about how politicians navigate decisions about reporting misconduct within their own organisations. This constitutes an important research gap, as insiders' willingness to raise concerns is a key mechanism through which organisations identify and address wrongdoing. This study examines the different approaches party representatives adopt towards reporting intra-organisational misconduct and the characteristics that distinguish these orientations. Drawing on 33 semi-structured interviews with Swedish politicians and employing inductive ideal-type analysis, we identify five orientations towards external reporting: Institutionalists, Responsible Critics, Faction Fighters, Conditional Critics, and the Disillusioned. These ideal types differ in the forms of misconduct that command attention, the motivations shaping reporting decisions, the perceived legitimacy of external reporting, and representatives' relationships with their party organisations. The study develops a novel typology of reporting orientations, advancing research on public administration, whistleblowing, and parties by enabling systematic comparisons of different orientations towards external reporting within and across organisational contexts.

Keywords: reporting, loyalty, whistleblowing, parties, misconduct

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Introduction

Misconduct in public organisations poses a significant threat to the quality of government (e.g. Rothstein & Teorell 2008; Bauhr & Grimes 2014). If unaddressed, it may weaken the internal functioning of public institutions, as well as the public's confidence in their fairness, responsiveness, and integrity over time.

Unfortunately, misconduct occurs across all types of organisations; political parties being no exception (Thompson 2000; Pollack et al. 2018; Huberts et al. 2022; Niklasson et al. 2024). We contend, however, that addressing misconduct is particularly important in such democratic settings. First, political parties occupy a pivotal position within representative democracy. They serve as key intermediaries between citizens and public institutions, structure political competition, shape policy agendas, and play a central role in political recruitment and leadership selection. Second, when misconduct, whether in the form of personal impropriety, favouritism, financial irregularities, or organisational failures, becomes normalised within party organisations, the consequences may extend well beyond the organisation itself; such practices can compromise parties' broader democratic function. By weakening perceptions of ethical and competent governance, they risk contributing to declining political trust, civic disengagement, and diminished confidence in representative democratic institutions. Preventing and addressing misconduct within political parties is therefore not merely a matter of organisational integrity; it is also essential for safeguarding democratic legitimacy and strengthening democratic resilience.

The purpose of this paper is to develop our knowledge of how party representatives approach the decision to report intra-organisational misconduct, since insiders—whistleblowers, leakers, and peer reporters—often play a key role in coming to terms with organisational misconduct by raising concerns with those in a position to act (Near & Miceli 1985; De Graaf 2010). However, research suggests that many cases of misconduct in political parties are never reported at all and if they are, they are primarily reported internally and informally (Niklasson et al. 2024).

This is perhaps unsurprising, given the strong norms of party loyalty in many contexts. Yet, political representatives are also typically guided by ideological commitments and democratic values, including a sense of responsibility to speak up for what is fair and just. The tension between the moral foundations of loyalty and fairness (Dungan et al. 2015; Dawson 2026) creates a potential dilemma for individuals: whether to act, or to remain silent, when they witness or become aware of misconduct within their own organisation. These decisions must be made within a complex web of competing considerations, including personal ethical values, the interests of the party, fear of retaliation, and concerns for one's political future.

Despite the particular significance of this dilemma in the party context, our understanding of how political representatives navigate decisions about reporting misconduct remains limited. To begin with, research on whistleblowing within political parties is almost entirely absent, whether in relation to internal or external reporting. Moreover, although concerns about loyalty are frequently assumed to influence whistleblowing behaviour, they are rarely examined empirically. Finally, existing knowledge of whistleblowing decision-making is derived primarily from descriptive survey research and experimental studies (Kang 2023).

Our study addresses this gap by asking: *What different approaches do party representatives adopt towards reporting intra-organizational misconduct, and what characterises these distinct orientations*? This question allows us to conceptualise misconduct reporting as a complex decision-making process in which multiple considerations

are weighed and combined in different ways by different individuals. In doing so, we move beyond previous research that has largely focused on identifying factors associated with insiders' willingness to report wrongdoing, or on estimating the relative importance of individual predictors. Instead, we examine how actors assess the situation as a whole, taking into account not only the nature and severity of the misconduct itself, but also their relationship to their organisation and its members.

We argue that these insights are essential for understanding how democratic and high-quality government can be sustained in the face of organisational threats. The study speaks directly to scholars of public administration concerned with state resilience, organisational integrity, and whistleblowing. Specifically, we contribute to the whistleblowing literature in two ways. First, by examining a critical case of strongly idea-driven organisations in which tensions between fairness and loyalty are likely to be particularly pronounced for individuals contemplating whether to report internal misconduct. Second, by exploring rich and qualitative evidence on politicians' reasoning in actual cases of misconduct.

The article also contributes to the emerging literature on misconduct and reporting in political parties and offers insights into party politics in general. In particular, it sheds light on the darker dimensions of party loyalty, intra-party relations, and factional dynamics, while identifying potential pathways through which organisational dysfunction and inappropriate behaviour may be addressed before escalating into public scandals.

We pursue our research question by drawing on 33 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with Swedish politicians operating at the local, regional, and national levels. An inductive analysis of these data reveals five distinct ideal types: the *Institutionalists*, the *Responsible Critics*, the *Conditional Critics*, the *Faction Fighters*, and the *Disillusioned*. Together, these ideal types capture different ways in which political representatives interpret, navigate, and ultimately resolve the loyalty dilemma of whether to report internal misconduct to outsiders.

Previous Research

The question of what shapes insiders' decisions to report wrongdoing has attracted sustained scholarly attention across a broad array of fields, including public administration, organisational studies, law, business research, psychology, and sociology. Yet, it has received comparatively limited engagement within political science. The discussion that follows therefore draws chiefly on whistleblowing research conducted in organisational settings other than political organisations. We begin by outlining the four principal categories of considerations identified in this literature—the nature and seriousness of the wrongdoing, the actors implicated, the anticipated consequences, and the available alternatives—before turning to the theoretical perspectives and analytical frameworks used to describe and explain how individuals navigate the trade-offs among these competing concerns.

Our argument is that, although existing research has generated valuable knowledge about the factors associated with insiders' willingness to report wrongdoing and—in some cases—about the relative weight of particular predictors, such approaches tend to treat these considerations as discrete influences which effects can be isolated and measured. As a result, limited attention has been paid to how individuals assess and integrate multiple concerns when confronted with actual reporting dilemmas.

Reporting Considerations

One important set of considerations that prospective reporters weigh when deciding whether to come forward concerns the *nature and seriousness of the wrongdoing* (e.g. Near et al. 2004). They may reflect on whether the issue is an individual-level transgression or a structural problem, and whether it represents a one-off incident or a recurring pattern (Dawson 2026). A substantial body of research indicates that individuals are more inclined to report serious violations (Roberts 2014; Valentine & Godkin 2019; Pratolo et al. 2020; Latan et al. 2023; Dawson 2026), particularly those that endanger physical safety and that recur over time.

