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European Union Voting Cohesion in the United Nations General Assembly

The Case of Eastern Enlargement

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Abstract

In European Union Common Foreign and Security Policy a development towards increasing cooperation and coordination in foreign policy matters can be observed. However, when in 2004 and 2007 a great number of new member states joined the Union, fears of how this would prevent the EU from further 'speaking with one voice' arose. This research project aims at analysing voting cohesion in the United Nations General Assembly after enlargement, based on the voting records of UN resolutions voted upon between 2004 and 2009. By considering various International Relations approaches a theoretical background will be given, serving to predict and explain possible variations and changes over time. The method employed for that is the so-called 'Agreement Index' in order to investigate the temporal development and level of cohesion. What is the development of voting cohesion among the EU member states, in particular with the joining of 'new' members? Has voting cohesion declined with enlargement? Can we indeed observe an increase in cohesion after enlargement, that is to say, a change between the moment of access of the new member states and more recent moments in time? This research shows that in general EU voting cohesion among the EU member states is high, but that no support can be given to the hypotheses that with enlargement voting cohesion in the UNGA declines and that it recovers or simply increases after some time (again) as the consequence of coordination pressures.

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Introduction

General

“The real choice therefore is not whether we play a global role, but how we play that role. To defend our interests and values, and to meet our responsibilities in a consistently effective manner, demands that we act together. To put it bluntly, Europe can choose to speak with a single voice, or Europe can decide not to be heard.”

Javier Solana, 2004

Already with the emergence of European Union (EU) cooperation in political matters in 1970 the first steps were taken to achieve common positions under European Political Cooperation (EPC). Further development and increasing cooperation from 1970 onwards brought EPC from a status outside the framework of the Community Treaties to being recognised in the Single European Act (SEA), where it was accorded its own section. Since the Treaty of Maastricht, Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) has been institutionalised ever more, and the cooperation and coordination has been taken to the next level. To start with, Article 24 TEU sets out that, “based on the development of mutual political solidarity among member states, the identification of questions of general interest and the achievement of an ever-increasing degree of convergence of member state actions”, “the Union shall conduct, define and implement a common foreign and security policy. While the EU member states naturally remain sovereign actors, being capable and entitled to follow their own national foreign policies and preferences, the EU framework puts forward certain expectations as to how to act in international forums.

One of these international forums is the United Nations (UN) and - for the purpose of this study - in particular the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). Even though being sovereign, each of the 27 nation-states is expected to act as “strategic agent of the EU” (Kissack, 2007, pp. 4-5) - an aspect that is further coined in Article 34 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU), possibly the legal basis that is most relevant in this study: “Member States shall coordinate their action in international organisations and at international conferences. They shall uphold the common positions in such forums” (Article 34 TEU). This upholding of common positions in international forums and coordinating action refer to what Solana means with ‘speaking with a single voice’. Further articles referring to the same topic point at goals and aims of this understanding, e.g. “[promoting] the complementarity and efficiency of their [the member states’] action”, or “promoting social and territorial cohesion”¹ (Articles 210 & 14 TFEU). The importance attached and perceived can be seen when considering that the European Union with the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009 has introduced the office of a High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, which is to further “ensure consistency the Union’s external action” (Article 21 TEU)

This already being difficult and controversial among the EU-15, the 2004 10+2 enlargement posed new challenges to the unity of the EU, thereby not only referring to the simple increase in the number of members. Clearly, a greater diversity of views imposes more limits on the positions to coordinate, and may trigger breakdown or gridlock in the EU’s decision-making process (Moravcsik & Vachudova², 2003). Further challenges to consider revolve around the problem of collective identity (Nugent, 2006).

¹ Article 14 TFEU refers to the economic dimension, however, in the case of arguing in favour of more coordination the arguments will be the same whether considering economic or foreign policy issues.

² Moravcsik and Vachudova (2003) refer to EU legislative politics in general. I consider their argumentation to be of relevance in the field of European Union foreign policy as well, as – even though the role of enforcement and obligation are certainly different - the basic choice the states face stays the same: agree to a common position or defect. In any case “adopting a common international EU policy is analogous to adopting a common

In the mid-1990s the new enlargements began to show on the horizon, with the EU-15 embracing the possibility to “make reference to ‘the necessary peace and political stability of the European continent and the adjoining regions’, what also implies greater security [...] and the possibility to define agreements and stable alliances with the new states” (Folguera, 2009, p. 692). Independent foreign policy initiatives by some accession states of 2004 and 2007³ have nevertheless caused some unease among the EU-15 member states, relentlessly demonstrating the troubles of EU foreign policy coordination (Johansson-Nogués, 2004). In particular, it gave room for sceptics to linger on a possible West-East division, or to put it in Donald Rumsfeld’s words: into suggesting a clear division between ‘old’ and ‘new’ member states (Johansson-Nogués, 2004). For the aims of the European Union the enlargements of the 21st century, hence, have posed a number of difficulties, which cannot be ignored easily. The coordination of foreign policy matters is a complex issue; however, it becomes most obvious in instances in which the EU member states are asked to give their opinion on such a matter. In the UNGA all different types of foreign policy areas are discussed, and, often, put to a vote, which gives the opportunity to study EU unity in this institutional body. Accordingly, EU unity will be considered along the lines of voting cohesion on UN resolutions in the UNGA in this research.

Research question

As discussed above the general problem revolves around determining whether the EU member states cooperate in international affairs, or CFSP, to such an extent that one could label them as ‘speaking with a single voice’. With a special focus on the assumed distinction between ‘old’ and ‘new’ member states, and aware of the fact that the topic needs to be refined, in order to provide a coherent and structured analysis, the term EU cooperation has been narrowed down to voting cohesion within the United Nations General Assembly. The main reason to do so obviously is the relation between foreign policy matters and the UNGA, the body being the “only forum in which the US and the member states of the EU, among others, deliberate and vote on a regular basis on a broad range of issues concerning the international community” (Voeten, 2000, pp. 185, 186). Furthermore the UNGA comprises both all EU member states and the questions asked in the voting, if employed, are universal, that is to say, equal for all members, and each member has the same voting power to exercise, which makes direct comparison possible. This is opposed to the UN Security Council (UNSC) in which of the EU states only the United Kingdom (UK) and France hold permanent seats.

Different studies have previously tried to put the voting behaviour of the CEECs into the context of foreign policy coordination within the EU prior to enlargement (European Union, 2004; Johansson-Nogués, 2004, 2006; Luif, 2003). The question that still has to be asked, however, is whether further differences and developments after joining the Union can be attested. Consequently, the focus of this research will be on the period after the Eastern enlargement of 2004, therefore providing the basis for analysing temporal differences in voting cohesion between the EU-15 and the accession states: What is the development of EU voting cohesion among the member states within the UN General Assembly after the Eastern enlargements? This main research question can then be subdivided into different aspects and questions such as the following. Did voting cohesion decline with enlargement? And what is the further development of voting cohesion among the EU member states? Can we observe an increase in cohesion after enlargement, that is to say, a change between the time of accessing the Union and more recent moments in time (2004-2009)?

The research question on the first sight thus is a descriptive question, aiming at describing facts, in this case the temporal development of the level of voting cohesion in a specified period of time. But at the same time, it can be considered relational, as it is designed to look at the relationships between two or more variables. What I intend to study here, is to a certain extent the relationship between duration of official membership, the number of members and voting cohesion. In addition to the key research question, a number of other considerations can be put forward. How can we explain possible

internal EU policy: it requires that member states weigh the potential benefits of a common policy against the potential costs of a policy that is not to their liking” (Frieden, 2004, p. 262).

³ Johansson-Nogués (2004) in particular refers to the reaction of some CEECs to the policy on Iraq, in which “notably Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary [showed] active support for the US line” (2004, p. 67).

differences between the states? Does voting cohesion vary across issue areas, and if so, how? These sub-questions are of an explanatory nature, aiming at explaining the causes for why there might be (or might not be) a relationship in the first place. It has to be emphasised, however, that it will not be subject of this project to seek causal relationships or causality statistically. Rather, the term “explaining” is used with reference to the more common denotation, in describing possible reasons, motives and consequences.

In the following, first existing research concerned with similar topics will be discussed, before passing to the theoretical approaches in International Relations Theory. Together with literature on the case of the European Union in particular these provide the basis for formulating hypotheses, which will be tested later. A quantitative analysis of voting records in the UNGA from 2004 to 2009 serves as ground for interpretation and conclusion.

Literature Review

This thesis touches upon a number of existing studies in the same field. In a broader perspective it is concerned with foreign policy coordination in general, making it a subject of International Relations (IR). More specifically, what is about to be analysed is set in the field of European Integration, as well, drawing upon its own share of specialised literature. As far as existing research in terms of EU member state voting cohesion in international institutions or bodies is concerned, a great number of studies so far has intended to establish knowledge about whether or not the EU – to come back to the initial formulation – speaks with a single voice (e.g. Farrell, 2006; Ginsberg, 1999; Kissack, 2007; Knodt & Princen, 2003; Laatikainen, 2006; Luif, 2003; Meunier, 2000; Rummel, 1988; K. E. Smith, 1998; Stadler, 1989). Much of this work is done in the framework of the UNGA, not lastly for the reasons indicated above: the opportunities it offers to analyse vote coordination in foreign policy matters quantitatively.

Therefore, the member states’ Common Foreign and Security Policy voting behaviour has been investigated in general (e.g. Bourantonis & Kostakos, 1999; Rasch, 2008; Rees & Young, 2005; K. E. Smith, 2006b; Sucharipa, 2003; Wouters, 2001, 2007), as well as with specific foci. In general terms, the overarching conclusion is that, in fact, the coordination process has intensified over the years, going hand in hand with an increase in voting cohesion, which among the EU members stands around 95% of all resolutions adopted by the UNGA (e.g. Wouters, 2007). Nonetheless, there are also voices that state the opposite: Rasch (2008) comes to the conclusion that – in the period studied by him (1998-2005) - it is still national interests that constitute the main driving forces of CFSP, the regime merely being an instrument for intergovernmental dealings, without much room for a single European voice.

Looking at the European Union member states and their cooperation from the point of view of veto player theory (Tsebelis, 2002), each member state, when having the choice of whether to uphold common positions or to defect, can be considered a veto player: “individual or collective actors whose agreement is necessary for a change of the status quo” (Tsebelis, 2002, p. 19). Similarly to what was introduced before, the theory predicts that with an increase in the number of veto players, here states present at the UNGA session, it becomes more difficult to change the status quo and deadlock is more likely. The identification of common interests, acting coherently and producing common positions turns out to be more difficult, as also the number of political opinions rises. However, it has to be kept in mind, that even though adding a veto player, or rather twelve new players, it is not necessarily the case that the size of the winset⁴ is reduced. Indeed, higher preference heterogeneity cannot always be observed: Should the accession states coincide with the preferences of the EU-15 member states it is also possible that the situation remains unchanged⁵.

‘Old’ versus ‘New’?

⁴ “[S]et of outcomes that can replace the status quo” (Tsebelis, 2002, p.13)

⁵ For more information and graphs please see the Appendix on *Elaboration on Winsets*.

