

**Do Bulgarian representatives in the working groups
of the Council of the European Union argue or bargain?**

T H E S I S

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INTRODUCTION

Since 1 January 2007 Republic of Bulgaria has been provided with the opportunity to actively participate in the formulation of new and amendments to existing policies of the European Union (EU). This means in practice that the country has voting power in the decision making process in the EU and from 'policy taker' of policies of the EU, it became an active policy maker in the policy formulation process.

The official start of the membership negotiations of Bulgaria with the EU begun on 15 February 2000 and was concluded on 15 June 2004, six months ahead of schedule. Thus, the period 2000–2005, marked Bulgaria's acquisition of the status of candidate country. The European Council in Brussels, on 16-17 December 2004, acknowledged the end of the negotiations for accession and declared that the EU is looking forward to welcome the country as a Council member in January 2007.

The European Parliament gave consent for Bulgaria's membership on 13 April 2005 with 522 voices 'for', 70 'against' and 69 'abstain' from voting. By signing the Treaty of Accession to the EU of the Republic of Bulgaria on 25 April 2005 in Luxembourg the country acquired the status of active observer (observer status) in the decision making process of EU institutions. Bulgarian ministers were thereafter entitled to participate in the European Council's sessions (with no voting right until full membership) and the experts from the Bulgarian administration were actively involved in the participation and coordination of national positions, which were presented to the European Council and the sectoral committees.

Under the terms of the Accession Treaty, EU declares that, its aim is to accept Bulgaria on 1 January 2007. The accession agreement also contains the option for postponing the membership with one year, if EU finds that there is a 'serious risk' that the country would not been able to implement the required reforms.

However, in February 2005, The EU Commission gave a positive evaluation for the signing of the Treaty of Accession. Nevertheless, until the date of accession, the Commission continued to monitor the implementation of the undertaken reforms by enforcing a system of close monitoring and by preparing annual reports for Bulgaria's progress towards membership. On 26 September 2006 the last monitoring report of the EU Commission for Bulgaria was published, in which it became clear that the country will be a full member of the EU on 1 January 2007. Since its accession to the EU, the Republic of Bulgaria has become a full member with all ensuing rights and responsibilities thereof.

In the country itself, the feelings of the people at large were that the accession of Bulgaria in the EU legitimised and put flesh to the economic reforms which have already being made or undertaken in the name of the full membership of the country in the EU. What is more, the accession of Bulgaria to the EU has psychological, political and economic dimensions, which have to be taken into consideration and studied in their complexity all together in order to outline to the maximum extend the overall picture of this historical event.

The purpose of this paper, however, is more modest. It makes an effort at '*triangulation*' of a large N-study by Daniel Naurin (2007) conducted among the representatives of all, by that time /February-March 2006/, 25 member states in eleven working groups of the Council of the EU. It will be argued that the accession of Bulgaria on 1 January 2007 provides an excellent opportunity to investigate this general observation about the presence of arguing and bargaining in the working groups of the Council in detail by case study (N=1) research of the Bulgarian permanent representatives (permreps) in the Council's working groups.

Moreover, it will be interesting to triangulate across this previous study, which was part of a broader project on cooperation and communication patterns in the working groups of the Council of the EU, in order to test the same hypothesis in different case and point in time.

Motivation for doing the survey

There are at least three reasons why this study is now particularly timely. First, enough time has passed since the Bulgarian accession in 2007 took place. The latter gives a fertile ground for further investigation on the process of acculturation of Bulgaria as a Council newcomer to the ethos of the European norm intensive environment.

Second, as it will be argued below, the bulk of the published literature on the Council is written before the second wave of the fifth Eastern enlargement of the EU. Therefore, there is a change in the real world which is not reflected by corresponding change in our understanding.

Third, a helpful test of normative density is to study the behaviour of newcomers. In the current paper that is taken into consideration by analysing the case of Bulgaria as Council novice. In particular, the survey is conducted at the level of individual negotiators by making online questionnaire among the Bulgarian permanent representatives in Brussels. By so doing, the goal is to observe, also via indirect contact through personal correspondence with some of them, whether and how they experience a trial-and-error sequence of learning the rules of the game and how the Bulgarian permreps are socialised to the Council's norms.

New member states are exposed to the rules during an 'active observer' period which, as stated above, Bulgaria acquired on 25 April 2005 with the signing of the Treaty of Accession to the EU in Luxembourg. A case in point of unsocialised newcomer learning to practice a more co-operative negotiation style is Sweden's first year attending Council negotiations where 'exposure to the Council culture was a baptism of fire' as they registered nearly half of all 'no' votes in the Council for 2005 (Hayes-Renshaw et al. 2006, p. 183; Lewis, 2008, p. 176). Although not a textbook example of socialisation as Sweden, the case of Bulgaria nevertheless provides an interesting test of hypothesis made by previous researchers on the communication patterns in the working groups of the Council.

In particular, the case study aims at investigating what kind of decision-making mode dominates the behaviour of the Bulgarian permanent representatives in Brussels at the time being. At the extreme, we can distinguish two types of social interaction: arguing and bargaining. Since Bulgaria was not officially a member state during the time this survey was conducted in February-March 2006 among all the other 25 member states, whether legislative decision-making in the Council is a consensual process or hard bargaining from the point of view of the Bulgarian delegates is still an open question. The survey presented in this paper aims at addressing this gap in the literature by putting this question to the Bulgarian permanent representatives (permreps) in the Council working groups.

However, among the students of IR theories, the notion of deliberation is notoriously famous for being difficult to operationalize and measure. Hence, empirical studies face significant methodological hurdles in distinguishing between arguing and bargaining. Therefore, in order to capture the mode of interaction of the Bulgarian permreps during the negotiation process, the empirical research needs operationalization of the theoretical phenomena it seeks to investigate. For survey research and in particular within the limited time frame of master degree project this must be fairly narrow.

As a result, in this case, the focus lies on motivations for giving reasons, which as previous researchers on the Council (Naurin, 2007, p. 19; Checkel, 2001, p. 9) have argued is a key for distinguishing arguing from bargaining. Thus, the specific explanatory research question this paper tries to answer in order to reach to the core of the predominant mode of interaction among the Bulgarian permreps can be summarized as follows: **'Why give reason in the working groups of the Council?'**

To overcome the test being inconclusive due to observational equivalence – different modes might predict the same or very similar results – as it is the case with reason giving being as

competitive with arguing as it is with bargaining, the attention will be focused on studying actors' motivation behind providing arguments. In the same line of thinking, it is important to note that the above question will be investigated through a *constructivist perspective* while rational choice theory and '*power politics*' will take the role of alternative explanations to enhance the internal validity of the results.

Furthermore, in the Council's context, different modes might be at work in different institutional settings. For example: 'civil servants meeting in working groups or the group of permanent representatives (COREPER) might engage in cooperative exchange or deliberation whereas ministers might engage in bargaining' (Warntjen, 2009, p. 11). Hence, the interpretation of the results will depend on the perspective and the level of analysis. In this case, the unit of analysis, as suggested above, is the behaviour of the Bulgarian permreps in the working groups of the Council whereas the unit of observation is each individual's motivation for giving reasons.