Another key consideration relates to the *actors involved*. Prospective reporters may ask themselves: Who is the perpetrator – senior leadership, an immediate superior, or a peer (Pershing 2003; Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran 2005; Bergemann & Aven 2023)? Who is affected (e.g. oneself, a co-worker, or the public)? And what is the prospective reporter's relationship to these parties? Prior studies show that individuals are more likely to report misconduct that directly affects themselves (Cassematis & Wortley 2013; Roberts 2014).

A third type of consideration concerns the anticipated *consequences* of reporting for the future occurrence of the wrongdoing, for the organisation's reputation, and for the actors involved. Do prospective reporters trust that their complaint will be taken seriously, that the issue will be addressed, and that everybody concerned will be treated fairly in the process (Keil et al. 2010; Roberts 2014; Caillier 2015; Lavena 2016; Ugaddan & Park 2019)? Or do they fear being dismissed, stigmatised as troublemakers, or even punished (Cho & Song 2015; Caillier 2017; Jeon 2017; Pratolo et al. 2020; Latan et al. 2023)? There is extensive evidence that whistleblowers often face retaliation, including social ostracism, removal from career-advancing roles, and dismissal (Rothschild & Miethe 1999).

It is therefore unsurprising that insiders also reflect on the *alternatives* available to them before raising concerns. They may consider whether to remain silent or even to exit the organisation altogether (Hirschman 1970).

In sum, research on whistleblowing has identified a broad array of factors that influence employees' decisions to report misconduct within their organisations. However, this body of work has only to a limited degree undertaken a systematic examination or theorisation of how these considerations relate to one another, or how individuals navigate competing concerns.

Theoretical approaches

A theoretical framework frequently employed in whistleblowing research is the cost-benefit perspective (e.g. Park & Lewis 2019; Klofstad et al. 2022). Yet, studies adopting this approach rarely specify how individuals evaluate and weigh competing costs and benefits when deciding whether to report misconduct. The rationalist assumptions underpinning this perspective have therefore been criticised for their limited ability to explain variation in individual motivations and modes of cognitive processing.

Many scholars have instead found that it is more fruitful to approach the decision to report wrongdoing through the lens of moral reasoning (Latan et al. 2019; Valentine & Godkin 2019). From this perspective, the ethical choice to report is understood as shaped by the extent to which individuals are motivated by self-interest or altruism, and by the weight they attach to fundamental moral values such as justice, fairness,

and loyalty. These values may come into direct tension in the context of whistleblowing; reporting that a colleague has been treated unfairly in order to uphold justice may simultaneously be perceived as an act of disloyalty towards the organisation, particularly if exposing wrongdoing risks damaging its reputation.

Prioritising loyalty is thus often assumed to result in silence (Vandekerckhove & Commers 2004; Waytz et al. 2013), but the implications of loyalty depend on to whom or what loyalty is directed—the organisation, individuals, or ideals—and on the roles these occupy in the given situation. As Lewis et al. (2014) note, reporting can equally be an expression of loyalty; it may reflect a form of altruistically motivated rational loyalty aimed at defending the organisation's underlying values and purposes rather than its leadership or current practices (Vandekerckhove & Commers 2004; Roberts 2014).

For government agencies, such values typically include equal treatment, transparency, and the efficient use of public resources. Civil servants working within such organisations have been shown to exhibit Public Service Motivation (PSM), a disposition that emphasises obligations to the public and a commitment to upholding altruistic values (Lewis & Frank 2002; Perry & Hondeghem 2008: vii). PSM theory has therefore been successfully applied to explain why civil servants engage in moral reasoning in ways that render them more inclined to report wrongdoing (Brewer & Selden 1998; Miceli 2008; Roberts 2014; Cho & Song 2015; Caillier 2017). Given that politicians hold public office, it is possible that they also make considerations along the lines of PSM.

While existing theoretical perspectives provide valuable insights into specific aspects of the reporting decision, they offer a less developed understanding of how individuals bring these considerations together when confronted with actual instances of misconduct. What different approaches are there empirically towards reporting internal misconduct, and what characterises these distinct orientations? These questions lie at the heart of the present study.

Methods

Swedish Parties as a Case

Swedish political representatives constitute a particularly interesting group for studying insiders' approaches to external reporting because they operate at the intersection of competing normative and organisational pressures. On the one hand, several features of the Swedish context encourage reporting. Sweden provides some of the world's strongest protections for whistleblowers and journalistic sources (Bauhr & Grimes 2017; SFS 2021:890; *Briefing Paper on Protection of Journalists' Sources*, 1998). Although whistleblower legislation does not primarily apply to political parties, it nevertheless reflects a broader societal recognition of external reporting as an important mechanism of accountability. In combination with high levels of social trust, relatively strong confidence in public institutions, and low tolerance of corruption (Johansson et al. 2021; Marien & Werner 2019; European Commission, 2020), these conditions may foster a sense that reporting serious intra-organisational misconduct constitutes a civic or democratic responsibility.

On the other hand, political parties are not ordinary organisations. They are highly value-driven organisations which purpose is to advance a particular political vision and, ultimately, to attain political power. Party representatives can therefore be expected to identify strongly with the organisation's goals and to be reluctant to engage in behaviour that could undermine its electoral prospects. While other

organisations may also be characterised by strong shared values, political parties represent an especially pronounced example of this organisational form.

In the Swedish case, these centripetal forces are further reinforced by a political culture marked by strong party loyalty and discipline. Swedish parliamentarians report among the highest levels of party discipline in Europe (Jensen 2000; Cordero et al. 2018). The tension between organisational loyalty and broader societal expectations of accountability is therefore particularly salient in this context.

For this reason, Sweden provides a useful setting in which to examine how members of value-driven organisations approach decisions about external reporting. Because party insiders must navigate competing obligations to their organisation, democratic norms, and the public interest, the context offers favourable conditions for capturing a wide range of reporting considerations and orientations towards external disclosure.

Data

Our analysis is based on semi-structured interviews with 33 Swedish party members with some position of trust (board, committee, council, etc.) at different levels (local, regional, and national) from all parties represented in the national parliament (see Appendix 1 for details). We strived to approach representatives of different age and gender. The interviews were in most cases conducted online, but in some cases in person-to-person meetings.

The interview guide was structured around themes that we identified as relevant in the literature review. They included the representative's relationship to and position in the party, experiences of misconduct, potential channels for reporting, and the relationship between the party and the broader society.

Since our topic is potentially sensitive—involving stories of misconduct and internal party processes that are not always publicly known—we took, in line with our ethical approval, several measures to secure the anonymity and safety of our interviewees: we obtained informed consent before the interviews started; all recordings were stored in a safe digital vault which could only be accessed by authorized members, and analyses were conducted within that vault.