For the purpose of this research it is of relevance to consider studies that concentrate on the patterns of a determined group of nation-states, particularly the Eastern (and Mediterranean) enlargement states: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. The introduction has hinted at the difficulties the 2004 and – albeit to a lesser extent – the 2007 enlargements pose to the unity of the EU. The communist past, the CEECs being considered “different from the ‘norm’” (Nugent, 2006, p. 64) and a much greater diversity of views suggest highly complex and time-consuming coordination processes, diluting the EU’s already rather unstable collective identity.

Existing literature points to the high possibility of the preferences being (or having been) heterogeneous, and predicts difficulties in coordination (e.g. Dimitrova, 2010; Hix & Noury, 2009; Kux, 1996; Passarelli & Barr, 2007; Thomson, 2009). Even though they study legislative politics in the EU⁶, Hix & Noury (2009) make a difference between ‘old’ and ‘new’ member states in what they label the ‘composition effect’. Claiming that the new member states make the Union “politically, economically, and culturally [more] heterogeneous than before”, not least because each of the newly joined states has lower income per capita than most the EU-15 states, they put forward that this “may go hand in hand with political polarisation [...] And, given the cultural, economic, and historical differences between the new and old member-states, a new east-west cleavage may have emerged [...]” (Hix & Noury, 2009, p. 160).

Having different preferences is one possible obstacle to voting cohesion, but other major factors are willingness and capability (Passarelli & Barr, 2007) - impossible to measure in the study due to the lack of data on preferences, but still playing an important role. Willingness only comes into play in case the preferences are off the EU mainstream, so that if it is high enough some member states might still be willing to adhere to the common position. Capability refers to whether the government can successfully hold up its position on the domestic basis. At this point we might be able to distinguish between the old and new member states as well: Dimitrova (2010, p. 143) states that “[p]ost-communist states [...] as the literature on this topic agrees, are weak states that have been, since the collapse of communism, in transformation”. According to her, this then might make these states different from the rest of the Union based on various considerations such as powerful non-state actors being capable of influencing internal decision-making to a large extent. Furthermore, further consequences of the communist past refer to both the ideological differences, which might have provoked a set of values, norms and preferences deviating from what is considered EU mainstream, and to the already indicated economic circumstances. In addition geopolitical interests play a role in all of these states: Some of the former Soviet bloc states might have particular views on Russia based on the influence of the Russian state; the Mediterranean countries due their size are expected to diverge on some issues, while other countries like Romania and Bulgaria might do so for being rather poor states.

Other authors establishing an imaginative border between ‘old’ and ‘new’ member states go in somewhat different directions. Passarelli and Barr (2007, p. 41), in contrast to Moravcsik & Vachudova (2003), attribute the new members a higher degree of ‘euroenthusiasm’ than for instance “the old moderate leaders (such as France and Germany)”. In his analysis of actor alignments before and after enlargement, Thomson (2009, p. 756) highlights that “[t]he enlargement from 15 to 27 Member States added a considerable amount of diversity to the European Union’s political system. Practitioners and academics expressed concern about the possible impact of enlargement on the EU’s capacity to act”. Some of the concerns revolve around “the larger number of actors [possibly making] decision[-]making more difficult [...], enlargement [having] the potential to create gridlock [...] [and] [expecting] enlargement to have widened the gulf between net-contributors and net-recipients from the EU budget in terms of their policy positions” (Hosli, 1999; König & Bräuninger, 2004; Zimmer, Schneider, & Dobbins, 2005; in Thomson, 2009, p. 756). Kux (1996, p. 413), almost a decade before

⁶ Still, I find it appropriate to apply their analysis to the matter of foreign policies, since the purpose of using their arguments is no more than to display that with enlargement the number of preferences among the EU members has increased. Whether this is within the framework of the European Parliament or with regard to foreign policy is not of importance.

enlargement, furthermore anticipated the candidate countries “to pursue a highly nationally oriented foreign and security policy”, while “representing highly diverging views regarding the future organi[s]ation of European security”.

The new member states are hence expected to have preferences that diverge from the old member states due to geopolitical, economic and ideological reasons. Whether this is in a – in this context - ‘positive’ way, reinforcing cooperation on foreign policy issues in the UNGA, or vice versa does, for the moment, not matter. In any case voting cohesion of the EU seen as one unit would most likely be affected.

Moravcsik and Vachudova (2003), still, hold that despite all the differences between the member states, and these being increasingly present, a deadlock in EU decision-making or a threatening of achievements is unlikely to happen: The new members are not to be expected to diverge largely from policy agendas of the European Union. Johansson-Nogués (2004) emphasises that the overall tendency of the CEECs to adhere to European Union positions has already been noteworthy even before the enlargement, also referring to voting patterns in the UN General Assembly. A similar conclusion can be indentified in Luif’s study on EU cohesion in the UNGA, pointing out that the “EU candidate countries (including Croatia) [have] quickly adjusted to the EU positions; only Latvia (strategic/security issues) as well as Cyprus and Malta (Middle East issues) still have identifiable distances to the EU consensus” (Luif, 2003, p. 51).

In a similar study on the relations between UN and EU, Wouters (2007) claims that “the enlargement to 27 Member States has arguably strengthened the EU’s influence and voting power, without substantially undermining EU coordination at the United Nations” (p. 12). Agreeing with Johansson-Nogués (2004) and Luif (2003), he ascribes this situation to the fact that the accession states had already aligned with the EU majority’s positions in the years prior to enlargement. In his speech of 2004 Javier Solana (p. 1), the former High Representative of EU CFSP, shows himself aware of the ‘need’ to speak with a single voice, while also being optimistic about the implications of enlargement:

“An enlarged EU will allow us to spread security, stability and prosperity within and beyond our continent. It will allow us better to tackle those many contemporary threats that do not respect frontiers. And it will enhance the opportunities for Europe to act as a positive force in the world”

Even though the literature suggests that the accession states had already coordinated their policies to some extent before joining the EU, each enlargement is bound to produce some re-balancing of preferences in which each candidate is conditioned differently (Johansson-Nogués, 2004). Therefore time is needed to assess the unity of the European Union in terms of voting cohesion, in order to be able to identify possible developments, either in the negative (less cohesion) or in the positive sense (increase in cohesion). As for the newly joined member states, the accession as a happening as such, and with it the belonging to the Union, will be thought of as a stimulus to coordinate their positions even more with those of the EU ‘mainstream’. Therefore voting cohesion, as will be explained at a later stage, is expected to be lower in the time of enlargement (May 2004), but to increase over time as coordination mechanisms set in.

Voting Cohesion Across Topics Concerned

Existing literature points at the fact that voting cohesion varies over time and is not homogeneous across topics concerned. Some issue areas have been identified to have either rather low levels of cohesion or to be among those that feature high voting cohesion. Heterogeneity or homogeneity is explained especially in terms of differentiating between ‘high’ and ‘low’ politics. Foreign policy is usually considered an aspect of ‘high politics’ (Morgan, 1973), therefore a highly sensitive issue to surrender part of a state’s sovereignty. Additionally, differences between the single issues of foreign policy have to be taken into account as well – and these might vary among the member states. While one state, e.g. due to its major nuclear lobby, considers the area of resolutions with nuclear energy to be highly sensitive, another state – possibly a former Colonial Empire – has serious difficulties to give up some of its principles in that particular issue area. Referring to the works of Rummel (1988) and

Stadler (1989), Birnberg (2009) points out that, following experience “each member state cultivates a number of taboo areas which are not subject to compromise” (Rummel, 1988; Stadler, 1989; in Birnberg, 2009, p. 74). Smith (2005, p. 156) argues likewise, emphasising the presence of '*domaines réservés*', in which member states are less likely to delegate aspects of their foreign policies to the EU. Similarly, Frieden (2004) puts forward that “member states whose preferences are further from the EU median than they are from the international media are more likely to oppose pooling representation” (p. 265), so that “European governments with more extreme views (compared with the rest of the EU) will be less likely to support a common international position” (p. 274). This implies also that those who perceive that they gain the most are also willing to compromise the most, whereas those who gain the least impose conditions and oppose common positions (Frieden, 2004; Moravcsik, 1998).

It has to be emphasised at this stage, that the research intended does not go further than to consider the European Union speaking with a single voice as an end in itself (Birnberg, 2009). Former studies do indicate that it does not end there, obviously, highlighting that speaking with a single voice is a mere precondition for the EU to successfully and effectively make foreign policy, and that anything which does not provoke collective influence of the Union, that is providing it with a “greater say in international politics’ cannot be considered a success” (Jorgensen, 1997; Scheel, 1988; in Birnberg, 2009, p. 33). The same is reminiscent in Solana’s words, labelling EU unity “a positive force in the world” (2004, p.1), whereas Wouters (2007) speaks of “the key to EU influence on UN decision-making [lying] in speaking with a single voice – even though it is probably overoptimistic to believe that ‘if the EU is united, they cannot be defeated’” (2007, p. 14). Even though these approaches are kept in mind, there will be no intents to measure effectiveness of the Union in the UNGA.

Theory

Primary to the more specific aspects of European Integration and voting cohesion, one question underlying all the debate can be identified: Do states – and if so-, why do states, in this case the member states, cooperate in the first place? Even though along with the development of EPC, the European Union has put down guidelines and commitments in its Treaties, each state remains sovereign, hence capable to follow its own preferences in international forums. The “EU clearly lacks a monopoly on foreign policy-making in Europe” (Allen, 2002, p. 43); however, previous studies suggest that voting cohesion among the EU member states in the UN General Assembly is still rather high, rated at 95% of all resolutions adopted (Wouters, 2007). Voting cohesion as such is defined as conformity of votes between the states of a determined body. Consequently, EU voting cohesion between the European Union member states can be viewed as the coinciding of the single member states’ votes with the EU majority position, which is defined as the votes cast by the majority of the EU member states. In the case of deviating positions by the some states, then, voting cohesion is not given.

International Relations Theory

This particular section will serve as theoretical background to much of the thesis’ assumptions and implications, and will offer a relatively broad framework of general International Relations theories as linked to foreign policy cooperation in the EU. As Johansson-Nogués puts it, “[On] a theoretical level, different explanations have been put forward to account for the tendency of the associated countries to voluntarily align themselves with the EU voting pattern” (2004, p. 79). Some of these theories will be put forward, in particular: Rationalism ((Neo-) Realism, (Neo-) Liberalism), Constructivism, and Neofunctionalism, before going a step further and identifying in how far the theories link up with the problem at hand. Thereby predictions as to voting cohesion will be developed, providing the research with three hypotheses.

Rationalism

As a first theoretical approach with regard to the question whether and why states cooperate in the first place, rationalist theory will be explained and linked to the problem at hand. Rationalism revolves around the assumption that states, being unitary actors, “calculate the utility of alternative courses of action and choose the one that maximises their utility under the circumstance” (Schimmelfennig,

2004, p. 77). Clearly linked to the positivist logic (Fearon & Wendt, 2002) and strategic calculation, states are driven “by preferences and expectation about consequences” (March & Olsen, 1989, p. 160). Consequently, in search for maximum utility, cooperation is likely when the condition is given that the potential benefits of common policy outweigh the potential costs of a policy that is not to their liking, their loss of sovereignty or national prestige (Frieden, 2004; Gordon, 1997).