On the latter, it deserves to be noted that there is no pretence that the researcher can predict each individual behaviour nor even explain anyone person's motivation in full. Sometimes though it is useful to make general conclusions whether arguing or bargaining best describes the interaction style of the Bulgarian permreps.

The conclusions which can be drawn from the herewith presented research on communication patterns among the Bulgarian permanent representatives (permreps), like those from the large-N study on which it is based, therefore concern primarily the distinction between arguing and bargaining – whether agreements are sought based on discussion on the merits or via threats and promises – rather than between communicative and strategic action (Naurin, 2007, p. 20).

This paper argues that – over the years, COREPER has been, and remains, the key laboratory to test whether and how national officials become socialised into a Brussels based collective culture and what is particularly important for this study, what difference this makes for the Bulgarian permreps' negotiation styles. Since the shared culture is most evident in those bodies that meet most frequently over the years, COREPER being the supreme illustration, then, the *most likely research design* of this paper is justifiable.

Hence, the survey focuses on analysing the behaviour of the members of the Bulgarian Permanent representation who stay in Brussels rather than ministers working in the capital. What is more, according to Checkel, agents in the transition, or new, states of East Europe and the former USSR – who come from domestic settings marked by weak political institutions – will be more open to socialization driven by persuasion (Checkel, 2001, p. 16).

Following from that, Bulgaria can be considered most likely case of socialization because it is a small and new country, which makes the Bulgarian permreps more susceptible to norm compliance. That the norm of arguing exists has been shown by the work of others, which will be discussed in the literature review part of the current paper. The goal is not just a review of the literature, but a critical assessment of its strengths and weaknesses.

Outlook on the Findings and Structure of the paper

Following both the literature on deliberation and the canonical Council literature, it is expected that Bulgaria will show features of deliberative member government and would - at a minimum – strive for consensus, offer reasoned explanations for its positions, and avoid pressing for a vote in the Council. The findings indicate that in most of the cases where Bulgarian representatives intervene at a working group meeting – they bargain in favour of their position, i.e. give reasons with the intention of clarifying why they are in favour of this position without trying to convince the others to change their minds. Reason-giving is also more common and considered to be more important than communicating salience.

A general contribution to the deliberative theory which comes out of these findings is that arguing 'takes a feeling of confidence and safety' (Naurin, 2007, p. 4). The following analysis of the Bulgarian permreps and their communication patterns in the working groups of the Council suggests that their behaviour in the Council is determined by the more readily observable decision rule (whether QMV, unanimity, counting) but also from their 'marge de manoeuvre'. Meaning that, the scope for deliberation is more restricted as a result of more narrowly defined instructions given to the permreps by the capital. This implies that 'actors who are in control of the decision-making situation can afford to argue more than actors who feel pressured by the risk of losing out in the negotiations' (Naurin, 2007, p. 4).

In other words, a possible explanation for these findings can be that Bulgarian permreps have to feel 'safe enough to argue' as suggested by the article with the same title (Naurin, 2007). Thus, the findings fit with previous research showing that arguing seems to be 'most common when it matters the least', i.e. when political stakes are low (Naurin, 2009, p. 50).

An important point, that deserves to be noted here, is that the finding that '*integrative bargaining*' is the predominant mode of interaction among the Bulgarian permreps in the Council can be interpreted as the 'highly socially desirable and politically correct answer'. The latter implies of the possibility that respondents adjust their answers in accordance with socially accepted norms of behavior and potentially bias responses resulting from memory failure or other types of interview-setting biases.

In response to such suspicions and in order to avoid as much as it is possible such criticism of potentially biased results, the present survey coded arguing and bargaining in terms of 'attempts at convincing the others' taken as evidence of arguing and on the other hand, 'attempts at clarifying one's position', which is coded as integrative bargaining. It is argued in the herewith presented research that in this way the respondents have no reason to make the connection between 'convincing', meaning arguing and 'clarifying' taken to represent integrative bargaining. Hence, it is rather unlikely that the respondents adjust their answers following norms of appropriateness.

Another important remark concerning the findings of the research is that the aim of the three survey questions presented in the online questionnaire distributed across the Bulgarian permreps is not to 'tap their memories about individual motives behind reason-giving'. As it will be argued at length in the coming, Methodological part of this paper, attempts at reconstructing the actor's motivation for giving reasons would require a careful process tracing or conversation analysis of the actual talks in the discursive process with many more participants. In relation to that, the current paper proposes one possible solution to use Q-methodology in future reserach in order to study the actors' subjectivity and deconstruct their motivation more precisely.

It would of course be fascinating to read Bulgarian negotiators' reports back home from Council meetings during these first years of its membership to track reports where Bulgaria was left out of actual deliberations and see how national instructions evolved. But to the researcher's knowledge 'outside' academic student have yet to gain such informational access. In other words, although the recent years saw great advancement in relation to the openness and transparency of the Council, this institution is still covered with a veil of secrecy making it hard for an outside researcher to process trace information on the actual negotiations and deliberation process that takes place behind closed doors.

Therefore, although process tracing or critical discourse analysis of individual speech acts and triangulation across multiple data streams are recognized as more reliable than making a rather simple survey consisting of three short questions, this remains a clear direction for future research and hence, out of the narrow scope of the current paper. Access to confidential documentation given to insiders and interns including informal evaluations and proceedings on the outcomes of meetings can be helpful in this direction.

Moreover, it is difficult to see how in three short questions one can deconstruct the actors' motivation behind reason-giving. Rather, as it was argued above, the aim of the current paper is to narrow down the research topic to a specific and feasible question. Namely, the herewith presented study test empirically in the case of Bulgaria whether trying to convince others is more often the main intention behind giving reasons than is clarifying one's position in order to facilitate a compromise. The latter, as it will be argued in the next sections, is the way this paper proposes to reach to the answer of the main explanatory research question why do the Bulgarian representatives give reasons in the working groups of the Council of the European Union.

Hence, making an online three-step survey on modes of communication among the Bulgarian permreps at a given point in time is only one way among all the other methods (narrative analysis, Q-methodology) available before the researchers on the Council. Thus, the '*modus operandi*' this paper follows has been chosen mainly due to its feasibility and doability within the limited timeframe of a Master degree project.

Last but not least important critique can be to question the basis of the method of studying the actors' motivation per se. In other words, as Panke (2006, p.374) has it, individual motivations to select arguing or bargaining speech acts are even irrelevant. Some scholars argue that studying motives is a futile exercise, questioning 'what sense does it make to just tally instances of memory recalling of individuals about their motives for giving reasons in characterizing, at aggregate level, a discursive process with many more participants'.