The interviewees were not selected on the basis of having experienced misconduct or having been involved in reporting processes. Rather, the sampling strategy was guided by their role as party representatives. Nevertheless, given our explicit focus on misconduct within political parties, it is reasonable to assume that individuals with negative experiences may be overrepresented in the sample. Most interviewees had encountered situations that they considered relevant to the topic under study.

Two respondents (R8; R17) explicitly stated that they viewed participation in the study as a form of whistleblowing in itself:

> I see this as a way of genuinely blowing the whistle and hopefully contributing to something concrete and worthwhile, something that helps society recognise these problems. These are not things people normally talk about, nor does talking about them usually lead to anything (R17).

We emphasised in these cases that our role as researchers does not allow us to intervene in, or resolve, the issues they described, a limitation the respondents readily acknowledged. Our impression, however, was that they felt a strong need to share their experiences with someone outside the party organisation.

Several additional observations suggest that our interviewees are not representative of party members more generally. At the time of the interviews, some respondents had already left politics (R2; R3), while others did so shortly afterwards (R10; R12). In addition, four interviewees had left their party and were serving as independents on their municipal councils (R24; R26; R28; R29) and five interviewees had been members of several parties (R16; R17; R18; R21; R24). These patterns indicate that dissatisfied party representatives may be overrepresented in the sample.

As this is a qualitative study, however, we do not regard this as a major limitation. The material also includes respondents who express strong commitment to, and satisfaction with, their organisations. The purpose of the study is not to estimate the prevalence of particular attitudes or experiences, but to identify and understand different ways of approaching the question of whether to report internal misconduct. To the extent that the data capture the full range of such orientations among party representatives, the value of the analysis remains intact.

Analytical Process

In order to identify different consideration approaches, we applied an ideal type analysis. The interviews were thus analysed inductively and iteratively in the following steps, as suggested by Stapley et al. (2022):

1. Each interview was summarised in a case report of approximately one to three pages.
2. Based on how interviewees discussed external reporting, the interviews were initially grouped into a set of preliminary categories.
3. The summaries, and where necessary the full interview transcripts, were then re-examined group by group in order to identify common patterns among respondents within each category and to distinguish these from patterns observed in other categories.
4. Cases that appeared to align more closely with another category were subsequently reassigned.
5. Shared characteristics were then developed for each group. These characteristics centred on the forms of misconduct that are of primary concern to the interviewees, the motivations that guide their decisions about whether to report, the extent to which external reporting is regarded as a legitimate option, and the nature of the respondents' relationship with the party organisation.
6. the respondents' level of engagement within the party, their experiences of misconduct, their views on external reporting, and the nature of their relationship with the party organisation.
7. To strengthen internal consistency, all cases were reviewed to ensure that respondents assigned to the same group exhibited the defining characteristics of that category. Where particular characteristics were present to a lesser extent, this was explicitly noted.
8. Optimal cases were identified for each emerging ideal type.
9. Preliminary labels were assigned to the groups, and detailed descriptions of the ideal types were developed.
10. As a reliability check, Microsoft Copilot was provided with the ideal-type descriptions and case summaries and asked to assess the correspondence between cases and categories.

11. In light of weaknesses identified through the Copilot reliability assessment, we re-read relevant parts of some of the interviews, revised the ideal-type descriptions and case summaries, and changed the categorisation of six of cases (R11; R24; R26; R28; R31; R33).

The principal advantage of this analytical approach is its ability to capture the broader context within which reporting decisions are made. Rather than limiting the analysis to respondents' explicit statements about misconduct reporting, it allows us to draw on our overall interpretation of each interview. The approach enables us to take into account who the interviewees are as political actors—including their political experience, position within the party, and their current relationship with and attitudes towards the organisation—the particular forms of misconduct that concern them, and their own experiences of misconduct within the party. By incorporating these contextual dimensions, ideal-type analysis facilitates the identification of distinctive combinations of orientations towards reporting and characteristics of political representatives. Such configurations would have been difficult to capture through thematic analysis alone (Stapley et al. 2022).

We are confident that the ideal types identified in this study represent distinct ways of approaching the reporting of intra-organisational misconduct. At the same time, the degree to which individual cases correspond to the defining features of a given ideal type varies and respondents frequently exhibit characteristics associated with more than one ideal type. This is to be expected, though, given that ideal types are deliberately stylised theoretical constructs designed to impose analytical order on the complexity and inconsistency of empirical reality. Real people rarely hold a single, coherent orientation towards external reporting. Rather, they often draw simultaneously on multiple, and sometimes conflicting, ways of thinking. Consequently, assigning respondents to one ideal type rather than another is not always straightforward from an empirical perspective.

Moreover, the use of semi-structured interviews meant that not all topics were explored to the same depth across interviews. It therefore remains unclear in some cases whether a particular line of reasoning is absent because the respondent does not endorse it, or simply because constraints of time and interview dynamics left limited opportunity to explore that aspect of the issue in greater detail.

Nevertheless, each interviewee is assigned exclusively to a single ideal type based on overall correspondence. This approach helps to ensure that the ideal types remain closely anchored in the empirical material. Rather than being constructed around exceptional cases, the defining characteristics of the ideal types capture the common core of the interview data and represent the minimum set of attributes that nearly all members of each category have in common.

A further strength of this analytical approach to assign each respondent to one single category lies in its ability to illuminate the relationships between the ideal types and to clarify the distinctions among them. Exploring points of similarity and overlaps helps to identify the defining characteristics that ultimately set the ideal types apart and justify their analytical separation (see "Comparisons between ideal types" for further discussion).

Results

A striking pattern across the interviews is the widespread reluctance to report misconduct externally, a finding that aligns with previous research (Niklasson et al. 2024; Dawson 2026). Across all ideal types, respondents consistently maintain that misconduct should first be addressed through internal party channels. Direct recourse to external reporting is simply not acceptable and interviewees frequently describe how those who circumvent established internal processes risk marginalisation or exclusion: "Then you're probably a bit more screwed, because then you're selling out the party. You haven't given them a chance to make things right" (R23).

Caution extends to internal reporting as well. Misconduct is commonly viewed as an issue best handled informally through trusted personal networks rather than through formally prescribed procedures. While interviewees frequently describe a formal reporting hierarchy, according to which concerns should be escalated from the local to the regional and ultimately the national level (R36), their experiences reveal that this structure is often bypassed in practice. Instead, reporting decisions are shaped by perceptions of trust, discretion, and personal reliability. Consequently, party members tend to approach individuals with whom they have established relationships rather than those who formally hold responsibility for receiving and investigating complaints (R23).

For respondents operating at the local level, the national organisation often appears remote and detached from local party life. As a result, a widely shared expectation is that local concerns should remain local. Escalating misconduct beyond the immediate organisational context is therefore often viewed as unnecessary or even undesirable:

> I think it's just a pride thing. In terms of values. That you should be able to handle yourself in relation to them. It will be a failure if the central level must step in and solve something. When the central level steps in, you know that things have really messed up. You should be able to handle most things locally (R34).