The greater the perceived gains, and the greater the added bargaining power (Frieden, 2004), the higher the expectation of vote coordination, and hence voting cohesion, between the EU member states in the UNGA. The European Union as a supranational actor might as well only serve as ‘tool’ in order to pursue own interests and preferences, as the states – from the rationalist perspective – are still concentrated on protecting their own political interests. Member states, hence, speak with a single voice because it gives them an advantage in defending their interests collectively (Allen, 2002) in cases in which their collective bargaining power has added value. However, member states who have preferences that are far away from the EU mainstream are more likely to oppose pooling representation than those who coincide with the mainstream (Frieden, 2004). Nonetheless, what we would expect to happen with enlargement is that in joining the European Union, the member states come to realise that they have more bargaining power when acting united. Hence, only looking at the premises in general, voting cohesion is more likely to increase once this realisation takes place.

The following two sections will go into more detail, introducing two main streams of rationalist/positivist logic with regard to International Relations theory and cooperation. (Neo-) Realism and Neoliberalism both focus on the states as main actors, put forward different assumptions and ideas as to state behaviour and, ultimately, have to be seen as opposing.

(Neo-)Realism

Similar to the other theories, (Neo-) Realism seeks to explain the behaviour of states within the international system. Developed by Morgenthau in the late 1940s and modified by Waltz (1979), the main assumption revolves around the view that sovereign states are the main foreign policy actors in an anarchic setting, being unitary actors and acting rationally (Bueno de Mesquita, 2006). The states, furthermore, are primarily motivated by the goal of survival and seek to maximize their power (classical, offensive Realism) and security (defensive, (Neo-) Realism) relative to other states, “think[ing] strategically about how to survive in the international system” (Mearsheimer, 1994-5, p. 10). Nation-states, hence, are always interested in gaining power, seeking hegemony, and hence in the “maximisation of individual utility” (Hasenclever, Mayer, & Rittberger, 1997, p. 23), which also has implications for the possibility of cooperation. While cooperation is not viewed as entirely impossible, the system and considerations of the states limit it severely (Waltz, 1979): It is assumed that cooperation is only feasible on a temporary, mostly short-term, basis, when it serves the states’ interests and increases their own power at the expense of someone else. This can also happen by means of (soft) balancing, which “involves tacit non-offensive coalition building to neutralise a rising or potentially threatening power” (Paul, 2004:14). ‘Speaking with a single voice’ could in this respect be regarded as the European Union member states trying to increase their bargaining power for instance vis-à-vis Washington and to peacefully counterbalance the weight of the United States in the international landscape.

What has to be mentioned at this stage, however, is the fact that Waltz himself rejects the notion that his theory can be used as explaining foreign policy: “Despite the disclaimers, structural theory is sometimes judged as a theory of foreign policy and found wanting [...] It is not, however, a theory of foreign policy at all, as anyone who looks at the cover or title page of my *Theory of International Politics* surely can see” (Waltz, 1994; in Elman, 1996, p.9). While Waltz considers neorealist theories unsuitable to serve as theories of foreign policy, other (Neo-) Realists like Mearsheimer, Posen, Walt, Christensen & Snyder show to be more optimistic (Elman, 1996). Elman himself rejects all four objections made, hence concluding that “neorealist theories *can* be employed as theories of foreign policy”, thereby referring to the *suitability* of “making statements about individual state’s foreign policies” (Elman, 1996, p.12; p.48). Here Elman’s conclusion will be followed, including (Neo-) Realism in the analysis.

With regard to international organisations, (Neo-) Realists hold these to be no more than “means by which individual states can coordinate their activities and help each other on a case-by-case basis” (Bueno de Mesquita, 2006, p. 61). Accordingly, voting cohesion in the UNGA is not thought of as active vote cooperation, but rather considered to consist of coincidentally overlapping preferences in foreign policy matters. This might also be a result of a shift in the international regime: In particular the CEECs have been subject to grand changes after the collapse of the communist system, which gave them the opportunity to “de-couple their foreign policy from the Soviet communist bloc, and assume a more independent foreign policy” (Johansson-Nogués, 2004, p. 80). Adapting to the new situation, then, “a Realist would presuppose that the post-communist countries would want to align themselves with the power bloc seemingly most useful to their current necessities”, this being the European Union, and even more so after having been granted accession (Johansson-Nogués, 2004, p. 80). Voting cohesion, from the Realist perspective, however, is usually tackled the other way around, that is to say, explaining the lack thereof (Birnberg, 2009), as national preferences are thought to be protected and the striving for power remains an important factor in creating divisions and, ultimately, defections (Laatikainen & Smith, 2006).

These member state preferences are expected to stay largely the same, conditioned by geopolitical⁷ considerations and irrespective of EU membership. Therefore, according the Realists, it is likely that there will be greater disagreements among the states immediately after enlargement, where new preferences are added to the pool. In addition, due to the assumption of relatively stable preferences, voting cohesion is not expected to increase. As already elaborated before, existing literature assumes the new member states to have preferences diverging from the EU mainstream, in both directions. If we follow (Neo-) Realist logic, then, which includes assuming the heterogeneity of these stable geopolitical interests with low possibilities of cooperation, the preliminary conclusion with regard to the question to be answered is the following: In moment of enlargement the number of preferences within the EU system increases and each member state is expected to defend its own interest. Therefore we can expect a decline in voting cohesion directly after enlargement⁸ which is not likely to recover over time (stable preferences). As for the 2004 enlargement, voting cohesion from 2004 (that is after enlargement has taken place) to 2009 is likely to stay the same, also mainly due to stable preferences among the EU member states.

Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism can be seen as the counterweight to Realism, in that the international system is considered to be naturally cooperative (Bueno de Mesquita, 2006). Even though states as sovereign entities are also identified as the main actors, the emphasis lies on the interdependency between actors, their roles being determined by the system itself, not by choices. Optimism about cooperation stems from both the regime as such and the role of International Organisations: Since Neoliberalists do not share the Realist assumption of the striving for relative gains and increasing power (Cranmer, 2005), but highlight that cooperation leads to absolute gains and wealth it is much easier to achieve. In fact, international regimes or institutions promote and preserve cooperation in that they regulate behaviour, build norms, or reward and punish actors. Axelrod and Keohane (1985) in this sense highlight the importance of the shadow of the future, the number of players in the system and the mutuality of interest. As a consequence, institutions such as the UN are able to provide a structured framework in which the interests among players, that is states, are perceived as more uniform (e.g. Axelrod & Keohane, 1985).

Johansson-Nogués (2004) ascribes the change in foreign policy preferences observed in the CEECs already prior to enlargement to a shift in regime, in that the states in fact hold the same values as the EU-15, automatically coinciding in preferences. She considers the alignment a consequence of the new governments emulating the ‘role model’ EU in order to gain popularity at home, while at the same time providing an argument put forward by Nicolaidis, who speaks of ‘anticipatory adaptation’

⁷ This includes the political behaviour of states conditioned by their individual historical, ideological roots, and influenced by their geographic position in the international system.

⁸ This can only be tested for the 2007 enlargement, though (cf. section on research design).

to the expected demands of the rest of the European states (Nicolaïdis, 1993; in Johansson-Nogués, 2004).

In the Neoliberalist perspective the European Union can be seen as representing an institutionalised variation from anarchy, in which “states are not simply cooperating. Indeed, with the progressive assignment of powers and authority to the Community level, the EU has become a supranational organization and Western Europe has come increasingly under a semihierarchical ordering principle” (Rosamond, 2000; in Collard-Wexler, 2006, p. 406). Due to this hybrid situation between hierarchy and anarchy, the European Union “has [also] broken the monopoly of the state in the management of international affairs” (Collard-Wexler, 2006, p. 412). It is an International Organisation which facilitates cooperation, by building norms and regulating behaviour, establishing common positions and policies within the Common Foreign and Security framework.

This framework imposes certain accepted behaviour onto the states, and even if the possibility for real punishment is not given and actors keep on making choices, it provides incentives to cooperate. The shadow of the future, to speak in metaphorical terms, is made longer in the respect that the European Union is a project that most likely will have a role to play in the future, widening and deepening at the same time. Hence, member states voting against their preferences might do so for three reasons: First, they will want to avoid uncomfortable discussions and arguments as the result of defecting, in order to maintain the benevolence of the rest of the Union. Second, even when voting against their preferences, states might gain from cooperation, i.e. if the benefits of a common policy are greater than the costs of not being able to pursue their own preferences. Third, as König and Junge’s studies on decision-making and veto powers in the Council show, member states might find a solution and reach a consensus by “intertemporal and domain-specific logrolling” (2009, p. 507), that is making deals across time and policy domain to achieve more effective outcomes. Here, an actor might even refrain from using their (veto) power in those voting rounds in which they are not primarily interested. Also concessions could be made in the expectation that there will be an equivalent action to one’s own benefit by the other member states in a future occasion. In both cases making sacrifices in the short run can increase individual benefit in the long run (Keohane, 1986). What is to be expected given the before mentioned assumption is that the accession states will sooner or later come to realise the shadow of the future and their belonging to an international regime which provides norms and regulations. As a consequence, it is likely that voting cohesion after enlargement will increase once they have done so.

Constructivism

The constructivist perspective also sees states as the primary actors in the international arena, but puts emphasis on a different aspect which – so far – has not been considered. Constructivism stresses the historically and, above all, socially constructed character of inter-state relationships. Wendt (1999) describes the Constructivist logic in the following way: “[The] structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces, and [...] the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature” (Wendt, 1999, p.1). Hence, it is “shared ideas that shape behaviour by constituting the identities and interests of actors” (Copeland, 2006, p. 1). Cooperation from the Constructivist perspective, accordingly, is more stable than for instance in the view of Realists, where a shift in power can have big influence on the behaviour of states.

In terms of vote coordination in international organisations, then, Constructivism offers a new perspective, which explains EU cohesion even in situations in which heterogeneous policy preferences show. In order to signify unity and make this unity visible to others, member states “try to act in concert at the UN” (Fassbender, 2004, p. 882). The fact that this unity is even considered by the sovereign states stems from the logic of appropriateness: states will act according to what they consider to be appropriate within the larger group they belong to, with the EU here representing a normative entity (Birnberg, 2009). Group dynamics bring about a situation in which one associates with the other and “repeated interaction can transform an interdependence of outcomes into one of utility” (Wendt, 1994, p. 390). As the “key catalyst in producing collective foreign policy” Smith (2004, p. 101) identifies the “progressive institutionalisation of communication processes”: “The

demands of EU membership and the habits of working together create and upgrade the idea of a common European interest, reflected as policy adaptation” (p. 115). This so-called coordination-reflex is developed by working closely together, then “[becoming] committed to exchanging views, [...] [beginning] to perceive common interests, [in the end ‘socialising’ them] into accepting that the EU should act in international politics, and they are therefore likely to develop common views and agree to common actions” (Smith, 2004; 2006, p. 115-116). As Jeffrey Lewis (2008, pp. 179) concludes: “[M]ember states allow and even encourage deliberation and informal norms of appropriateness because they lead to desirable institutional arrangements and, ultimately, collective policy outcomes that everyone can live with”. According to Birnberg, studies conducted by constructivist researchers tend to “propose that EU member states coordinate their positions for the sake of EU unity, regardless of national interests. They maintain that the ‘reflex of seeking and promoting a common position, typically under the leadership of the EU Presidency, is [...] firmly entrenched in the GA” (Paasivirta & Porter, 2006; in Birnberg, 2009, p. 45-46).