Although the point of the latter can be seen, there are numerous other authors who claim that it is exactly this actors' motivation that is the key for operationalising and measuring arguing and bargaining empirically. For instance, Checkel (2001, p. 565), argues that by using multiple, process-oriented techniques one can actually 'reconstruct' agent motivation. What is more, Checkel specify five such scope conditions under which agents should be especially open to argumentative persuasion and thus arguing (Checkel, 2001, p.562).

First, arguing is more likely to be effective when the persuadee is in a novel and uncertain environment. This condition is met in the cas study presented in the curent paper because Bulgaria is a newcomming country in the EU.

Second, arguing is more likely to be effective when the persuadee has few prior, ingrained beliefs that are inconsistent with the persuader's message. Put differently, novice agents with few cognitive priors will be relatively open to persuasion and arguing. Checkel shows empirically in two cases – Germany and Ukraine – that among older policy makers socialized in postwar values and institutions, where an ethnic conception of Germaneness prevailed, those actors carried significant cognitive priors. Instead, he concludes that one sees hints of more deliberative and persuasive processes only with younger politicians.

Third, arguing and persuasion are more likely to be effective when the persuader is an autoritative member of the in-group to which the persuadee belongs or wants to belong.

Fourth, arguing and persuasion are more likely to be effective when the persuader does not lecture or demand but, instead, acts out principles of serious deliberative argument.

Fifth and final, arguing and persuasion are more likely to be effective when the persuader-persuadee interaction occur in less politicised and more insulated, private settings.

These five scope conditions were enumerated above in purpose, because they reflect in a rather compressed form the institutional conditions in COREPER (less politicized and more insulated, private settings) and the characteristics of the Bulgarian negotiators in the Council's working groups (novice agents with few cognite priors due to domestic settings marked by weak political institutions).

In sum, as Checkel has it (2001, p. 8) given their own professed concerns, students of deliberation do need to take care whether the 'force of the better argument' has convinced someone (internalisation) or whether arguments are being deployed strategically (incentives).

And, according to him, methodologically, this will require greater attention to agent motivation.

After this brief outlook on the findings, the attention is now directed towards discussing the structure of the paper. In the next, theoretical part of the study, an outline of the theoretical expectations will be given by summarizing specific and measurable hypothesis. The notions of arguing and bargaining will be conceptualized and explained. Then, the relationship between the dependent and independent variables will be theorized using an arrow diagram.

The causal mechanism this paper will focus on, based on the previous research on the Council, is that arguing is the predominant mode of decision-making in the behaviour of the Bulgarian delegates at this point in time. Nevertheless, in order to strengthen the conclusions made out of this survey and enhance the internal validity of the results, what would a rationalist theory and power politics say about this behaviour will also be considered as alternative explanations.

In the methodological part of the paper, the empirical research design to measure what kind of decision-making mode dominates the behaviour of the Bulgarian delegates at the time the survey was undertaken (June 2010) will be described. In order to test in practice whether arguing as hypothesized causal mechanism is actually the predominant mode of decision-making, the study will use online questionnaire to get to the core of the actors' motivation to give reasons in the Council. By making an effort at triangulating the research design used in a large N-study conducted by Naurin (2007; 2009), the present paper will test the same hypothesis with different data and point in time by case study research design on negotiation modes dominant among the Bulgarian permreps in the Council.

The data and analysis section will trace empirically the role of arguing as hypothesized causal mechanism and pay attention to alternative explanations. The data will be described using tables and diagrams in order to illustrate the patterns for the case study of Bulgaria and juxtapose those findings with the results of the large N-study on the other by that time 25 member states. The strengths and weaknesses of the research design, methods and indicators will be discussed and the interpretation and analysis of the results will be made. In the end, whether or not the findings corroborate the hypothesis that arguing is the predominant mode of decision-making for the Bulgarian permreps will be discussed.

Last but not least important, in the final concluding part of the paper, the answer to the main explanatory research question will be given and the implications that follow from it discussed. Beside those immediate findings, some of the interesting observations from the interaction and established rapport with the Bulgarian permreps will be summarized pointing for possible explanations of the results. Finally, the limitations of the study will be discussed and directions for future research will be given.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Literature Review

During the last two decades there has been a tendency in normative political theory to emphasise the importance of deliberation. This emphasis on deliberation – reiterated in an ever-expanding body of literature – derives largely from the work of Jürgen Habermas, whose theory of communicative action has been adapted to the study of IR and to the study of EU governance (Pollack & Shaffer, 2008, p. 146). According to this view, democratic politics should be more about giving good reasons than forcing or striking deals. Arguing, rather than bargaining or voting, is at the heart of democracy (Naurin, 2007, p. 3).

In the meantime, this '*deliberative turn*' in International Relations has reached EU studies. Consequently, we can distinguish *four different strands* of contributions to the study of argumentative discourse in the field of European integration (Risse & Kleine, 2010, p. 709).

First, there are various normative contributions to deliberative democracy in the EU particularly concerned with the democratic or legitimacy deficit of the European Union. Although this group of authors promote institutional designs that enable deliberative discourse and their proposed institutional solutions resemble closely those identified by scholars approaching arguing and discourse from a more analytical and empirical angle, their work is out of the narrow scope of the current research.

A second group of authors, the current paper aims at contributing to, approaches arguing and deliberation with an empirical rather than normative focus. Daniel Naurin, for example, undertook a survey of counsellors of all EU member states in 11 different working groups of the Council (Naurin, 2007a; 2007b; 2009). He proposes a solution to one particularly difficult problem facing researchers, who try to measure deliberation empirically, namely the distinction between arguing and cooperative forms of bargaining. He comes to the conclusion that the key for operationalising this distinction lies in studying the actors' motivations for giving reasons.

In addition to that, there are several case studies using process tracing in and around the Council framework that have provided evidence of deliberative behaviour. By far the most systematic attempt in this direction is the work of Lewis (Lewis, 2003; 2005; 2008), based on a thorough empirical investigation of COREPER using careful qualitative analysis. He contends, rather convincingly, that the processes of socialization and deliberation play a very important role in shaping attitudes and behaviour.

What is more, we know now that the often asserted claim of consensus-seeking in Council negotiations is confirmed by voting records (Hayes-Renshaw et al., 2006; Hagemann et al., 2007). And previously understudied components of the Council are now better accounted for, including the rotating Presidency (Wamtjen, 2008; Tallberg, 2008), the general secretariat (Beach, 2008) and preparatory committees (Häge, 2008). Arne Niemann studied arguing and bargaining with regard to the EU's external trade negotiations (Niemann, 2008), while Jeffrey Checkel looked at persuasion in the context of compliance with the Council of Europe's human rights provisions (Checkel, 2001a; 2001b).

Finally, there has been some recent work on the EU's constitutional processes, from the negotiations leading up to the Constitutional Convention (Panke, 2006). The contribution of this and other authors (Risse & Kleine, 2010) consists of specifying scope conditions under which deliberation actually matters in terms of influencing outcomes in EU negotiation settings.