Notably, the formal whistleblowing channels established by some parties are not particularly salient in the interview material unless respondents are explicitly asked about them. Some interviewees are aware of their existence and know that they have been used, particularly in the context of the #*MeToo* movement (R4). Nevertheless, none describe such channels as a central feature of the party's internal practices for addressing misconduct. They appear largely peripheral to respondents' accounts of how concerns are actually raised and handled within party organisations. In some cases, interviewees also express scepticism towards these mechanisms. Their concerns centre on the possibility to remain anonymous and the one-directional nature of the reporting process, which they believe can make it difficult to verify allegations (R33).

Only once internal reporting options have been exhausted do some respondents consider escalating concerns beyond the party organisation. The five ideal types presented in the analysis below represent distinct ways in which party members approach and make sense of this dilemma: the Institutionalists, the Responsible Critics, the Faction Fighters, the Conditional Critics, and the Disillusioned. The respondent numbers provided in parenthesis after the headings indicate membership of the respective ideal type. The underlined respondent denotes the optimal case for the ideal type and respondents shown in bold represent

cases that closely conform to its central characteristics. Borderline cases are marked by non-bold respondent numbers, and their partial divergence from the ideal type is discussed in the text.

The Institutionalists (R11; **R15**; R18; **R19**; **R20**; **R21**; **R22**; R31)

Institutionalists are only actively engaged in the party to a limited or modest degree. This means that they spend maximum 10-15 hours per week on political work (except for R18, who is engaged "all her working hours"), even though they may have been party members for more than 50 years. They hold positions in specialized municipal boards, nominating committees, municipally owned companies and foundations, or the like, but there are also those who hold a central position in the party locally (R15; R18).

Institutionalists do not necessarily have any strong personal experiences of serious party related misconduct, but this does not mean that they are completely unaware of, or unaffected by misconduct taking place in the party. However, they do not feel that they have ever been systematically and personally targeted themselves. The kind of misconduct that they have primarily observed is that on the individual level; party members who abuse their power or employ domination techniques, such as discrediting, silencing, and harassment of others.

Nevertheless, Institutionalists find it difficult to envisage circumstances under which they would report misconduct externally, particularly to the media: "Leaks are a dangerous thing. They're not good for the party. You keep things in-house. They [leaks] feel disloyal somehow" (R11). Even criminal wrongdoing committed by a party member does not necessarily trigger a willingness to turn to outside actors (R15), although such situations constitute the one context in which they at least consider involving actors beyond the party organisation. Respondent 31 stands out as an exception insofar as he describes having seriously contemplated external reporting in relation to organisational misconduct once. Yet, he ultimately decided against it, based on concerns that largely mirror those of other Institutionalists.

The reason Institutionalists refrain from external reporting is that they perceive a responsibility to protect the organisation and, by extension, to some degree, themselves. Partly, because they regard the ideals and political objectives the organisation seeks to advance as too important to jeopardise through negative publicity. External reporting may undermine public support for the party and thereby reduce its capacity to realise the political goals that the interviewee values: "I think I'd probably have felt that the party's policies were too important, and that we were too close to not making it [into the municipal council] to risk that kind of negative publicity" (R21). Partly, because harming the party carries personal risks. Such action may adversely affect the interviewee's own political career, either because electoral support for the organisation declines, or because party leaders, fellow members, or party supporters view external reporting as a betrayal and respond accordingly: "in that situation, your career is over" (R18).

Not all Institutionalists articulate each of these concerns. What unites them, however, is a perceived need to protect the party, which is reflected in a generally accommodating stance towards the organisation. Institutionalists tend to view party membership as entailing a duty to avoid actions that might damage the organisation, and external reporting is regarded as incompatible with that duty.

Misconduct or disagreements should instead be handled internally – "Yes, isn't that [the party] the only place where you can solve it [the problem] if disputes should arise?" (R15) – and Institutionalists generally trust in their own and the party's ability to solve any problems that may arise: "Roll up your sleeves and let's

do it together!" (R22). By being persistent and engaging their fellow party members, they are confident that the party will clear up the misconduct and improve. "People are often receptive to criticism when it's delivered fairly" (R20).

Respondent 11 may not fully share the optimism that the party is capable of resolving internal democracy problems, but he still takes for granted that such issues ought to be handled internally and through collective effort. Drawing on a sporting analogy, he argues that party members should approach these challenges in the same way as a football team: "You're a team, and not just in one sense. You should be like a football club. You're loyal to each other and you fight for each other."

If internal problems ultimately remain unresolved, Institutionalists typically adopt coping strategies that enable them to remain active within the party. These strategies may involve distancing themselves from particular individuals (R22) and investing instead in relationships and forms of cooperation that make continued engagement possible (R21). Their accounts further suggest a considerable degree of tolerance towards organisational shortcomings. Failures to address misconduct are frequently rationalised as exceptions rather than symptoms of systemic problems, or portrayed as insufficiently serious to warrant stronger action (R31).

If this group would find that they have reached a dead end and lose faith in the party and its politics, they would simply resign their membership and leave quietly, without making any fuss. Their sense of loyalty to the party reaches beyond the formal membership.

The Responsible Critics (R1; R7; R12; R13; R25; R30)

Responsible Critics are characterised by a strong ideological commitment. The kind of misconduct that they focus on the most is therefore when the party diverges from what they believe is the agreed political path - the direction mapped out in the party programme and "the very soul of the party" (R12). Upon such ideological misconduct, Responsible Critics view it as their duty to defend themselves, as well as party members and the voters, whom they claim would otherwise be deceived by the party. They therefore speak up—report—in internal party deliberations and in the public sphere to right the party ship by pointing out that this is not the party line "according to our last congress. This is not what we state in the party programme" (R7). External reporting is a natural response to the party's problems (R25).

The sense of obligation to report is partially developed by the Responsible Critics themselves, for example, through long-standing party memberships (at least ten years). "When you've been a member for as long as I have, I think you've earned the right to have a say about where the party's heading" (R12). Others have extensive experiences of political work (at least 20 hours per week), or merely through the enthusiasm and self-confidence of youth (R7). These dispositions contribute to Responsible Critics' feeling that silently accepting decisions that are inconsistent with the party programme would be letting themselves down: "If I just fall into line, I'd be selling myself out. I'm not going to do that" (R12). For this group, politics is deeply personal (R1).

However, the obligation to act is typically not merely self-imposed; it also arises in response to perceived external expectations. Responsible Critics describe being approached by party members and voters who share their ideological convictions and who express concerns about the party's position on specific issues. These individuals seek to ascertain whether the Responsible Critic supports the party line and, if not, why

they have not publicly voiced their dissent. Even when such expectations are not made explicit, Responsible Critics nevertheless feel compelled to report externally in order to justify themselves in the eyes of those who have placed their trust in them. By doing so, they hope to nuance the political debate, rally the likeminded troops, and show party members and the public what the party really stands for (R7; R25; R30).