What influences these dynamics rather strongly, is the question that needs to be asked every time when speaking of the European Union in connection with identities: “To what extent does a European identity exist?” (Barbé, 2007, p. 261). Especially with regard to the accession states the presence of an immediate European identity and striving for EU unity is not likely and might have taken some time to develop, may it be on the basis of group dynamics or the will to display unity itself. A process that can be identified with regard to the matter is the process of Europeanisation of foreign policy, when considered under the perspective of identity construction (Wong, 2005). Emphasising that “research undertaken in recent years [...] suggests that officials are increasingly thinking in ‘European’ rather than ‘national’ terms” (Wong, 2005, p. 138), Wong thereby both keeps in mind “socialising” and the “coordination reflex”. Constructivists would argue that at some point such a development is to be expected. Following from their logic the conclusion as to the question at hand would be that as the duration of membership increases, the coordination pressures and group dynamics are likely to become more pronounced and voting cohesion among the European Union member states is likely to increase, even though there might have been a decline at first.

Neofunctionalism

Neofunctionalism is another approach in disagreement with the premises of Realism, going in many ways further than just considering the possibility of cooperation. The European Union in particular is seen through the spectrum of integration, which - according to Barbé (2007) - is the extreme form of cooperation. Consequently Neofunctionalism and integration are to be found on the opposite extreme of the cooperation spectrum as Realism. Established by Haas (1958), the approach centres on the concept of spill over effects (Nugent, 2006). Starting with functional spill overs, which assume that integration that was largely confined to economic sectors, these provoke that strong incentives for integration in further, adjoining and related, sectors are given. In a second step, political spill overs can be observed in which national elites increasingly shift their allegiances from the national level to the supranational, the EU level. This process results in the supranational level gaining importance and generating new pressures and demands (Haas, 1958). To put it in a nutshell, “integration [is] seen as promoting further integration” (Nugent, 2006, p. 563), in which the nation-state – as opposed to all other approaches considered here – is not be seen as the primary actor in the international system.

In terms of cooperation in foreign policy matters, Neofunctionalists expect full-fledged integration of member states, which implies that voting cohesion should not be a matter that needs to be doubted. In that sense, Neofunctionalism makes it methodologically difficult to study voting cohesion, seeing that the EU is considered to be a “unity”, while the UNGA has to be conceptualised as a body in which states play the main role. However, it is possible to formulate expectations on the basis of the concepts and assumptions of this theory: In joining the European Union, the member states are subject to spill over effects, resulting in the retreat of national preferences as opposed to the supranational level. As a consequence of this developing of full-fledged integration voting cohesion is expected to rise. More precisely, we can expect that voting cohesion in the moment of enlargement starts off worse, but as soon as spill overs kick in it is likely to increase after some time.

The European Union and Cooperation

The EU member states coordinating their positions can be classified as 'multilateral cooperation', which is even harder to achieve than bilateral cooperation (Barbé, 2007). Moreover, the label 'multilateral' is used in an extreme form with 27 member states aiming at achieving common foreign policy positions. The European Union at the same time has a special status, being a one-of-a-kind phenomenon, in which the institutional framework produces further incentives or pressures to cooperate in foreign policy. It is, in fact, a highly complex matter within the area of International Relations.

When discussing voting cohesion the concept of coherence, interchangeably also labelled as 'consistency', plays an important role. To be more precise and following the categorisations of Nuttall (2005), what is at stake here falls under the concept of 'vertical consistency' - consistency between EU and national policies. Nuttall asks the question as to "what extent [...] member states [are] prepared to bind their national foreign policies to the outcome of the CFSP and the EU's other external relations policies, thereby strengthening the EU's position as a force in international diplomacy" (Nuttall, 2005, p. 106). Mentioning the legal development of the European Union in this respect as well, he highlights that while there have been general obligations (e.g. Art. 180 TEC; Arts. 11.2, 14.3, 15 Consolidated), their respect is only "sporadic because there is no credible provision for policing it" (Nuttall, 2005, p. 107). Coming back to the conceptualisation of cohesion, in this study the concept of voting cohesion will be used as referring to all member states pursuing the same interests within the UNGA, that is, 'speaking with a single voice' and voting cohesively.

It has already been discussed that the states, when attending the UNGA sessions, do so as sovereign states. As UN members they are entitled to vote according to their own preferences, in fact the UN system is "fundamentally statist" (Smith, 2006, p. 114), its rules holding that "only states have the right to vote within the UN's main bodies" (United Nations, 2006, p.34; Rule 124). Since the EU consequently cannot issue a single vote, the states nonetheless have to keep in mind their membership of the EU and are expected to speak with a single voice. Hence, they "embody multiple roles" (Krasner, 1999, p. 6), as EU membership and the rights associated with UN membership coincide, or rather, overlap. The coordination pressures present, aiming at reaching coordination and unanimity, can be interpreted from various angles. Either, as Constructivists would argue, the goal is to show EU unity, or the member states perceive coordination as the best of their options to achieve their own goals, which represents the general rationalist perspective. Realists would presuppose that the EU members all have the same preferences and no coordination will have taken place, unless relative power could be increased. Neoliberalists, then again, would ascribe the main role to the institution itself, setting up certain norms and punishing mechanisms, which would automatically lead to cohesion without much coordination. Neofunctionalists, on the other hand, highlight the effects of spill overs in the process of cooperation.

Hypotheses

In any case, a real problem does only exist, if the national preferences do indeed differ from each other, considering that "where interests are in full harmony, the capacity of states to cooperate [...] is irrelevant to the realisation of mutual benefits" (Oye, 1985, p. 6), or to put it more simply: irrespective of coordination member states would exhibit perfect voting cohesion. At an earlier stage it was pointed to the fact that existing literature largely assumes that the 'new' member states differ from the 'old' ones in terms of preferences. Geopolitical interests, ideology or economic considerations draw an imaginary boundary, which has to be taken into account when investigating the topic at hand. Therefore, voting cohesion in the UNGA can be expected to decline immediately after enlargement, when a number of new member states add new preferences to the pool and no time for possible coordination has been given.

Hypothesis 1: In the moment of enlargement voting cohesion among the EU member states in the UN General Assembly is likely to decline.

Only in the case of heterogeneous preferences, then, the state is faced with the choice of cooperation - to either pursue its own interests or to succumb to coordination pressure and "adjust their behaviour to

the actual or anticipated preferences of others" (Axelrod & Keohane, 1995, p. 226): In this situation the member states would have to "consider the trade-off between the advantages [...] and the disadvantages of overriding heterogeneous preferences" (Frieden, 2004, p. 261). Constructivist logic, here, constitutes an exception in the theoretical framework, since due to the coordination-reflex preferences and interests would have been socialised into a common position which is perceived as positive by any of the member states, as they "tend to conform to the institutional rules and 'scripts' to which they have subscribed" (Hall & Taylor, 1996; in Birnberg, 2009, p. 56).

All EU member states are expected to be subject to coordination pressures, whether informal or formal. Informal pressures, according to Birnberg (2009), include actions that ask the states to cooperate without obliging them, whereas formal pressures are based on legislation, therefore being of legal and binding nature. For instance, member states are required to uphold a common position that has been agreed on within CFSP, thus obliging them to vote cohesively. Membership, therefore, is an important factor when it comes to coordination pressures. As Birnberg puts it: "After all, it is their EU membership which provides the basis for their intent to coordinate their votes" (2009, p. 76). In joining the Union, the member states accept the rules and provisions that are given and are certainly aware of the pressures they will be put under in instances of policy coordination. As former studies (e.g. Johansson-Nogués, 2004; Luif, 2003; Smith, 2006; Wouters, 2007) highlight, the CEECs had already aligned their votes with the EU mainstream even before official enlargement in 2004 and 2007, respectively, this being a consequence of different considerations.

Going a step further and considering the discussion presented above, one should assume that with membership the pressure to coordinate one's own positions with the EU median is even higher. With increasing pressures as the time of membership elapses, consequently, voting cohesion can be expected to rise. This is in line with Constructivist, Neoliberalist and Neofunctionalist logic. Combining these four approaches and their conclusions which have been stressed above it is feasible to come up with a second hypothesis:

***Hypothesis 2a:** Voting cohesion in the UN General Assembly among the EU member states is likely to increase some time after enlargement – as a consequence of various possible mechanisms kicking in.*

However, as has also been highlighted at an earlier stage, Realism suggests a rather different logic, emphasising the existence of preferences each sovereign states holds and seeks to follow, in order to gain ground in comparison to other states. These preferences are furthermore expected to stay largely the same, irrespective of EU membership. Contrasting from all other approaches in this respect, the second hypothesis is therefore in line with the conclusion drawn from realist logic:

***Hypothesis 2b:** It is likely that there will be no increase in voting cohesion after official enlargement and the temporal development is not expected to show great variations or trends.*

Research design

The research design of this thesis is in the first place quantitative, an "empirical research where the data are in the form of numbers" (Punch, 2006, p. 3). The variable of interest, the dependent variable, is the level of voting cohesion among the EU member states. The period of investigation ranges from 2004 to 2009, thereby taking the moment of the first Eastern enlargement in 2004 as the point of reference. When we speak of voting cohesion of the European Union member states within the UN General Assembly, this refers first and foremost to the system level. Without taking into account single states it is unity of the EU as a whole we are concerned about (unit of analysis). In order to analyse this aspect, a cohesion index will be used, the so-called 'Agreement Index', which has been introduced by Hix, Noury and Roland (2007, p. 91):

$$AI_i = \frac{\max\{Y_i, N_i, A_i\} - \frac{1}{2}[(Y_i + N_i + A_i) - \max\{Y_i, N_i, A_i\}]}{(Y_i + N_i + A_i)}$$

“where Y_i denotes the number of Yes votes expressed by group i on a given vote, N_i denotes that number of No votes and A_i the number of Abstain votes” (Hix et. al., 2007, p. 91). Hence, the index is capable of taking into account three voting possibilities in one formula (yes, no, abstention), from which absenteeism has been eliminated before. When employing the ‘Agreement Index’ final values can range between 0 and 1, with the value of 0 denying any kind of cohesion at all and the value of 1 demonstrating perfect cohesion (in which all member states vote the same).

The analysis of voting cohesion in general will focus on the temporal dimension, in order to be able to relate to the research question which also focuses on a possible development. Therefore the cohesion levels as calculated by means of the ‘Agreement Index’ will be established and graphically demonstrated for every year, starting in 2004 and concluding with 2009. This way it will be possible to investigate the impact of the enlargement for EU voting cohesion in the UNGA. It will only be possible to test the first part of the hypotheses (that there is a decline in voting cohesion after enlargement) for the second enlargement in 2007. This is due to the data being available for this research: While for the 2007 enlargement data is possessed both of the period both before and after enlargement, this is not the case for the first one. Whether there has been a decline after the 2004 enlargement is not to be assessed, and the study will hence focus on the development over time of voting cohesion (i.e. whether there has been increasing, decreasing or stable cohesion).