A third type of contributions has approached arguing and reason-giving from a rational choice perspective. Frank Schimmelfennig in particular has advanced the notion of 'rhetorical action' in this context (Schimmelfennig, 2003). In his understanding, rhetoric action means

using arguments and reasons for strategic purposes. Schimmelfennig's concept is therefore situated precisely at the intersection of bargaining and arguing. Schimmelfennig convincingly demonstrated his approach empirically with regard to the EU's and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) enlargement decisions.

A fourth contribution to the study of discourse focuses on the 'power of discourse' and is heavily influenced by the works of Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe. The concept of 'critical discourse analysis' as developed by Norman Fairclough and Ruth Wodak has also been applied to the EU recently. In the following, however, the focus is on arguing and reason giving in the Habermasian meaning of discourse, which arguably is more suitable for a study on negotiation patterns in the working groups of the Council.

The norm of consensus decision-making

Consequently, in the following paragraphs the attention will be directed towards discussing what has already been known on the issue of deliberation in the available literature, pointing to some shortcomings of previous research that the current study proposes to improve.

To begin with, one of the most basic and durable normative standards in the Council is to make collective decisions by consensus. The shared culture remains most evident in those bodies that meet most frequently – with COREPER being an ideal laboratory to test these empirically, because this committee represents the needle's eye through which the legislative workload of the Council flows (Lewis, 2003, p. 97). And the permanent representatives who live in Brussels and meet weekly to prepare the upcoming ministerial meetings are exemplars of state agents whose behaviour reveals that norms and deliberation matters.

What is more, Lewis finds that the Council is dominated by consensus behaviour designed to bring everyone on board, and that 'argumentative rationality plays an important part in managing the legislative output of the EU' (Lewis, 2008, p. 181). The credibility of the latter is confirmed by most of the students of the Council of the EU, who agree that decision-making within this institution is usually consensual. Negotiations are conducted within the frame of a strong consensus norm. Studies of voting records have found that ministers vote very seldom, at least explicitly, even in cases where qualified majority voting (QMV) is possible (Naurin, 2007, p. 13).

That is to say, that despite provisions for QMV, EU governments overwhelmingly take decisions by consensus in the Council. In 75 to 80 per cent of all cases where decisions could have been taken through voting, member states instead resort to consensus agreements (Hayes-Renshaw et al., 2006, p. 163). A recent study after the 2004 enlargement confirmed that the level of disagreement recorded officially in voting has not increased since the 2004 enlargement (Hagemann & De Clerck-Sachsse, 2007).

There must then be other measures in place to explain the lack of 'no' votes in the Council. One such measure described in the literature is the use of *formal statements* which are indeed one way for the governments to show their opposition instead of voting 'no'. These statements are used to signal to home governments that the representative has stressed his or her position on a piece of legislation, but were reluctant to take a more drastic step and prevent consensus (Hagemann et al., 2007, p. 1). It therefore appears as if the Council records now show an even greater emphasis on the culture of consensus, while at the same time the governments have been able to ensure the recording of their true political positions in these formal statements.

Having said that, it obviously requires some explanation why governments would choose to record their position in this manner rather than exercising their legal rights to oppose a given policy through voting (Hagemann et al., 2007, p. 14). The lack of formal and negative votes

has been interpreted as compliance to a norm of consensus (Warntjen, 2010, p. 677). To put it differently, compliance with Council-specific informal rules and procedures explains why 'some dogs do not appear to bark' (Hayes-Renshaw et al., 2006, p. 286).

This is not surprising since in the literature on Council decision-making consensus has become the keyword for explaining policy change (Konig et al., 2008, p. 81). Hence, the question whether member states abstain from using their veto power due to a culture of consensus. If taken one step further the above findings call into question the explanatory power of veto player theory or even rational choice theory. Also within international relations arguing has been upheld as a possible and normatively compelling alternative to unmasked power politics (Naurin, 2007, p. 3).

Therefore, what would rationalist theories expect for the behaviour of the Bulgarian permreps, will be considered in this paper as alternative explanations. Controlling for such will enhance the scope and the validity of the conclusions made. Especially if one is to have in mind that the question of how do delegates behave can be addressed not just from constructivist perspective but also from rationalist point of view.

Power Politics as alternative explanation

Sociological institutionalism is well positioned to explain how the above described norm of consensus diffuses in the EU bargaining system and becomes internalised among negotiators. In comparison to most other international institutions, the EU is characterised by a relatively high degree of cultural homogeneity, shared values and therefore constitutes a fertile ground for norms to spread and structure negotiating behaviour (Checkel, 2005; Lewis, 2009).

Here, the phrase: 'relatively high degree of cultural homogeneity' is taken to mean that the cultural diversity is what makes the EU unique 'united in diversity' entity. It is exactly this 'unity of opposites' that is seen as a matter of strength.

The latter can be exemplified by taking the case of Bulgaria as an illustration. As it will be argued below, the Bulgarian negotiators actually constructed 'common lifeworld' with the other delegations in the EU using narratives during the pre-accession phase. By means of these narratives and through discursive possesses, Bulgaria displayed characteristics of 'likeness' to the EU ethos. At the same time, after the accession of Bulgaria, the Bulgarian culture was not assimilated. In the same vein, by no means the cultures of the different states that constitute the EU will be absorbed and lose their own characteristics in becoming part of one larger culture of the EU.

Hence, the relatively high degree of cultural homogeneity is taken here to mean that the member states have to share a '*common lifeworld*', meaning shared values and believes, shared idea for their common future together as one union of friends.

Negotiators that have been part of EU system for a long time have become socialised to act in accordance with the norm of consensus decision-making, which even may have gained a taken-for-granted character (Heisenberg, 2005). Newcomers, by contrast, frequently diverge from this norm initially, but later adapt to the expectations once they learn the decision-making culture (Lewis, 2008). Examples of the latter include Sweden's extensive record of contested voting in its first year of membership, and the subsequent adoption of the consensus norm when negotiators become acculturated.

Indeed, that the new member states after the 2004 enlargement did change their behaviour in terms of contesting Council decisions has been shown by previous research on the Council (Hagemann et al., 2007). However, the pattern is opposite to the one exhibited by Sweden (Warntjen, 2010, p. 675). As the figures show, the new member states seem to be learning 'the game' and begin to assert their positions more clearly as the initial period of membership comes to a close (Hagemann et al., 2007, p. 8). Therefore, the case of Sweden, which initially

voted very often against proposals in the Council, although explicit ‘no’ votes are rare, is the exception rather than the rule.

While at first glance it may be difficult to understand why the EU’s large member states, advantaged by the system of QMV, accept the practice of consensus decision-making, *power oriented institutionalism* can help to explain this puzzle. It is possible for powerful states to respect the procedural norm of consensus and simultaneously use various practices to escape the constraints on power intrinsic to this norm. The large member states of the EU can draw on their structural power advantages to shape arguments adopted by consensus or unanimity (Tallberg, 2008). Moreover, negotiations, even where they result in consensus agreements, are known to take place in the shadow of the vote (Tallberg, 2010), which grants the EU’s large member states more extensive influence over outcomes. Rather than challenging differentiated influence, the consensus norm thus creates a procedural fiction that hides and legitimises the exploitation of the weak by the strong.