Responsible Critics do not just think of themselves as responsible in the sense that they protect the interests of many; they also emphasize the importance of reporting externally in a responsible manner. This implies not expressing too sharp criticism (R25), but being reasonable and constructive (R1; R30). "[You] express some kind of praise or loyalty to the party, but also try to nuance [the political debate]" (R30). This form of reporting may even be a way of protecting the party from greater harm by anticipating others who might otherwise have expressed criticism in a less constructive way (R1). Responsible external reporting also entails not publicly criticizing the party line too often (R12; R30). "Once every six months isn't that much, in my view /…/ especially when it's such an important and central issue, and one that I'm frequently asked about" (R30).

Reporting externally about ideological party misconduct is thus something that Responsible Critics perceive as a duty, which they may even be prepared to carry out openly—opposed to anonymously—and without the support of others (R1; R12; R30), in spite of the severe scoldings this may result in from the party leadership. You take one for the team, or is sometimes even sacrificed for the team (R1).

They are more hesitant, however, to report misconduct related to individual or organizational misconduct externally (R1; R7; R25; R30). Respondent 7 explains that since accusations about individual misconduct are difficult for the public to confirm, they just become speculations and "[n]othing is improved or solved by people reading speculations on Twitter". Respondent 12 claims, however, that he is willing to report externally on organisational misconduct that violate ethical rules.

At least two Responsible Critics (R12; R30) left their party less than three years after the interview. Resignation is not the defining characteristic of this group, however. Rather, they are distinguished by their determination to fight for their cause and by their willingness to draw on the legitimacy they believe their position within the party affords them in order to voice criticism publicly and, in their view, save the party from itself while remaining politically active. The fact that some of them later exit the party when they feel that they can no longer support the party line and still keep their heads high (R30) is not surprising. After all, some fights are lost.

Respondent 13 differs somewhat from the other Responsible Critics in that she conceptualises external reporting of ideological misconduct less as an obligation and more as a "democratic right". One possible reason is that she does not identify as a politician, even though she serves on the municipal council and is engaged in political work on a near full-time basis. For her, the label *politician* is primarily associated with actors at the national level. Public criticism of ideological misconduct is therefore most readily justified when directed at national party representatives and undertaken collectively in defence of the interests of her local electorate. Compared with the other Responsible Critics, her stance is noticeably more cautious, perhaps reflecting a somewhat lower level of political confidence and self-assurance.

The Faction Fighters (**R4;** R24**;** R26**; R28;** R29**; R34**)

Faction Fighters are deeply embedded within the party organisation, both through their social networks and their political activities. Their political engagement may have begun already in the party's youth wing, or they have developed strong ties to the organisation at an early stage through family members and close friends. Respondent 24 differs somewhat from this pattern, having joined the party relatively recently. Despite this, he has quickly become actively involved in local party affairs and, within five years, has attained a level of organisational integration comparable to that of the other Faction Fighters.

Except for Respondent 29, Faction Fighters tend to feel a strong sense of loyalty and responsibility towards the party: "In many ways, I'm fiercely loyal to the party", Respondent 34 declares. They are not always satisfied with the conduct of individual party members or factions, however. The forms of wrongdoing they focus on in the interviews primarily concern individuals, or groups of individuals who engage in misconduct, for example by harassing, stalking, or even sexually assaulting fellow party members, or by engaging in financial crime, nepotistic practices, the spread of malicious rumours, or attempts to capture the organisation through illegitimate means.

Having witnessed or experienced these forms of individual wrongdoing first-hand, Faction Fighters demonstrate a strong willingness to report them externally, although Respondent 26 is clearly more hesitant to do so. Overall, Faction Fighters perceive such action not as disloyalty, but as a way of protecting the party by exposing problems that might otherwise remain concealed and by removing individuals whose conduct undermines the organisation—or by defending those who are unfairly targeted by others. From this perspective, those responsible for serious individual misconduct should not occupy positions of influence within the party: "Because I genuinely don't think perpetrators have any place in our party" (R34).

Faction Fighters further contend that members of the public are entitled to know about the conduct of party members who engage in serious wrongdoing (R4; R26; R34). While they acknowledge that external reporting may damage the party's reputation, they tend to draw a clear distinction between the party as an organisation and the individuals responsible for misconduct. In their view, responsibility for such actions rests with the perpetrators themselves, and their misconduct should not be allowed to tarnish the party as a whole.

While Faction Fighters are willing to report certain forms of misconduct externally, they are considerably more reluctant to do so when the issue concerns political disagreements (R24; R26). A recurring theme in their accounts is the need to maintain ideological unity in public. Respondent 24 captures this view succinctly, insisting that "we're in agreement once we leave the meeting room", irrespective of any disagreements expressed internally. Publicly challenging collective decisions after they have been made is therefore viewed as illegitimate. Rather than airing disagreements externally, Respondent 4 maintains that leaving the party would in itself constitute "statement enough".

Something worth noting is that the Faction Fighter approach—external reporting of individual wrongdoing, aimed at preventing particular individuals or factions from advancing to influential organisational positions—is mentioned repeatedly in our interviews, but not necessarily by respondents who are Faction Fighters themselves (R2; R14; R16; R17; R18). Respondents typically describe this practice as behaviour they observe among other party members and view critically. In their accounts, such reporting is often interpreted as a strategic and self-interested tactic, deployed to undermine political competitors who pose a

threat to one's own career ambitions or to candidates aligned with rival groups within the party. That this kind of external reporting really takes place is confirmed by Bågenholm et al. (2025), who observe that media leaks concerning party related misconduct increase during nomination periods, which is exactly the time when Faction Fighters are the most likely to act: when the contest for control of the organisation gains momentum.

It is important to note, however, that Faction Fighters do not speak of their use of external reporting of individual misconduct as a means of advancing their own careers or those of members of their faction. Rather, they present such reporting as serving the interests of the party as a whole.

The Conditional Critics (R9; R10; R14; R16; R23; R31; R33; R35; R36)

Conditional Critics vary in their levels of party activity and involvement in party networks. What unites them is their assertion that they would report party-related wrongdoing to external actors under certain circumstances. One such circumstance would be the presence of severe and persistent organisational problems, whether related to party leadership (R26; R35), financial management (R16), or the party's political direction (R35). These problems would need to have broader societal consequences, for instance by affecting the functioning of local government (R9), influencing citizens' electoral choices (R35), or causing serious harm to members of the public (R10).

In contrast, external reporting would not be considered appropriate in cases involving individual misconduct. Although R16 indicates a willingness to report such incidents as well, Conditional Critics generally regard these matters as personnel issues that should be dealt with internally:

> Quite often, it's people who are struggling a bit, and they're not helped by being thrust into the public spotlight. And it certainly doesn't do the party any favours, nor does it help with the work we've got ahead of us (R36).