Furthermore, due to theoretical considerations put forward above, it will be interesting to break down the index into issue areas as well, as differences across the areas are to be expected. Controlling for the policy field in which the voting takes place attempts to separate preference effects, which are more likely to be pronounced in particular areas than in others, from cohesion effects (see Krehbiel, 1993 for a detailed analysis of preferences and voting behaviour). Depending on these results (both with regard to the temporal and the issue dimension), possible explanations for why voting cohesion might vary will be given, referring to the characteristics of the issue at hand and/or the moment of voting. Finally, then, attention will be drawn to the hypotheses developed in the theoretical framework and a final conclusion be elaborated.

Data collection

The data collection has been conducted using the UN database (UNBIS) and coding the voting records of all UN resolutions – original data - between 2004 and 2009 (including), which constitute the units of analysis. However, the majority of resolutions in the UNGA during that period has been passed with consensus, without vote, so that for the quantitative analysis of voting behaviour it only makes sense to include those that have been voted upon. This is the case, considering that we do not have information on how the countries would have voted had there been a call for vote. Hence, it is necessary to eliminate this kind of speculation, even though a possible limitation of the research become visible: The fact that not all resolutions in the UNGA are voted upon, but the vast majority is adopted without vote might imply a bias in the voting record, since – as recognised by Johansson-Nogués (2004) – those resolutions put to a vote are certainly the most sensitive ones, hence precisely the issues that represent the obstacles to EU cohesion. More precisely, 466 (of all 1916 resolutions issued) resolutions have been identified and its voting records quantified. For each of the resolutions, every member state had the choice between three possible responses: “yes” in the case of being in favour and supporting the resolution, “no” in the case of opposition, and “abstention” when choosing not to communicate their opinion. While only affirmative or negative votes are counted when deciding whether or not a resolution is passed (United Nations, 2006, pp. 23, Rule 86), member states can also choose not to be present at all in the meeting. The reasons for being absent (“non-voting”) can be manifold, with the states missing out either involuntarily (e.g. missing resources) or deliberately (e.g. to show opposition) (Russett, 1966).

In terms of the data analysis it is important to make the methodological choice of how to deal with abstentions of the member states as well as absenteeism. First, in terms of abstention it has to be kept in mind that what this study aims at is voting cohesion. Therefore, I have decided to follow Birnberg's (2009) reasoning, including abstentions into the analysis. She points out that "[s]ince the focus of the thesis is on EU coordination/EU cohesion inside the UNGA, it does in fact not matter whether or not the member states vote in the affirmative, the negative or abstain. It only matters, whether or not they do so collectively" (2009, p. 101). Second, the status of absenteeism is another point to consider. The main problem here is the fact that there are different reasons for being absent, and - even more complicated - these are reasons unknown to the researcher in most of the cases. Making assumptions as to how a member state would have voted had it been present is just as inappropriate as simply assuming that its absenteeism is due to demonstrating opposition. Such interpretations only make sense in instances in which all EU member states choose not to participate, allowing for the presumption of coordinated action. However, this is only seldom the case, so that the question remains open. Also in this case I have chosen to apply Birnberg's (2009) reasoning, in which she follows Voeten (2000) in treating absenteeism as missing data. The data can be considered to be 'missing' in that any action possibly to be taken by the concerned member state is unknown and not recorded. I therefore assume that absenteeism is independent and not related to the government's position.

Data Analysis - EU Cohesion Levels in the UNGA

This section will focus on giving data and information with regard to the EU member states' cohesion levels in the United Nations General Assembly, providing graphs, tables and interpretations. The dependent variable, the level of voting cohesion, will be assessed both in more general terms and according to issue areas (policy fields), but also compared over time.

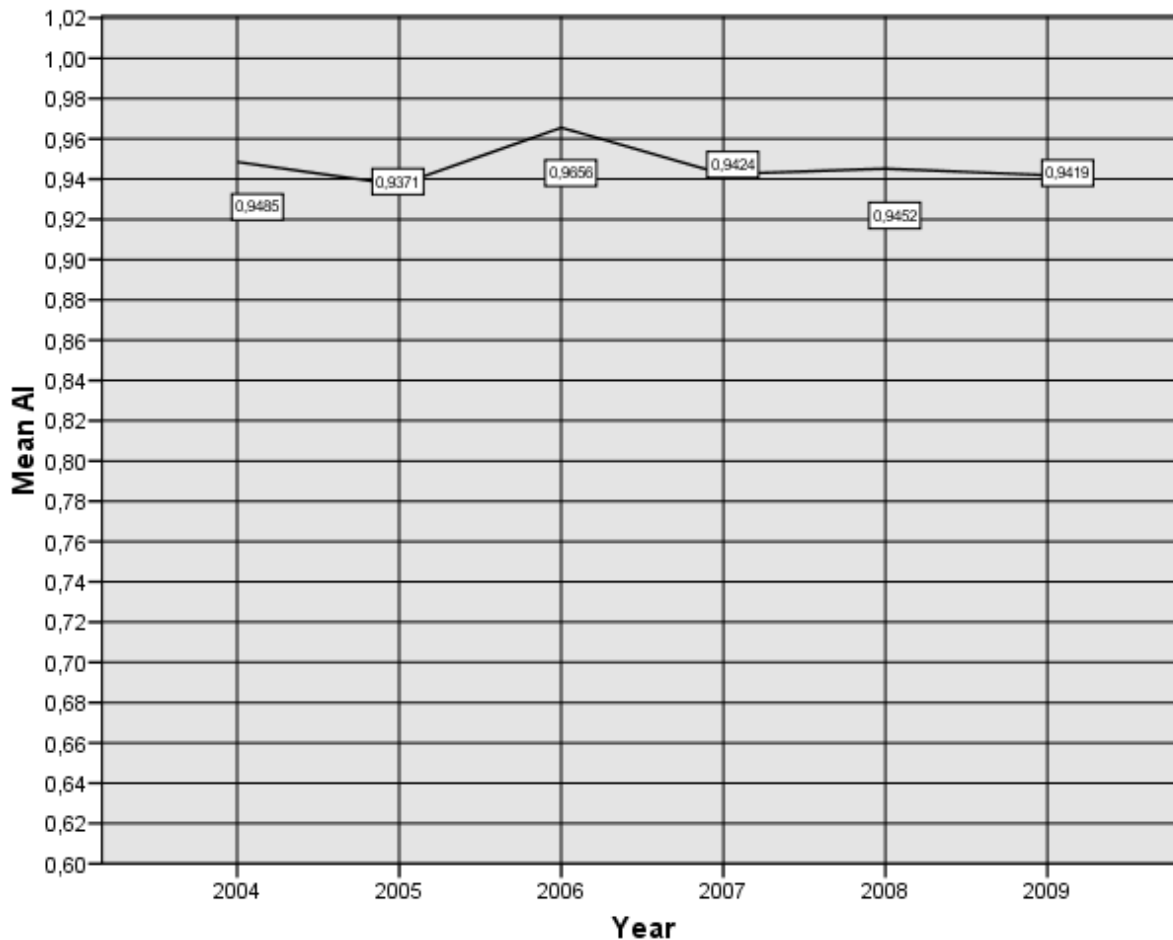
EU Cohesion Over Time

Looking at the means of the Agreement Index in general and comparing them over six years (Figure 1), the first impression has to be that generally the EU member states score relatively high in agreement in the UNGA. The horizontal axis represents the year the resolutions were voted upon, whereas the vertical axis depicts the value of the Agreement Index calculated on the basis of the formula put forward by Hix, Noury & Roland (2007). The line, then, connects the individual mean values of each year, in order to better be able to follow the development. From 2004 until (and including) 2006, the Agreement Index has been calculated for 25 member states⁹. For the resolutions issued from 2007 onwards the behaviour of 27 member states has been recorded.

The overall agreement index of .9478 (see also Appendix; Table 1) from 2004 to 2009, on a possible range from 0 (no cohesion at all) to 1 (perfect cohesion), reinforces the first impression and shows clearly that the EU tends to vote cohesively in a large number of occasions, even though they do not do so successfully every time. A cohesion index of this value indicates that in the whole period on average either 24 out of 25 member states voted the same, or 26 out of 27 cast the same votes in the UNGA. Furthermore, this value is in line with the percentage of agreement of 95% calculated by Wouters (2007). Some variation, however, can be observed: While the values of the Agreement Index are decreasing from 2004 (.9485) to reach the curve's lowest point in 2005 (.9371), a quick recovery is made in 2006, rising up to the highest point of .9656. Nevertheless already in 2007 this is followed by a drop to the previous levels, where from 2007 to 2009 the value stays between .9419 (2009) and .9452 (2008).

⁹ The first Eastern enlargement took place on 1 May 2004, however, all resolutions issues and taken into account here have been voted upon on a later date. Therefore, in all 2004 voting procedures present in the analysis the new member states were already officially part of the Union.

Figure1: Average EU Cohesion Level in the UNGA (2004-2009)



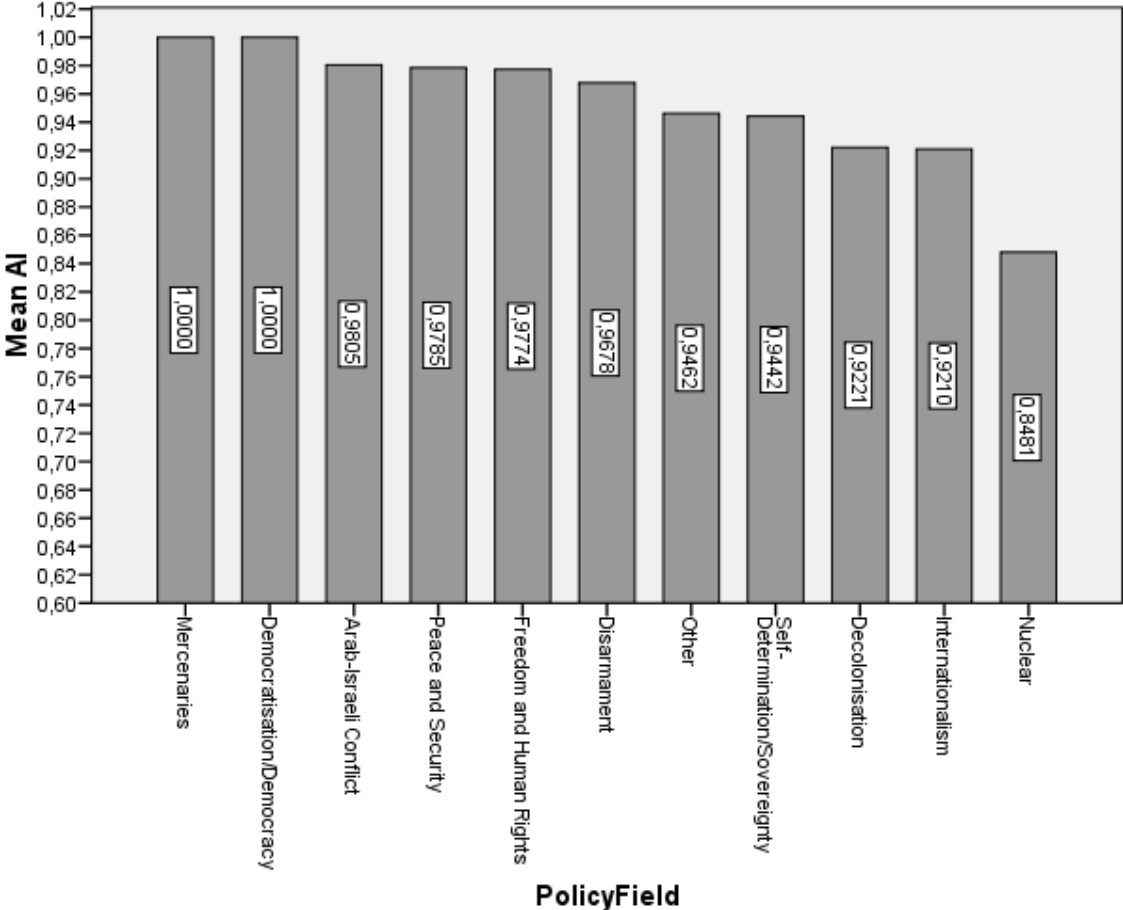
Without any type of control variable and simply comparing the values of the Agreement Index, hence, some pattern can be observed: Agreement decreases after 2004, when the first new member states joined, but based on the data at hand it is not possible to draw any conclusions from that. Seeing that this study lacks data from before the enlargement, patterns cannot be observed as to whether the joining of ten member states altered the trend of voting cohesion in the UN General Assembly. On the other hand it experiences a rapid growth from 2005 to 2006 (this to be seen in relative terms, as the values in general seem to be rather stable), which might be the result of the coordination reflexes and pressures kicking in – even though belated¹⁰ and only to decrease to the low 2005 level again in 2007 – the year the second Eastern enlargement took place; however, this time only with two new states joining the Union. As with all the variations mentioned before, another important question is whether the variation observed is significant at all. With regard to this a 95% Confidence Interval of the difference of the Agreement Index from 2004 to 2009 has been calculated (One-Sample T Test). The results imply that the value of 2006 is indeed of some significance, seeing that it lies outside (on the upper side) of the interval (cf. Appendix; Table 3). All other values can be found within the boundaries and can hence be described as normal and without great significance. In addition, no noticeable change can be discovered in the years following the 2007 enlargement, indicating that coordination is – against expectations – not increasing, and no hints at coordination pressures or reflexes are given.