On the latter, there are at least two major arguments, that are described in the literature, against the claim that arguing plays a substantial role in international relations (Risse, 2000, p. 14) On the one hand, actors in world politics in general and in the working groups of the Council in particular, do not share a common language, history, or culture. On the other hand, relationships of power are never absent in international relations. Since, according to Foucault, power as a social structure resides in the discourse itself. It is, therefore, preposterous to assume that truth-seeking discourse is possible in international politics.

In other words, two crucial preconditions for argumentative rationality as identified by Habermas are missing in world politics. Each of these objections will be addressed one at a time in the following section in order to critically assess under what conditions arguing might be expected to be the dominant mode of interaction in the working groups of the Council.

Specifically, on the question that actors in world politics do not share a common language, history, or culture. According to Risse (2000, p. 14), prenegotiations usually encompass a phase whereby actors construct such a common lifeworld in a symbolic sense, mainly through narratives. Therefore, it can be argued that the Bulgarian permreps construct their common lifeworld with the permreps of the other, currently 26 member states, during the active observer status and the pre-negotiation phase of Bulgaria’s membership. The latter is a prerequisite for building mutual trust in the authenticity of each other’s communications.

The second objection raised against argumentative rationality concerns the nexus between arguing and power and therefore is more difficult to tackle. That is because power as a relationship of influencing an actor’s behaviour, might affect arguing in at least two ways:

First, power relations might define who has legitimate access to a discourse and what counts as a ‘*good argument*’. Second, even more important, is that power asymmetries in the Council working groups might affect who says what and when and how arguments are framed in the first place (Risse & Kleine, 2010, p. 16).

Admittedly, the question of power is one conceptual lacuna in the constructivist literature on Europe and the Council more specifically. According to Checkel, missing in this discussion is an understanding of power that is both hard-edged and multi-faceted (Checkel, 2006, p. 22). Hard-edged in a sense that reflects the compulsive face of power: ‘the ability of A to get B to do what B otherwise would not do’ (Lukes, 2005, p. 16). Multi-faceted, meaning that institutional power is actors’ control of others in indirect ways, where formal and informal institutions mediate between A and B working through the rules of these institutions, ‘A constrains the actions of B’ (Lukes, 2005, p. 27). Productive power is generated through discourse and the system of knowledge through which meaning is produced and transformed (framing). Thus, while Habermas may enjoin us to background power (Risse 2000 p.7), the reality is more complex.

Following from the above, it can be concluded that perhaps the high degree of consensus that the scholars of the EU observe is explained by the exercise of institutional power from the Commission. In this case, the ability to keep certain issues off the EU agenda. The latter is also confirmed by other studies of the Council (Schneider, 2008, p. 281) that found that most trivially, the 'consensus' could simply be a consequence of the tendency of the Commission to introduce legislative proposals that make a majority of the member states happy. The Commission quite frequently simply refuses to initiate legislation to which a majority of the member states would object (Schneider, 2008, p. 282). Controversial issues hardly ever reach the final stage of voting, which is an example of the power exercised by the Commission over the EU agenda setting.

It is thus not the force of the better argument that changes minds, as students of Habermas would claim. Rather, arguments carry the day when advanced by individuals with particular characteristics who operate in particular kinds of institutional settings that are conducive to persuasion (Checkel, 2006, p. 19).

After considering what the alternative explanations and the gaps in the literature might be, the next section will discuss how exactly this study proposes to remedy them. To begin with, while Council research has 'reached a new phase of sophistication', as Daniel Naurin and Helen Wallace point out in recent edited volume (Naurin & Wallace, 2008, pp. 1-2), they also note that 'there are still many dark corners waiting to be revealed' with two particularly important for the purposes of this study.

First, the notion of deliberation is notoriously difficult to operationalise and measure empirically. Many researchers on the Council (Niemann, 2008, p. 121; Checkel, 2001, p. 10) point out that this is a particularly difficult problem, namely how does one recognize communicative action when one sees it and how can one distinguish it from bargaining? While the rigor of these studies reviewed above, that use process tracing as their main method of analysis, is admirable, the operational measure of deliberation is somewhat problematic. The more empirically oriented work of this sort fails to employ a transparent research methodology, where the data and their limitations are clearly identified, proxies of measuring deliberation are established and alternative explanations are considered. Lacking this, it is difficult for other scholars to see deliberation's causal role (Checkel, 2001, p. 3).

Second, as argued above, Bulgaria is relatively new country in the EU. Hence, there are not enough scientific accounts that describe the behaviour of the Bulgarian delegates in Brussels. These gaps in the literature lead to a narrower focus and set of research questions in the current paper. Namely, the attention will be directed towards studying the actors' motivation for giving reasons. Arguably, the most straightforward way of analyzing motives is asking people about them in interviews (Naurin, 2007, p. 560). Therefore, this study makes use of this method by conducting online questionnaire based on a three question survey in order to get to the core of actor's motivation why give reasons for their positions. Thus, the case study of Bulgaria complements recent work (Naurin, 2007; 2007; 2009) that examines the presence of arguing and bargaining by large N-study of, at that time, 25 member states in 11 working groups of the Council of the EU.

All things considered, the literature on deliberation is voluminous and constantly evolving. Therefore, the researcher makes no pretence to summarised it. Instead, the goals in this section were more modest: to review it and explore the models of human behaviour on which it is based as well as to survey possible alternative explanations. It argues that there is still no agreement among the scholars about how important arguing really is, compared to bargaining and voting, for coming to agreements in the Council.

In the previous, literature review part of this paper, it was discussed that missing in this discussion is the answer to a particular question. Namely, is arguing a significant mode of decision-making in the case of Bulgaria or not? This question points at one gap in the

literature that this study proposes to remedy. Namely, up until now, there are not many scientific accounts analysing the behaviour of the Bulgarian permreps as Council newcomer. Moreover, in the literature there is a hope that less powerful actors will have more of a say in policy processes dominated by arguing rather than bargaining (Naurin, 2009, p. 36). Therefore, it will be interesting to see whether a priori less powerful actors, in particular representatives of small and new member states such as Bulgaria, are more inclined towards arguing.

In sum, whether Bulgarian permreps argue or bargain in the working groups of the Council remains an open question. It is known already by the results of a large N-study conducted on the Council (Naurin, 2007) that, in general, arguing is indeed a common phenomenon in the Council. But there is no clear picture how frequent this type of behaviour is among the Bulgarian permreps. The current paper will strive to give an answer to this question by asking why the Bulgarian delegates give reasons in the Council. As Naurin (2007, p. 19) has argued, the latter is the key for distinguishing arguing from bargaining empirically.

How can we define deliberation, arguing and bargaining and operationalise these notions for empirical testing will be discussed in the next section.