A second condition for external reporting is that repeated attempts to address the misconduct through internal channels prove unsuccessful. Conditional Critics emphasise that they first seek to resolve the issue within the party. However, if they lose confidence in the party's willingness to take the matter seriously, or in its capacity to address the problem effectively, they indicate that bringing the issue to wider public attention becomes the only viable course of action. This pattern is consistent with Dawson's (2026) finding that willingness to report misconduct outside the organisation increases markedly when internal reporting mechanisms fail.

Conditional Critics recognise the substantial personal costs that external reporting may entail. This consideration is closely linked to a third condition; they typically contemplate reporting wrongdoing outside the party only once they are prepared to sever their ties with the organisation, or if the potential damage to their future standing within the party carries no or little significant weight (R16; R23). External reporting thus serves as a means of publicly distancing themselves from the party, signalling their disagreement with its actions and disassociating themselves from its conduct:

> That would really be the last resort. At that point, I'd leave the party. /…/ The party has a responsibility to look after its members, and if they don't look after me, then frankly, I don't care about them either (R35).

If Conditional Critics have not reported experienced misconduct to external actors already, this is primarily because they have not yet encountered wrongdoing that they regard as sufficiently serious to warrant such a drastic step (R35; R36). This is particularly the case given the potential personal costs of external reporting, both for themselves and for friends and colleagues within the party (R14). Alternatively, they may simply not yet have reached the point at which they are prepared to leave the party (R14).

It is worth noting that Conditional Critics display considerable variation in their willingness to engage in external reporting. At one end of the spectrum are individuals who appear highly reluctant to disclose concerns outside the party (R10), although they nevertheless maintain that they would do so under exceptional circumstances. At the other end are respondents who regard external reporting as a self-evident course of action when serious wrongdoing occurs (R16; R23). As Respondent 23 emphatically states: "[i]t's our damn responsibility to speak up when we see something wrong!"

What unites the Conditional Critics is that their silence is contingent rather than unconditional; it depends on the party meeting certain expectations regarding how it conducts itself and responds to misconduct. As Respondent 23 explains: "I'm very loyal, as long as the party behaves the way it's supposed to." Accordingly, Conditional Critics are prepared to report organisational misconduct externally if they conclude that the party has failed to uphold those expectations and no longer merits their loyalty.

The Disillusioned (R2; **R3;** R6; **R8; R17)**

The Disillusioned have experiences of being extensively engaged in political work (e.g. as full-time parliamentarians on the local or regional level, or political secretaries) and they have been so for at least ten years. Because of exposure to serious party misconduct, however, they have scaled back on their political engagement markedly and may even have given up on politics entirely, since they found themselves (or in the case of R2, people close to them) politically marginalized, or subjected to prosecution, harassment, or slander during recruitment processes. Now, they are tired, sad, and angry, and share detailed experiences during the interviews of structural problems related to party culture, work environment, and internal democratic processes.

In spite of their sometimes even traumatic experiences, this group will not report externally to the media about the problems in the party. They pocket their anger, sometimes because they still feel too strong an obligation to the party (R2; R3). Just thinking about reporting to the media causes Respondent 3 pain: "From my perspective, there was also a sense of personal grief in publicly criticizing a system that I had been part of building." He was a party member throughout most of his youth and adult life and struggles to redefine himself as somebody outside politics: "Who am I now?", he asks himself dazed. The experience, he suggests, resembles that of leaving a sect after years of membership. A similar theme emerges in Respondent 2's account. Only after leaving her position within the party did she come to recognise the extent to which the working environment had been unhealthy.

Even though the other Disillusioned do not refer to their party as a sect, they all share the image of the party as an organization that is immune (or in the case of R3, should be immune) to meaningful change from the outside world. Reporting to the media would thus not make any real difference, either because the complaint would not be taken seriously, or because the problems are too deeply ingrained into the party structure, culture, or leadership. It is thus not worth running the personal risk that media exposure would

entail (R17). Respondent 8, for example, fears that reporting the sexual harassment that he has been subjected to on two occasions would only cause ridicule. Even though one of the incidents occurred in a recruitment situation, in which Respondent 8 was being interviewed, he still worries that people might think that he—being a big man—should have been able to defend himself. Besides, the transgressions were not that grave, he reflects: "they weren't rapes", only "a hand on the crutch". He also states that those who committed the misconduct hold too powerful positions in the party for things to improve, a conclusion that other Disillusioned also draw.

The Disillusioned have thus given up. They no longer believe that the party can improve, neither with nor without their efforts. They may still remain active in the party, though. Respondent 17 clings on, more to prove people wrong about her than anything else, but she keeps to herself and has abandoned all political ambitions: "I'm happy where I am. /.../ I'll keep going as long as I can, but I have no ambitions to take on any high-profile positions." Respondent 6, who stands out within this group because he has neither been as politically active nor become as deeply resigned as the others, even enjoys political work still: "It's a bit of fun, really. You learn a thing or two, and every now and then you make a small contribution." Nevertheless, he shares the prevailing view among the Disillusioned that the party is unlikely to change.

The very fact that the Disillusioned choose to participate in the research project suggests, however, that they are not necessarily willing to let experienced party related misconduct pass without accountability completely. Two respondents (R8; R17) explicitly describe their participation in the study as a form of whistleblowing. The research interview appears to provide an alternative channel through which they can communicate their experiences in a safer, more nuanced and constructive way than in the media, while also avoiding the personal exposure associated with that reporting option. Respondent 8 reflects: "to participate in this research project is a way of reporting externally in a way that may provide some food for thought in the future".

Were a reporting mechanism available that could guarantee complete anonymity, some of the Disillusioned would thus be willing to make use of it. Even so, such a possibility appears considerably less certain than among the Conditional Critics, for whom external reporting remains a more readily accepted option.

Comparison between Ideal Types

Through our inductive analysis of the interviews, we distinguish four dimensions that together shape how party representatives understand and respond to the prospect of reporting misconduct beyond the party: the forms of misconduct that are of primary concern to the interviewees, the motivations that guide their decisions about whether to report, the extent to which external reporting is regarded as a legitimate option, and the nature of the respondents' relationship with the party organisation. The five ideal types represent different configurations of these dimensions. Their distinguishing characteristics are summarised in Table 1.