EU Cohesion Across Issue Areas

¹⁰ This makes sense, as it might take some time to show results.

Figure 2 provides the average cohesion levels in the UNGA from 2004 to 2009 distinguishing between issue areas only¹¹. The horizontal axis names the issue area, whereas the level of cohesion can be read off the vertical axis, so that each column shows the average cohesion levels of the issue area it represents over the whole period of time examined. Ranging between an Agreement Index of 0.8481 (Nuclear) and perfect cohesion of 1 (Mercenaries, Democratisation/Democracy), the overall level of cohesion continues to be high, even though in some issue areas coordination of votes seems to be more difficult to achieve than in others. It has been argued that some issue areas constitute so-called 'domaines réservés' or taboo areas (e.g. Smith, 2005, Birnberg, 2009), in which member states protect their own interest to a larger extent than in other areas, which are not considered as sensitive. The resolutions put to a vote with regard to nuclear matters yield the lowest cohesion levels by far, followed by Internationalism and Decolonisation. Vote coordination in resolutions pertaining to Mercenaries and Democratisation/Democracy is most successful, and the issue areas of Arab-Israeli Conflict, Peace and Security, as well as Freedom and Human Rights follow closely with agreement levels that are nearly perfect.

Figure 2: Average EU Cohesion Levels Across Issue Areas (2004-2009)



It also has to be taken into consideration that the number of resolutions voted upon is not distributed equally across the issue areas. For instance, the weight of the cohesion level in matters concerning the Arab-Israeli Conflict (111 resolutions) or Freedom and Human Rights (87), weight much more in the overall mean than those – as a whole - issued within Mercenaries (5) or Democratisation (7)¹². That the issue area with the by far lowest average cohesion levels does make up a great part of the

¹¹ For information and considerations on the division into issue areas please see the Appendix on *Comparing and Contrasting Policy Fields*.

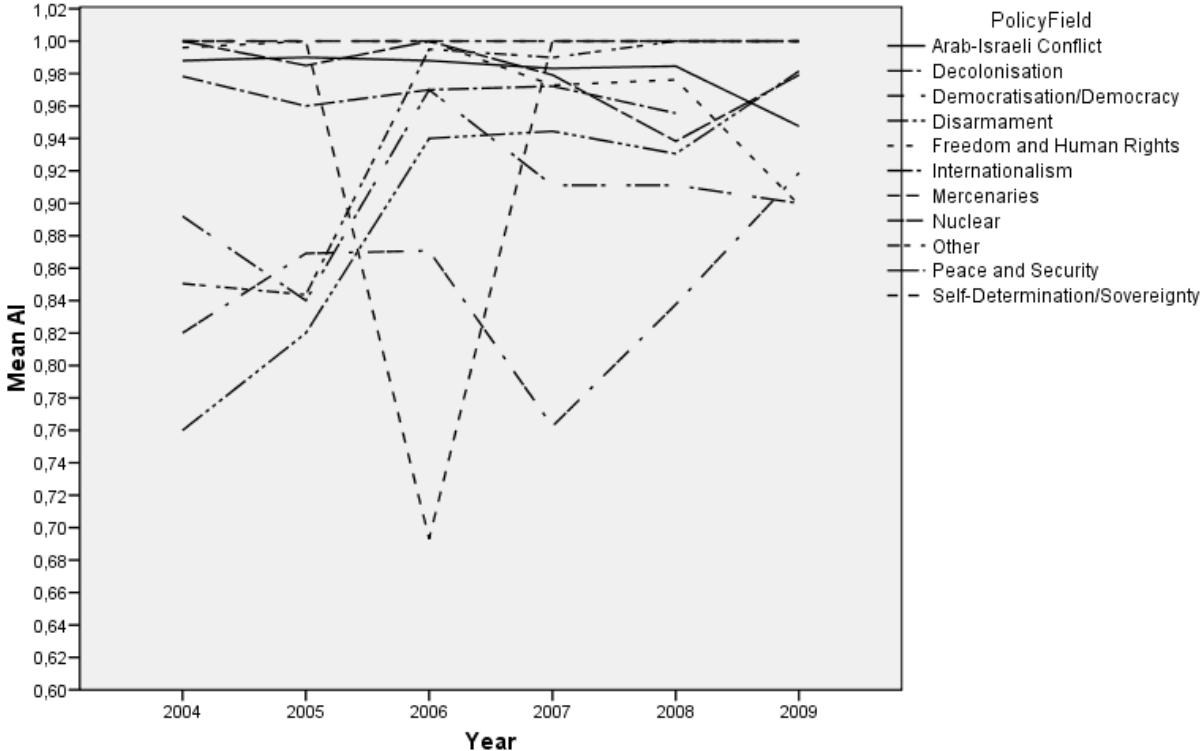
¹² This does not refer to the individual resolutions being weighted differently, but rather to the impact each issue area has on the overall average.

resolutions (77) only reinforces the significance of the relatively high general mean of .9478. With regard to the curve of the cohesion level it might be interesting to investigate whether in 2006, a significant value, there were more resolutions in issue areas with a generally high level of cohesion than in other years. A look at the voting records clarifies that most of the 2006 resolutions were issue in the area of Arab-Israeli Conflict (20), followed by Decolonisation (18) and Freedom and Human Rights (16). Arab-Israeli Conflict and Freedom and Human Rights traditionally show very high levels of the Agreement Index, (.988 and 1, respectively), however not decisively higher than usual within the field.

Decolonisation, on the other hand, does show an outlier in 2006, with a value of .97 as opposed to its mean of .92 over six years. This results from twelve resolutions concerned with small individual states, termed “Questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands”, in which perfect cohesion has been achieved. The implications are obvious: Even though it cannot be said for sure, the high value of 2006 might merely have been a consequence of a particularly high level of cohesion within this policy field at a certain moment in time.

Further attempts will be made in order to allow for a more detailed interpretation, taking into account eye-catching statistical results and variations over time, and consulting the voting records in search for the member states defecting in general or in certain areas. For this end, Figure 3 depicts the level of EU voting cohesion across issue areas and over time in the UNGA from 2004 to 2009 as expressed by the Agreement Index. Similar to Figure 1, the horizontal axis represents the year the resolutions were voted upon, whereas the vertical axis illustrates the value of the Agreement Index (see also Appendix, Table 2 for values). Each graph, shown with a different type of drawing the line, then, can be ascribed to one of the eleven particular policy fields. With the help of this figure variations over time within the individual issue areas can be identified and interpreted. In particular, it helps identifying in how far the individual areas conform with the overall trend seen before.

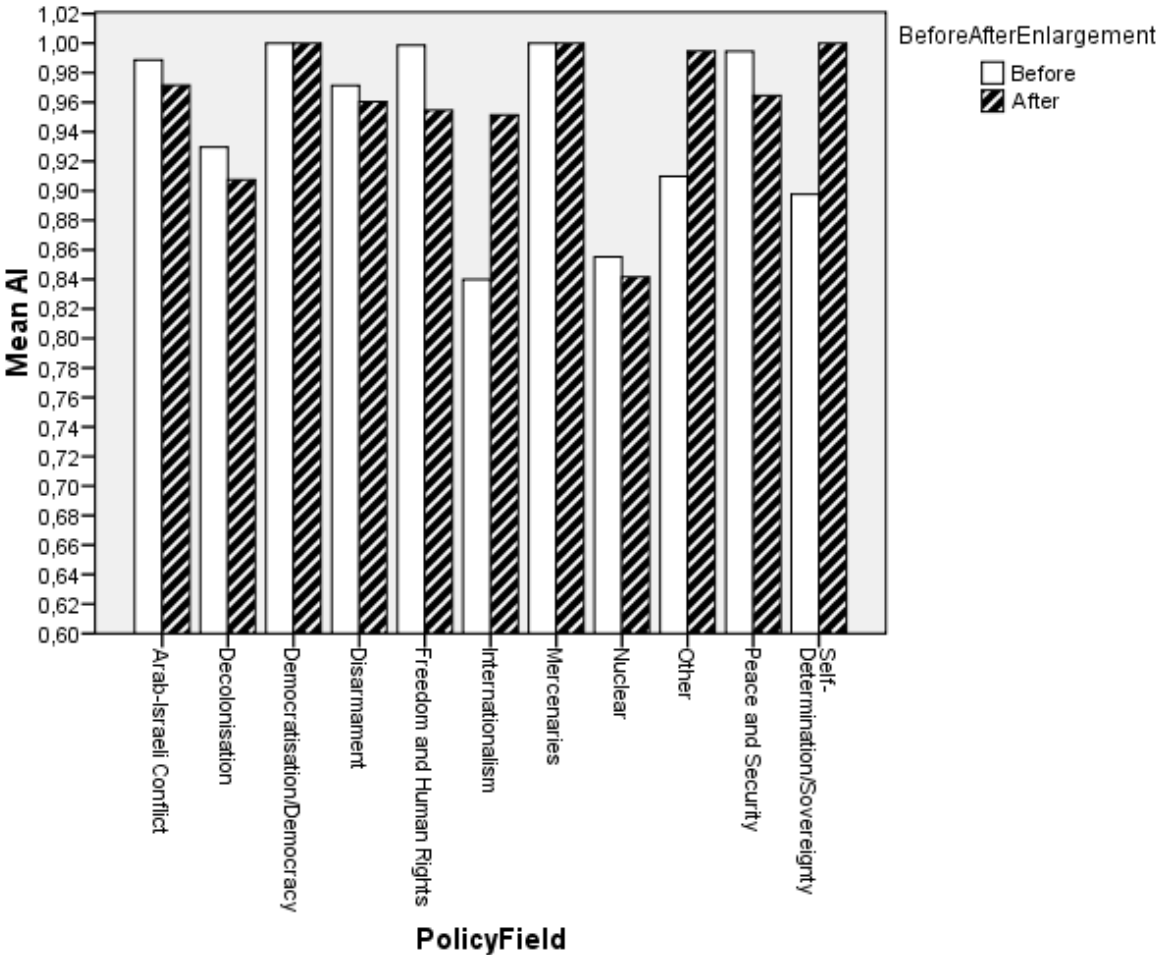
Figure 3: Level EU Voting Cohesion Across Issue Areas and Over Time