Conceptualising Arguing and Bargaining

Before the notions of arguing and bargaining to be operationalised and measured, their meaning needs to be first of all properly defined. Therefore, the goal of this section is to conceptualise those concepts in a way amenable for empirical testing. In the literature on deliberation, there is certainly no consensus on how this should be done (Panke, 2006; Risse et al., 2010; Naurin, 2007). Hence, the question how can we define the concepts of arguing and bargaining and operationalise these for empirical research remains open.

Consequently, in order to make sense of the arguing – bargaining distinction, it is found useful to follow Naurin's typology of different types of social decision procedure (Naurin, 2009, p. 38) that was used in a large-N research project on arguing and bargaining in the Council of the European Union. This typology has the advantage of being clear in the definitions of these contested concepts by capturing their essence. In addition to that, however, in the lines to follow it will be discussed how the other scholars of the EU categorise these different modes of decision-making in the Council.

To begin with, arguing and bargaining are two distinct modes of interaction in which social actors can reach agreement on a collective decision. In the literature (Naurin, 2007, p. 561), the central distinguishing characteristic between the two is whether the actors assume that preferences, or 'wants', are up for change or not. As a result, if an actor *aims at convincing* others of the value of a certain policy option, he is *arguing* whereas, if the communication between the parties is focused on reaching a common decision, but includes *no effort at changing the minds* of the others about what they want or what they perceive to be right, then *bargaining* is occurring. The method in the former is giving convincing reasons concerning the merits of different options while in the latter, the preferences are assumed to be fixed in the short term and the merits of the question are not introduced (Naurin, 2007, p. 562).

This conception of arguing and bargaining fits well with the common view of deliberative theorists of bargaining as a form of interest-aggregation that builds on the exchange of threats and promises, while arguing is based on claims of validity. However, arguing defined as discussion on merits is not enough to capture the concept of deliberation as used by normative theorists. In deliberative democratic theory genuine deliberation is considered to be present when the actors involved are not only making attempts at convincing others of the merits of a certain course of action, but are also open themselves for being convinced by the force of the better argument. Power and social hierarchies consequently recede in the

background (Risse et al., 2010, p. 5). Argumentative and deliberative behaviour is as goal-oriented as strategic interactions. The goal, however, is not to pursue one's fixed preferences, but to seek a reasoned consensus.

The distinction between arguing and bargaining, thus, is not one between strategic and communicative action as arguing may be either strategic or communicative (Naurin, 2007, p. 562). Therefore, one can distinguish between cooperative and competitive arguing, where the former means sincere deliberation, while the latter is termed '*rhetorical action*' following Schimmelfennig (2003, p. 160) and describes a mode of interaction which lacks reciprocity. Rhetorical action means that arguments are used strategically with the purpose of persuading opponents rather than reaching common understanding (Naurin, 2007, p. 11).

Thus, rhetorical action is the attempt of negotiators to frame any given issue in order to steer negotiations in the direction desired by the framer. Hence, this is different from lying and cheating as it falls within the repertoire of legitimate strategic action and demarcates the borderline between bargaining and arguing (Schimmelfennig, 2003). *Framing* is a sort of fair competition. That is because, after competing frames has been proposed, parties feel compelled to sort them out. At this point, according to Müller (2004, p. 415), the competition will relate much more to the stronger relation of the competing frames to applicable normative settings or whether an agent's arguments resonate and are thus empowered/legitimated by broader discourses than to mere power supporting a particular frame. Competitive framing then enters the form of an exchange of arguments justifying the advantage of one frame over the other.

As it was mentioned above, bargaining is also two types, namely cooperative and competitive. The cooperative form is known as '*integrative bargaining*' (Naurin, 2009, p. 37). The goal in an integrative bargaining game is not to transform preferences, but to clarify them and to put them on the table, whereas '*distributive bargaining*' is about competitive bargaining game and pressuring the other participants to make concessions by using threats. The result is that one participant's gain is the others' loss. In other words, in distributive bargaining mode, actors aim to elicit as many concessions from their negotiation partners as possible while making as few as possible themselves (Warntjen, 2010, p. 667).

Thus, the scholars working in the '*negotiation analysis*' tradition have contributed to our knowledge and understanding of decision-making modes by distinguishing between distributive and integrative bargaining. Distributive bargaining focuses on the relative share an actor would receive from an agreement. In contrast, integrative bargaining aims at increasing the absolute value of the deal to benefit everyone as much as possible.

The conceptualisation of the different modes of decision-making made above is in accordance with the existing literature on the issue. For instance, in the same vein, Andreas Warntjen distinguishes between distributive bargaining, co-operative exchange, norm-guided behaviour and deliberation (Warntjen, 2010, p.667). This categorisation of decision-making modes draws on the distinctions made in the literature and has the benefit of overcoming an analytical disadvantage incurred if negotiation styles are coded in dichotomous terms as either arguing or bargaining.

In the scheme below the empirical reality of Council negotiation is more accurately depicted as a continuum ranging between the polar ideal-types of '*competitive*' (distributive bargaining in the lower right-hand side of the *Table 1*) and '*co-operative*' (deliberative styles in the upper left-hand corner of the *Table 1*). Thus, this typology takes into consideration the better known distinction between distributive and integrative strategies and tactics, whereas using the arguing/bargaining typology instead would make it difficult to see the variations between these very different strategies and study their effects. As a result, the four types of interaction described above are summarised using the *Table 1* below:

Table 1: Distinguishing arguing and bargaining as social decision procedures

	Arguing	Bargaining
Co-operative	<p>Deliberation</p> <p><i>Problem:</i> Disagreement over course of action due to partiality of views, differing frames of reference</p> <p><i>Mode:</i> dialogue, elaborate each other's view, explore each other's understanding of empirical facts and normative principles</p> <p><i>Goal:</i> common and better understanding of right course of action</p>	<p>Integrative bargaining</p> <p><i>Problem:</i> Disagreement over course of action, caused by conflicting wants (self-regarding, other-regarding or ideal-regarding)</p> <p><i>Mode:</i> clarify wants of other and self, searching for optimal compromise solution, trading via issue linkages, log rolling, 'IOUs'</p> <p><i>Goal:</i> to maximize own wants (via the want-satisfaction also of others)</p>
Competitive	<p>Rhetorical Action</p> <p><i>Problem:</i> Disagreement over course of action, caused by lack of information or other's wrong belief</p> <p><i>Mode:</i> monologue, 'rhetorical action', plebiscitory reason.</p> <p><i>Goal:</i> persuade other of one's preferred course of action</p>	<p>Distributive bargaining</p> <p><i>Problem:</i> Disagreement over course of action, caused by conflicting wants (self-regarding, other-regarding or ideal-regarding)</p> <p><i>Mode:</i> signalling commitments, pressuring via threats and demands, giving concessions</p> <p><i>Goal:</i> to maximize own wants (at the cost of others)</p>

Source: (Naurin, 2007, p. 13)

The four types of interaction have in common the goal of reaching agreement on a common course of action. The two bargaining modes and rhetorical action are based on strategic action, while deliberation implies reciprocity and sincere efforts at reaching understanding (Naurin, 2009, p. 38). This is in line with other research on deliberation which establishes through truth-seeking discourse what '*the right thing to do*' would be, whereas norm-guided behaviour leads actors to follow norms without making a conscious choice (Warttjen, 2010, p. 670).