TABLE 1. CHARACTERISTICS OF EXTERNAL REPORTING IDEAL TYPES

	Institutionalists	*Responsible Critics*	*Faction Fighters*	*Conditional Critics*	*Disillusioned*

Kind of misconduct in focus	Individual	Ideological	Individual	Organizatio-nal	Individual and organizational
Motivation	Once you sign up, you are obliged to keep silent	Obligation speak up for voters and party members in a responsible way	Ridding the party of bad eggs is a way of saving the party	Reporting as a last resort to reveal severe problems and distance yourself from the party	Reporting would not make any difference, but only entail personal risk
External reporting	No	Yes, about ideological misconduct.	Yes, about individual misconduct.	Yes, about organization-nal miscon-duct.	No
Relationship to party	Accomodating	Torn/ Hopefull	Controlling	Demanding	Resigned
Respondents	11; **15;** 18; **19**; **20**; **21**; **22**; 31	**1**; **7**; **12**; 13; **25**; **30**	**4**; 24; 26; **28**; 29; **34**	**9**; **10**; 14; 16; **23**; 31; 33; **35**; **36**	2; **3;** 6; **8**; **17**

Note: Each respondent is assigned exclusively to a single category. Borderline cases are marked by non-bold respondent numbers, while respondents shown in bold represent cases that closely conform to the central characteristics of the ideal type. The underlined respondent denotes the optimal case.

One analytical concern is whether the Institutionalists and the Disillusioned are best understood as two distinct ideal types, or if they represent the same group at different stages of a political life cycle. It is plausible that some Institutionalists may become Disillusioned over time if they are exposed to serious misconduct within the party or come to perceive the organisation as less responsive to internal problems than they initially expected.

The reason why we perceive these as two distinct ideal types is because their considerations and motivations to refrain from reporting are quite different. Whereas the Institutionalists take for granted that reporting is unnecessary, since the misconduct will be dealt with internally, the Disillusioned give the party no such credit. Their conviction is instead that the party is a hopeless case—that it will not or cannot improve—and that nothing they do, including reporting externally, will make a difference.

The distinction between these two ideal types thus remains analytically useful; although movement between them is conceivable over time, they represent distinct orientations towards the party in the present. Moreover, becoming Disillusioned is not the only possible trajectory for Institutionalists. Some may instead evolve into Conditional Critics, retaining a belief in the party's capacity for improvement while simultaneously becoming more willing to consider external reporting under certain circumstances.

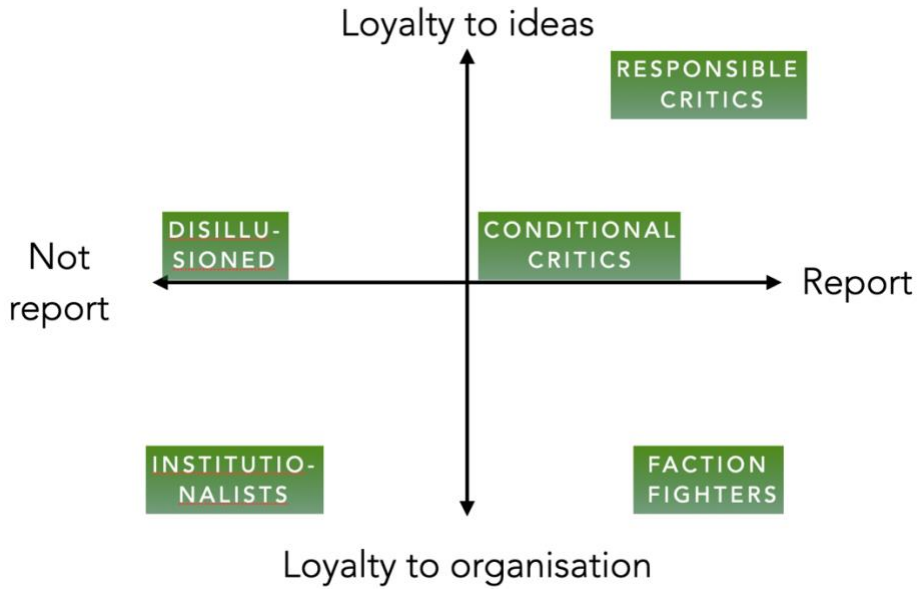
Another challenge lies in distinguishing Conditional Critics from other ideal types, particularly the Institutionalists. Indeed, the Conditional Critics constitute the most internally diverse of the five ideal types. Consequently, the boundary between those Conditional Critics who maintain that, in the most extreme circumstances, they would reluctantly consider reporting very serious misconduct externally and those Institutionalists who might contemplate external reporting in cases involving clear criminal wrongdoing is a fine one, at least with regard to the dimension of external reporting.

The two ideal types nevertheless differ in theoretically important ways, most notably in the kinds of misconduct that command their attention. Institutionalists tend to downplay the problems they encounter within the party, interpreting them primarily as the result of individuals behaving inappropriately. Conditional Critics, by contrast, view the misconduct they have experienced as more serious in nature and are considerably more likely to describe it as systemic, structural, or indicative of broader organisational

shortcomings. This difference ultimately provides the strongest basis for distinguishing between the two ideal types.

There are also important similarities across the ideal types. Loyalty, for example, emerges as a recurring theme in all groups. Although they reach different conclusions regarding whether to report misconduct externally, they all relate to two underlying questions that guide their positioning on the dimensions: To what extent does the party and other actors command their loyalty and what does that loyalty entail?

GRAPH 1. IDEAL TYPES AND LOYALTY



Concluding Discussion

The purpose of this paper is to explore the different approaches that party representatives adopt towards reporting intra-organisational misconduct and to identify the characteristics that distinguish these orientations. Our findings confirm the relevance of reporting considerations identified in previous research. The theoretical perspectives previously employed to explain reporting behaviour are likewise clearly applicable to our data. The contribution of this study therefore lies neither in testing individual variables nor in evaluating competing theories, but in the delineation of five ideal types that capture the complexity of insiders' considerations: the *Institutionalists,* the *Responsible Critics,* the *Faction Fighters,* the *Conditional Critics,* and the *Disillusioned*. These ideal types vary in terms of the forms of misconduct that attract their attention, the motivations that guide decisions about reporting, the perceived legitimacy of external reporting, and their broader relationship with the party organisation.

We contend that the distribution of these orientations within an organisation constitute an important aspect of organisational culture as it sheds light on an organisation's capacity to recognise, address, and ultimately resist corruption and other forms of systemic organisational failure. It is therefore noteworthy that two of the ideal types identified, the Institutionalists and the Disillusioned, are generally unwilling to report intra-organisational misconduct externally, except perhaps in cases involving criminal offences.

At the same time, it is important to recognise that participation in this research project may itself constitute a form of external reporting. In the case of the Institutionalists, we find little evidence that this is their motivation for participating; they rarely describe concerns that they wish to bring to wider attention. For some of the Disillusioned, however, participation clearly serves such a purpose, as discussed above.

Participation in the study may also provide an alternative outlet for highly dissatisfied Conditional Critics. For these respondents, the interview can represent a way of communicating knowledge about misconduct within the party before they are prepared to take the more consequential step of leaving the organisation. The concerns they raise may be serious and frustrating, yet not sufficiently severe to justify abandoning political engagement altogether. Under such circumstances, participation in the research interview may be understood as an attempt to address perceived problems through a different channel, allowing respondents to voice their concerns while remaining within the party organisation.