At an earlier stage it has been hypothesised that an enlargement of the European Union is expected to alter EU cohesion in a negative way (cf. Hypothesis 1). With regard to the 2007 enlargement the

general data compared over years confirmed this expectation in some manner, but it might be interesting to take a look at what trend the individual issue areas follow. Indeed, six of the eleven areas display a fall in the levels of voting cohesion from 2006 to 2007, and comparing the annual means of the Agreement Index before and after enlargement (Figure 4). This includes matters such as Arab-Israeli Conflict, Decolonisation, Freedom and Human Rights, Nuclear, Other, and Peace and Security. Especially the decline in cohesion in resolutions issued under the heading Nuclear has to be emphasised again, as it shows that the drop is fairly substantial (from .8708 to .7625). At the same time, however, it is hence also possible to observe that five of the issue areas do either not change the way the first hypothesis predicts, yielding either no change in the level of voting cohesion before and after enlargement, or even behaving vice versa: The issue areas of Internationalism, Other and Self-Determination/Sovereignty show an increased voting cohesion after 2007.

Figure 4: EU Voting Cohesion Across Policy Fields Before and After the 2007 Enlargement



Interesting to see is also what provoked the substantial decrease in nuclear matters in the first place, that is who can be identified as the main defectors and hence partly responsible for imperfect cohesion levels. Examining voting records for instance for 2007 it results that the newly joined states (Bulgaria and Romania) are in fact among the states departing from the EU mainstream and hence defecting EU cohesion, but do so only in six (of which four fall into the category of nuclear matters) of 90 defections overall¹³. In how far this makes the two states responsible for the decline in voting cohesion is difficult to state: The fact that the United Kingdom alone assembles 13 defections within this year, relativises the assumption to a large extent. In addition, keeping in mind that one should be cautious in

¹³ Again, in order to be classified as defection the member states have to vote opposed to the EU mainstream, that is the voting option with most supporters.

overestimating the 2006 value, the fall could plain and simple be interpreted as returning to the standard level.

Previously, it has also been put forward on the basis of theoretical considerations that the level of EU voting cohesion in the UNGA is likely to experience a rise sometime after enlargement. While in the overall mean this is the case for the period from 2005 to 2006¹⁴, the level stays roughly the same for 2008 and 2009. Of course, this might be due to the fact that during the first enlargement ten states joined the Union with the capacity to show their larger impact as compared to the mere two states becoming members three years later. Nevertheless, this thought is highly speculative and opposes the statements made earlier: If there is any chance of ascribing the decline in cohesion in 2007 to the enlargement, a possible increase would have been visible as well.

All in all, this analysis and discussion has shown that it is – to say the very least – rather difficult to make any reasonable statements as to the three hypotheses put forward. Even though the general trend follows the pattern predicted and a development towards a higher level of voting cohesion some time after the first enlargement as well as a decline after the second one can be observed, the variation is only small and statistically relevant in only one point. Similarly, the trends are not in unison in all issue areas, as figures 3 and 4 clearly show. In addition, no increase or learning effect overall is to be seen after 2007, and the one observed from 2005 to 2006 has to be considered belated – in case ascribing it to the assumptions. More likely, though, is that the high 2006 values (to recall: the only significant change) are not the result of any type of learning process, nor that the decrease toward 2007 is a response to the second enlargement. Rather, they come about due to some very specific resolutions issued within the area of Decolonisation.

What is more, a rather big problem is the lack of knowledge as to whether the changes in the level of voting cohesion are really the consequences of the new member states joining the Union or whether former members have defected to a larger extent. Tentatively, it can be said that the voting records have not shown any particularly high occurrence of the accession states defecting. In fact, which member state does not agree with the EU mainstream seems to be related to the issue areas concerned, and a particularly high rate is held by the United Kingdom. Therefore, preferences still seem to play an important role, which shows in the most sensitive areas where coordination is more difficult than in others.

Conclusions, Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

The European Union, to return to the initial question, does indeed speak with a single voice in the UNGA – most of the time. The high value of the Agreement Index shows that many, almost all member states tend to vote cohesively. This can be interpreted as a success, yes, however, the fact that there are great differences between the issue areas reveals that a lot of work still remains to be done if the European Union effectively wants to show union in all situations. The obvious differences between issue areas, in particular the field of nuclear matters, points at the fact that certain issues are of more concern to some member states than others, and an independent vote is then preferred in order to protect the sovereign state's preferences.

Hypotheses Revisited

This research has aimed at investigating the consequences of enlargement to the level of voting cohesion among the EU members in the United Nations General Assembly. On basis of the Agreement Index the development of this level has been described and analysed in the above sections with regard to the research question and the hypotheses put forward. It has been shown that in the moment of enlargement, in 2007, the level of voting cohesion did indeed decline (cf. Hypothesis 1); however, this fact has been ascribed to statistical outliers in the previous year which had provoked an extremely high and deviating value. Due to lack of data for the period before 2004, the effects of the 2004

¹⁴ Please remember the former hints that the 2006 value is likely not to be a result of a learning effect, but rather due to specific resolutions issued in a particular year.

enlargement could not be taken into account, so that Hypothesis 1 should be rejected for the period studied: Voting cohesion does not decrease significantly in the aftermath of an enlargement.

The lack of great variations as response to enlargement might be an indicator for candidate states already coordinating their votes before official accession, as has been investigated e.g. by Johansson-Nogués (2004), Luif (2003), Smith (2006) and Wouters (2007). Vision for the future and/or the will to belong to the Union and be a responsible partner might constitute an impulse for many of the nation states to start aligning their votes beforehand. In how far this is indeed the reason, however, is once again unclear. Just as well could the preferences and interests of the joining states be coincidentally concurring with those of the EU-15, for geopolitical, historical or cultural reasons. As has been indicated, adding players to the “game” does not necessarily provoke higher preference heterogeneity. Even though the theoretical discussion has ruled out such a phenomenon based on the observed and studied differences in these aspects, it exceeds the length and feasibility of this research to make explicit statements in this respect.

The decline being absent, an increase in voting cohesion that is statistically significant and independent of exceptional events cannot be observed, either. While a purely statistically significant increase takes place in 2006, two years after the first enlargement, deeper investigation into the characteristics of this occurrence have raised doubts about whether this has been due to the reasons put forward in the theoretical part, such as coordination mechanisms, cooperation pressures or the input of the length of membership elapsing and provoking feelings of identification. Rather, a relatively high number of very specific resolutions in the field of Decolonisation were issued in this particular year, which generated higher than normal values in voting cohesion.

Consequently, it is the variation of hypothesis 2a/b which has found most support in this research, at least partially. Indeed, the temporal development of the level of voting cohesion has not shown great variations or trends over time, neither decreases in voting cohesion immediately after enlargement, nor increases some time after some time of “recuperation”. Realism, and hence its deduction represented in Hypothesis 2b would ascribe the non-increase to the stability of preferences among the member states, which are expected to vote according to their interests and independent of any EU membership influences. Accordingly, the differences between issue areas, some apparently constituting more of a sensitive area to the member states than others, indicates that – at least in some circumstances – the states defend their own interests and prefer this to a common EU position in the UNGA. That there has not been a drop in voting cohesion after enlargement, then again, seems to be opposing this statement, as it would be expected that with more member states more preferences should provoke a decrease. According to Realist logic pre-enlargement voting alignment would also not take place, so that the explanation put forward by its advocates would likely be by means of already conforming preferences before accession. If following this thought, it has to be assumed that the newly joined member states have indeed not too deviating interests so that the winset stays approximately the same.

All in all, no support can be given to the hypotheses that with enlargement EU voting cohesion in the UNGA declines and that it recovers or simply increases after some time (again). As for why this is the case, two perspectives have been developed: On the one hand, voting alignment of the accession states might have been taken place before official enlargement, as proposed and elaborated before on the basis of the work of a number of authors (e.g. Johansson-Nogués, 2004; Luif, 2003; Smith, 2006; Wouters, 2007). On the other hand, the new member states’ interests could also be considered to be corresponding to the EU-15 mainstream, anyway, so that no cohesion pressures or the like would have been necessary.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

In consequence of this study’s lack of data on preference distributions further analysis of this aspect cannot be offered, but is suggested for future research. With the help of those it might have been possible to better assess the behaviour of the members after enlargement and to see whether voting against preferences with the EU mainstream takes place after all. Another suggestion is concerned with a follow-up analysis of voting cohesion in the UNGA. Even though cohesion was considered to be on a high level, it is not perfect and there are states defecting in the UNGA. It might be interesting

to investigate the voting behaviour of individual member states with regard to the topic at hand, identifying main coalitions, and single out the main (non-) defectors statistically. Moving away from the system level, coalitions or voting-groups could possibly be identified, also keeping in mind different issue areas. Their voting alignment could be illustrated with the help of a cluster analysis, which “aims to solve [the problem of] [grouping] individuals in such a way that those allocated to a particular group are, in some sense, close together” (Bartholomew, Steele, Moustaki & Galbraith, 2002, p. 15). Having information on the voting behaviour of individual member states permits further investigation into reasons and influences for this particular behaviour. For the United Kingdom this might for instance be the transatlantic dimension, seeing a deep relationship with the US. Moreover, similar to the study previously completed by Smith (2006) a qualitative research method based on (in-depth) interviews with the persons familiar with and involved in the UNGA negotiations could help evaluating whether the rest of the world sees the EU in a different light, i.e. possibly more diverse, in times of enlargement. The quantitative data of voting records does not necessarily comply with the perceived level of union of the Union.

This research has aimed at analysing the extent to which EU member states coordinate their votes within the United Nations General Assembly. The focus has been on the impact of enlargement to the cohesion levels. Even though enlargement as such has shown to be no decisive factor in EU cohesion, and the EU agrees on a wide majority of issues, it does (still) not reflect reality to consider the EU to be speaking with a single voice. In order to attain the goal put forward by Javier Solana, to play a global role and defend European interests collectively, the EU must also intent to coordinate in issue areas which are subjects of sensitive issues to single or groups of member states. It seems as if in the moment of truth national interests still can be the decisive forces.