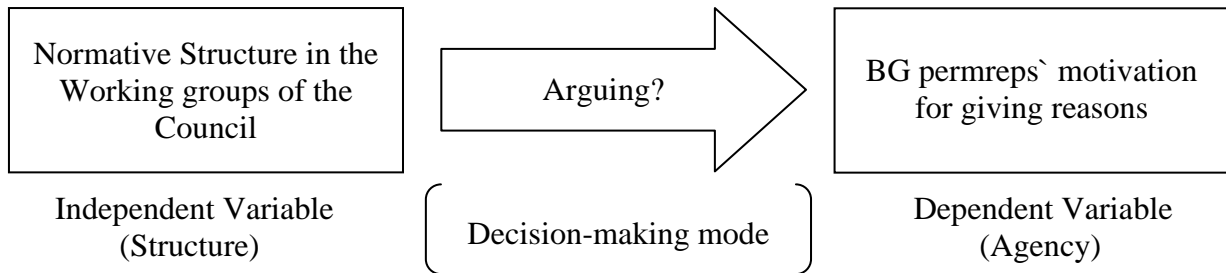
Theoretical expectations

The Council of Ministers is the most important legislative institution of the European Union. This is where representatives from the twenty-seven member states (as of 2007) negotiate and decide on EU legislation and other forms of policy. There are convincing scientific accounts that suggest that arguing is a significant mode of decision making in this key arena for European politics (Heisenberg, 2005; Lewis, 2005; Naurin, 2007; Risse et al., 2010).

Following from these works, it can be concluded that the norm of arguing exists and what is more, it is the predominant mode of decision-making in the working groups of the Council. Therefore, arguing is the theoretically expected causal relationship between the dependent

variable, in this case the behaviour of the Bulgarian permreps, and the independent variable – the normative structure in the working groups of the Council. To make this point clear, and for presenting and keeping track of complicated explanations between the dependent and independent variables an arrow diagram will be used (Johnson & Reynolds, 2008, p. 68):

Figure 1: Arrow diagram of negotiation processes in the working groups of the Council and Bulgarian permreps` behaviour/motivation for giving reasons



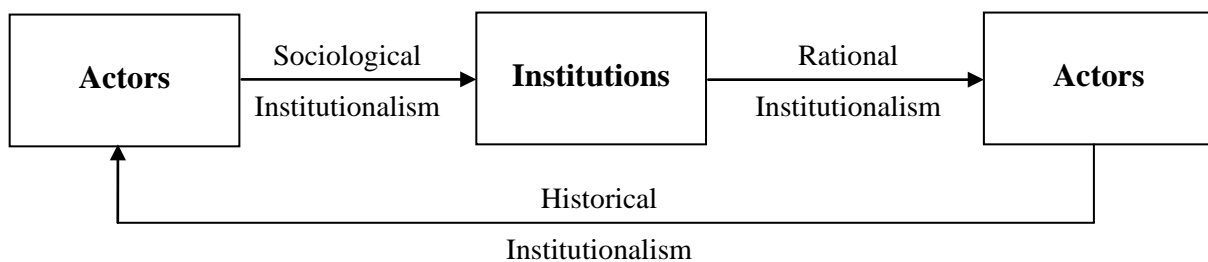
Arguably, the most interesting relationships to investigate are those where the intersection between structure and agency happens. In this case, the independent variable is the structural context of the working groups of the Council whereas the dependent variable is the agency`s behaviour. The latter is operationalised in a manner amenable for empirical testing as the Bulgarian permreps` motivation for giving reasons, which as Naurin (2007, p. 19) and Checkel (2001, p. 565) had argued is the key for distinguishing arguing from bargaining.

For representational clarity, the arrow diagram is used to summarise the discussion that is to follow. Admittedly, this is oversimplified as the empirical reality of Council negotiation is more accurately depicted as agents are not simply conditioned by the normative structure, but are actively reproducing or reconstructing the structure as their interactions go on.

To put it differently, according to Marsh and Smith (2000, p. 5), who propose a *dialectical approach* towards the study of policy networks, any model which stress exclusively either structure or agency has severe limitations. It is more adequate to see the relationship as dialectical, as involving what Hay (2000, p. 15) terms '*strategic learning process*'. Meaning that, action is taken by an actor within a structural context. The actor brings strategic knowledge to the structured context and both that strategic knowledge and the structured context help shape the agent`s action. However, the process is one of almost constant iterations, as the action affects both the actor`s strategic knowledge and the structured context, which then, in turn, shape but of course do not determine, the agent`s future action.

In order to illustrate this point clearer and present in which sense the relationship between structure and agency is dialectical anyhow, the figure bellow will be used as an illustration:

Figure 1.1: Mutual constitution of agents and structure



The basic idea behind the *Figure 1.1* above is that according to Sociological Institutionalism, actors shape institutions, which according to Rational Institutionalism, via the 'rules of the game' shape the behaviour of the actors. On the other hand, Historical Institutionalism claims that at $t=0$, actors shape institutions that (at $t=1$) shape them in their decisions on changes in the Institutions.

The key claim is that political actors do not (always) make decisions based on calculation of individual utility or material benefit, but they follow socially defined rules and norms – even when doing so may not be directly in their self-interest. Hence, the key questions to be asked are: how do collective rules and norms guide political behaviour and how are these rules socially constructed.

Scholars theorised two mechanisms by which this constitutive effect of Institutions works, namely *socialization* and *social learning*. Firstly, through processes of socialization, actors internalise rules/norms which then influence how they see them themselves and what they perceive as their interests/preferences. Secondly, through processes of social learning, actors acquire new preferences through argumentation, deliberation and persuasion (through interaction).

These mechanisms may shift preferences away from narrow (economic) self-interest. Therefore, constructivist contributions to EU Integration theory can be summarised as: description of socialisation processes. Constructivists theorised three key mechanisms of socialisation. The three are: repeated *contact* over time (an argument about the quantity of contact); *institutional environments* (an argument about structural context and preconditions) and *social interaction* where communication in some form plays a central role (an argument about the quality of the contact).

Meaning that socialisation is most likely in institutions when identities and interests are in flux (Checkel, 2001, 2003). In addition to that, constructivist value added is the notion of ideas tracing (how the EU was constructed through discourse and narratives).

To return to the Marsh and Smith's dialectical approach towards Policy Networks and put it in the context of the Council. According to researchers (Lewis, 2009; Warntjen, 2010, p. 665), the Council of the EU is a crucial actor in EU decision making. Because it can be characterised as an international negotiation forum on the one hand and a *supranational network* on the other. Hence, the Council as an international institution is like a network. Consequently, this network, the culture within the network and the resources and attitudes of network members are all, to an extent, socially or discursively constructed. As such, all the relationships, but particularly that between structure and agency is dialectical.