Unlike the Disillusioned, however, no Conditional Critic explicitly states that participation in the research project serves as a means of reporting misconduct. Nevertheless, there are indications that this may be the case in at least some instances. Respondent 33, for example, explains that she has reported poor working conditions within the party at the local level to the district organisation, but without receiving any meaningful response. Although she would like to pursue the matter further, she remains uncertain about how to do so. Her participation in the research project may therefore represent an attempt to explore an alternative avenue through which these concerns can be voiced. A similar interpretation may apply to Respondent 14. Having written a full, though unpublished, manuscript detailing the misconduct he claims to have experienced within the party, he likewise appears to be searching for possible channels through which to communicate these experiences beyond the organisation.

It is therefore important to emphasise that our ideal types are developed in relation to a very specific form of external reporting, namely reporting to the media. They should not be assumed to apply equally to other forms of external disclosure in which concerns can be raised without the same risk of amplification, sensationalisation, or exposure of the source's identity. Future research could therefore examine in greater depth how the ideal types identified here understand and evaluate different forms of external reporting, and whether their attitudes vary depending on the reporting channel in question.

For an initial typology of approaches to external reporting, however, focusing primarily on media reporting constitutes a reasonable delimitation. Not only is media disclosure the form of external reporting that receives the greatest attention in the literature on whistleblowing and leaks, but it is also a reporting channel of particular relevance in political organisations. Reporting through the media has the potential to shape public perceptions, influence political careers, and affect organisational legitimacy in ways that few other forms of external disclosure can. Consequently, media reporting represents a particularly salient context in which to examine how insiders navigate the dilemmas associated with exposing intra-organisational misconduct.

Another limitation relates to the interview method itself. Previous research identifies revenge as a potential motive for reporting misconduct externally (reference). Elements of such reasoning are also discernible in our material. In some cases, the Conditional Critics' preference for reporting only after leaving the party appears to be motivated, at least in part, by a desire for retribution. At that point, concern for the party's wellbeing may give way to a sense that the organisation no longer deserves protection. Respondent 10 says:

> [I]n that situation, I probably wouldn't be worried about harming the party in that way /…/ because I, or someone else, had been treated so badly. At that point, I wouldn't feel any loyalty to protect the party.

Still, it is possible that our data underestimate the prevalence of more overtly vindictive forms of external reporting. Respondents may be reluctant to acknowledge motives such as revenge in a research interview, given the negative connotations associated with such behaviour. Consequently, social desirability bias may lead some interviewees to present their reporting decisions in more principled or altruistic terms than would be the case in practice.

Despite these limitations, we are convinced that the ideal types capture genuinely existing orientations towards external reporting. We also consider it likely that similar orientations can be found in other types of organisations. Although the ideologies that underpin such organisations may differ from those of political parties, parties are by no means unique in possessing a distinctive organisational identity, a shared set of values, and collectively pursued goals. We expect there to be individuals who resemble the Responsible Critics in feeling a duty to defend and uphold those commitments in other organisational settings as well. Nor are the Faction Fighters likely to be unique to political parties. The strategic use of external reporting as a means of influencing organisational control probably exists in a variety of organisations.

It is certainly possible that additional ideal types exist in other organisational settings. One example might be individuals who bypass internal channels altogether and report directly to external actors without first attempting to bring about change from within the organisation. Such an orientation is absent from our material and is difficult to envisage in the context of political parties, given the strong sense of loyalty that many politicians feel towards their organisation. This approach also appears to be relatively uncommon in other organisational contexts (Near & Miceli 1985). Nevertheless, there are reasons to expect it to be more likely outside party politics. Future research in other organisational settings may well identify additional orientations that are absent from the political context examined here.

Furthermore, the distribution of these different orientations may vary across organisational settings, including among political parties. This is not a question that we seek to address in the present study, since the size and composition of our sample does not allow us to relate experiences or perceptions systematically to specific party organisations. Even so, the analysis reveals no clear indications of such patterns. On the contrary, respondents from the same party often express markedly different views regarding party culture and the organisation's capacity to address complaints and misconduct. This suggests that immediate organisational contexts and individual experiences may matter more than differences between parties.

However, future research could examine whether certain ideal types are more prevalent in some parties than in others, and how such patterns vary across organisational levels and national contexts. Such work could provide new insights into a largely unexplored dimension of party organisational culture. In particular, it may enhance our understanding of how parties respond to misconduct and internal dissent, how internal power struggles are expressed, and how party organisations evolve (or not) over time.

Overall, this study contributes a novel way of conceptualising reporting considerations that is relevant to public administration scholarship, whistleblowing research, and party studies. The ideal types identified in the analysis enable future research to take a more systematic approach to describing, comparing, and assessing the implications of different orientations towards external reporting among organisational

members. They likewise provide a foundation for the study of reporting cultures across organisational contexts. Developing such knowledge is important for understanding how public institutions' capacity for self-correction, accountability, and democratic resilience.

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Appendix 1: List of interviews

Respondent 1: Woman, the Liberals
Respondent 2: Woman, the Social Democratic Party (former member)
Respondent 3: Man, the Social Democratic Party (former member)
Respondent 4: Man, the Social Democratic Party
Respondent 5: Cancelled
Respondent 6: Man, the Moderate Party
Respondent 7: Man, the Liberals
Respondent 8: Man, the Left Party
Respondent 9: Man, the Liberals
Respondent 10: Man, the Sweden Democrats
Respondent 11: Man, the Sweden Democrats
Respondent 12: Man, the Liberals
Respondent 13: Woman, the Left Party
Respondent 14: Man, the Liberals
Respondent 15: Woman, the Moderate Party
Respondent 16: Man, the Centre Party
Respondent 17: Woman, the Moderate Party
Respondent 18: Woman, the Sweden Democrats
Respondent 19: Woman, the Left Party
Respondent 20: Man, the Left Party
Respondent 21: Woman, the Green Party
Respondent 22: Woman, the Green Party
Respondent 23: Woman, the Social Democrats
Respondent 24: Man, the Social Democrats (former member)
Respondent 25: Woman, the Liberals
Respondent 26: Man, the Social Democrats (former member)
Respondent 27: Cancelled
Respondent 28: Man, the Social Democrats (former member)
Respondent 29: Woman, the Social Democrats (former member)
Respondent 30: Man, the Christian Democrats
Respondent 31: Man, the Moderate Party
Respondent 32: Man, Independent who was interviewed to provide an outside perspective. Not included in the analysis.
Respondent 33: Woman, the Centre Party
Respondent 34: Man, the Social Democrats
Respondent 35: Woman, the Social Democrats
Respondent 36: Man, the Left Party

TABLE A1. SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS

Party	*Women*	*Men*	*All*
Social Democrats	4	6	10
Liberals	2	4	6
Left Party	2	3	5
Moderate Party	2	2	4
Sweden Democrats	1	2	3
Centre Party	1	1	2
Green Party	2	0	2
Christian Democrats	0	1	1
All (n)	14	19	33
(%)	42	58	100