Appendices

a) Table 1

Table 1: Eu Voting Cohesion in the UNGA (2004-2009)

AI

Year	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
2004	,948521	73	,1377103
2005	,937067	75	,1487881
2006	,965575	98	,1020012
2007	,942446	77	,1371269
2008	,945166	77	,1338239
2009	,941919	66	,1383088
Total	,947771	466	,1319096

b) Table 2

Table 2: EU Voting Cohesion Across Issue Areas (2004-2009)

AI

PolicyField	Year	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Arab-Israeli Conflict	2004	,988000	20	,0369352
	2005	,990000	18	,0308697
	2006	,988000	20	,0369352
	2007	,983157	17	,0394423
	2008	,984568	18	,0371730
	2009	,947531	18	,1576795
	Total	,980464	111	,0715382
Decolonisation	2004	,892000	5	,0889944
	2005	,840000	6	,1239355
	2006	,970000	18	,0591111
	2007	,911111	5	,0496904
	2008	,911111	5	,0496904
	2009	,900000	5	,0608581
	Total	,922071	44	,0824578
Democratisation/ Democracy	2004	1,000000	2	,0000000
	2005	1,000000	1	.
	2006	1,000000	1	.
	2007	1,000000	1	.
	2008	1,000000	1	.
	2009	1,000000	1	.
	Total	1,000000	7	,0000000

Disarmament	2004	,978261	6	,0532498
	2005	,960000	3	,0692820
	2006	,970000	6	,0501996
	2007	,972222	2	,0392837
	2008	,955556	5	,0993808
	Total	,967809	22	,0613670
Freedom and Human Rights	2004	,996000	15	,0154919
	2005	1,000000	14	,0000000
	2006	1,000000	16	,0000000
	2007	,972851	17	,1119395
	2008	,976190	14	,0890871
	2009	,898990	11	,2367712
Total	,977402	87	,1054416	
Internationalism	2004	,760000	1	.
	2005	,820000	1	.
	2006	,940000	1	.
	2007	,944444	1	.
	2008	,930556	4	,1051650
	2009	,981481	3	,0320750
Total	,921010	11	,0914377	
Mercenaries	2004	1,000000	1	.
	2006	1,000000	1	.
	2007	1,000000	1	.
	2008	1,000000	1	.
	2009	1,000000	1	.
Total	1,000000	5	,0000000	
Nuclear	2004	,820000	10	,2497999
	2005	,869091	11	,2160303
	2006	,870769	13	,1830511
	2007	,762464	12	,2499408
	2008	,837607	13	,2426508
	2009	,918803	13	,1125266
Total	,848096	72	,2106295	
Other	2004	,850500	5	,3018712
	2005	,843636	11	,2648593
	2006	,995000	12	,0173205
	2007	,989899	11	,0224733
	2008	1,000000	6	,0000000
	2009	1,000000	4	,0000000
Total	,946151	49	,1654786	
Peace and Security	2004	1,000000	6	,0000000
	2005	,985000	8	,0424264
	2006	1,000000	8	,0000000
	2007	,979167	8	,0413347
	2008	,938272	9	,1653757
	2009	,979167	8	,0413347
Total	,978534	47	,0775570	
Self-Determination/ Sovereignty	2004	1,000000	2	,0000000
	2005	1,000000	2	,0000000
	2006	,693182	2	,4339064
	2007	1,000000	2	,0000000
	2008	1,000000	1	.
	2009	1,000000	2	,0000000
Total	,944215	11	,1850183	

c) Table 3

Table 3: Confidence Interval for AI Mean of EU Voting Cohesion (2004-2009)

			Statistic	Std. Error
AI	Mean		,947771	,0061106
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	,935763	
		Upper Bound	,959779	
	5% Trimmed Mean		,972433	
	Median		1,000000	
	Variance		,017	
	Std. Deviation		,1319096	
	Minimum		,2200	
	Maximum		1,0000	
	Range		,7800	
	Interquartile Range		,0000	
	Skewness		-3,320	,113
	Kurtosis		11,357	,226

d) Comparing and Contrasting Policy Fields

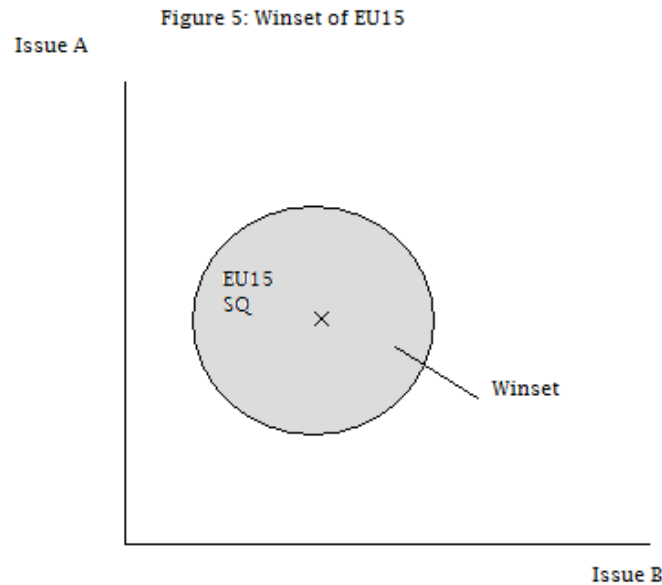
When establishing the categories in which the resolutions will be classified according to policy fields, it is important to keep in mind both the purpose of the additional differentiation as well as some basic considerations when comparing between two concepts. The main purpose of breaking down the analysis into different policy fields stems from the methodological need to control for spurious variables. A control variable, also labelled test variable, “is held constant in an attempt to clarify further the relationship between two other variables” (Babbie, 2007, p. 435). One of the most problematic issues in this research is the impossibility to include preferences into the analysis, which are expected to have some influence on the relationship. Not knowing preferences at the same time implies not knowing whether voting cohesion takes place due to active coordination or whether it is just a coincidence, because the member states’ preferences are the same anyway.

As there is no data available on preferences of the states, least of their preferences in the UNGA sessions, this study will draw upon issue areas instead. This decision is based on the assumption that member states should have the same preferences, or at least roughly the same, and above all stable interests within the issue areas. To put it more simply: A country voting in favour of abolishing nuclear weapons one year is very unlikely to vote against it the following year, or even five years later. It has been indicated in the former analysis that some policy fields might constitute ‘*domaines réservés*’ or differ along the continuum of ‘high’ and ‘low’ politics. All these factors, mainly revolving around variation in preferences, made me take the decision to include a control variable in the analysis by comparing the ‘Agreement Index’ across the policy fields, since “[c]omparing is controlling” (Sartori, 1991, p. 244-45).

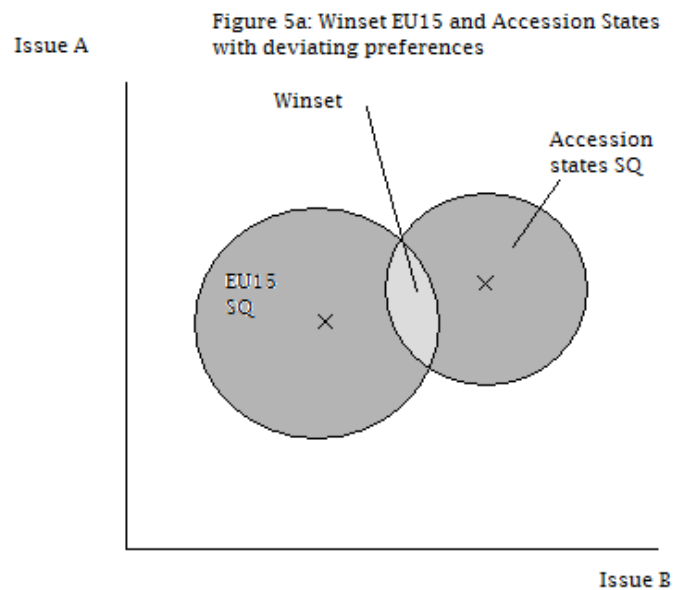
Coming up with the categories is a further step that needs to be considered extensively and in order to reach the aim of controlling. In this respect Morlino (1994, p. 17) emphasises that one needs to “understand what one wants to study, defining properties and attributes, as well as classify correctly in order to identify the empirical variations of the phenomenon in the different realities”. The most important step, hence, is to “search variations” (Morlino, 1994, p. 19), or, to define it along the lines of Sartori: “[C]omparing is contrasting one thing from the other” (1994, p. 31). Consequently, I established a set of categories, which made it possible to compare and contrast two concepts from each other.

e) *Elaboration on Winsets*

In order to elaborate on and clarify the argument put forward by Tsebelis (2002), I came up with a very simplified example illustrated with three figures. Assuming that the EU-15 represent one body of preferences on two issues, labelled as “EU15 SQ”, the winset lies in the whole circle comprising these preferences (Figure 5).

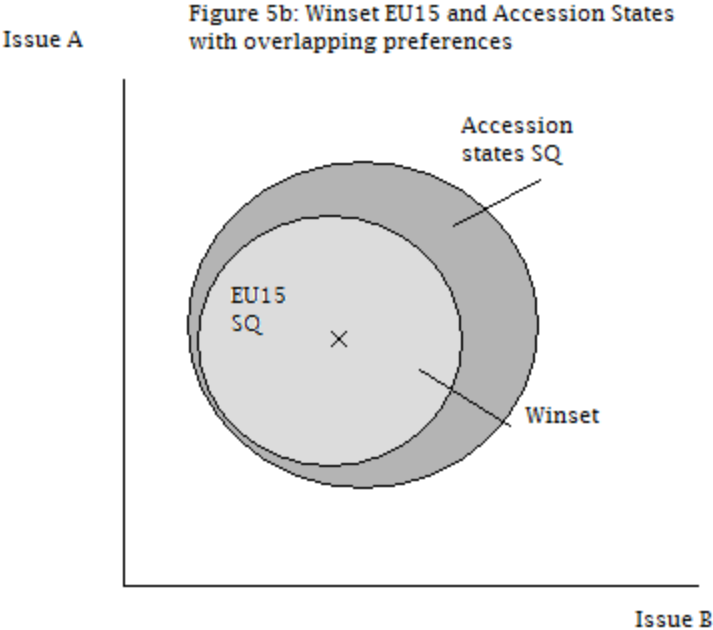


As mentioned earlier with enlargement two different situations may arise, which have different implications on voting cohesion. The first scenario assumes that the accession states hold heterogeneous preferences from those of the EU-15 mainstream. Hence, a new circle of preferences adds to the picture, with the winset (light grey) being the intersection of the EU-15 and the new member states' set of preferences (Figure 5a).



The result is a much smaller winset, meaning that the possibility to coincide in voting interests in the UNGA would be smaller as well. It becomes more difficult to agree on a common position with the rising number of political preferences. On the other hand, the second scenario depicts a different situation, in which the accession states' preferences coincide and overlap with the EU-15 status quo

(Figure 5b). The winset reflects the size and position of the original one and communicates a simple message which is also true in more complicated circumstances: Additional players do thus not necessarily provoke higher preference heterogeneity or lower voting cohesion.



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