In Marsh and Smith's usage of the term '*dialectical relationship*' the latter means an iterative relationship between two variables in which each affects the other in a continuing iterative process (Marsh & Smith, 2000, p. 5). The process is easily illustrated if one is to consider the relationship between structure and agency presented in the arrow diagram above.

The idea behind the graphic is to emphasize that the relationship between networks and outcomes is not a simple, unidimensional one. Rather, as Marsh and Smith argued, there are three interactive or dialectical relationships involved between: the structure of the network and the agents operating within them; the network and the context within which it operates and the network and the policy outcome.

To illustrate this point further in the context of the Council, the attention is now turning to give some examples from previous research on the issue. For instance, in the 2010 Journal of European Public Policy special issue on EU negotiation theory, Andreas Warntjen discuss the difficulties associated with identifying a particular mode of decision-making in the Council's framework and argue that owing to observational equivalence some empirical findings can be used to support different conclusions (Warntjen, 2010, p. 665).

That is to say that, different modes might be at work depending on the context. For example, the decision-making mode might differ according to the (institutional) settings (Lewis, 2009; McKibben, 2010; Risse et al., 2010). In the context of the Council of the EU, civil servants meeting in working groups or the group of permanent representatives (COREPER) might engage in co-operative exchange or deliberation whereas ministers might engage in bargaining (Warntjen, 2010, p. 671). Therefore, the Council's 'culture' is not uniform and can be found in varying degrees of tensile strength and durability throughout different institutional venues.

Empirical studies hence seek to unveil institutional scope conditions conducive to the different modes of decision-making. But institutional factors also affect the outcome. For example, larger voting power should, *ceteris paribus*, give more influence to bigger member states when qualified majority voting (QMV) applies (Bailer, 2010). What is more, the member state holding the Presidency arguably benefits from its prerogative of making the first proposal (Tallberg, 2008; Wamntjen, 2008).

The third dialectical relationship discussed above involves the network and the policy outcome. There are scholars within the Council that studied this relationship (Risse & Kleine, 2010, p. 712) and tried to identify potential institutional scope conditions for arguing leading to persuasion. Their strategy is to focus on properties of the negotiation outcome, because effective arguing leads to a *reasoned consensus*, which is in many ways distinguishable from the *compromises* that typically result from processes of pure bargaining.

However, a correlation between various institutional scope conditions and a particular negotiation outcome does not yet allow the researchers on the Council to clearly identify the causal mechanism linking analytically distinct modes to different empirical observations.

Hence, an important avenue for future research could be to investigate the three dialectical relationships described above in their complexity as acting together in determining the existing correlation between the Council as supranational network and the policy outcomes.

Based on the discussion above it can be concluded that, if the Bulgarian permreps give reasons in order to convince the others of the merits of their position, then they are arguing. On the contrary, if they bargain in favour of their position, then it is expected that the Bulgarian permreps will merely exchange information by clarifying and making others understand why they are in favour of their position.

According to Johnson and Reynolds (2008, p. 150), hypothesis suggested by large-N study, general observation, or other sources can be investigated in detail by small-N research (in the case of the current paper, case study research, where N=1). Hence, as it is suggested by a study, which was part of a broader project on cooperation and communication patterns in the working groups of the Council, conducted among all, at that time, 25 member states, **the hypothesis this paper will try to test in the case of Bulgaria is:**

H1: Trying to convince others is more often the main motivation for the Bulgarian permreps to give reasons than clarifying one's positions in order to facilitate a compromise.

In other words, it is expected that arguing will be the predominant mode of interaction for the Bulgarian permreps during the negotiations process. Nevertheless, in order to enhance the internal validity of the results, bargaining and power politics will be discussed as plausible alternative explanations. That is because, Naurin's findings also indicate that 'representatives of smaller and new coming states argue considerably less often than bigger states' (Naurin, 2007, p. 29).

Bulgaria is both, a small and newcomer member state and it can be expected therefore, that it is possible for the Bulgarian representatives not to consider arguing as their primary mode of interaction. Hence, in order to explain whether arguing or bargaining is the predominant mode of decision-making it is important to control for both the variation between the

different actors (*agency*) and different institutional settings (*structure*). Thus, it has to be taken into account that the current survey on the Bulgarian permreps' motivation for giving reasons in the working groups of the Council will give a snapshot on different actors in different point in time within different institutional settings. Meaning that, the micro focus of this study prevents seeing the broad picture: it could be that the dominant mode of interaction between all, currently 27 member states, has changed over time.

Nevertheless, one possible way of operationalising arguing and bargaining for empirical measurement will be discussed in the next methodological part of the paper.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Operationalising and Measuring Arguing and Bargaining for Empirical Testing

Working with the notion of deliberation brings about substantial methodological challenges. A shortcoming with which scholars working on socialization and deliberation typically struggle is that some of the notions are neither clearly identifiable nor easily measurable. There is agreement among the scholars that as the study of deliberation progresses, we are increasingly facing complex methodological and empirical questions: How can we identify deliberation, and how can we distinguish it from other action models such as bargaining?

Methodologically, a central challenge for proponents of both arguing and bargaining therefore is recognising them when they see them. According to Naurin (2007, p. 4), one possible solution to this particularly difficult problem with respect to operationalisation and measurement of arguing and bargaining empirically is to look not only at whether, but also why, actors give reasons for their positions. What is more, Naurin advises that empirical studies of arguing and bargaining do better trying to capture actors' motivations for giving reasons instead of studying cooperative versus competitive behaviour, or whether reasons were given and/or positions changed (Naurin, 2007, p. 16).

This view is strengthened by the work of proponents of persuasion like Checkel (2003, p. 13), who uses process tracing as his main method of analysis. Arguably, both groups of arguing/deliberation and persuasion perspectives are seeking to explain the same phenomenon: why do the actors engage in deliberation and what is their motivation behind giving reasons.

Contrary to that, Panke (2006, p. 374), argues that individual motivations to select arguing or bargaining speech acts are even irrelevant and that the emphasis should be put on the contextual preconditions for the impacts of ideas. Put differently, the empirical question to be asked is whether the actors share a common standard for the evaluation of ideas, do they constructed a common lifeworld or not.

Scholars have used different terms – deliberation, social learning, argumentation, persuasion – to characterise the interaction that can lead to preference change and thus socialization. However, whatever the term, the challenge has been to operationalise it in a manner amenable to empirical testing.

A case in point is operationalizing 'arguing' and 'bargaining' in terms of typical speech acts for both types of speech that Claudia Landwehr used in her analysis of a fundamental and highly polarising conflict – the German decision over the import of embryonic stem cells (Landwehr, 2009). By analysing negotiations in different forums, Landwehr shows that a well justified and widely accepted compromise can be achieved in a conflict that had appeared irresolvable in moral terms and irreducible in terms of interest. Hence, mutual understanding and consensus can be viewed as realistic results of political decision-making

processes and achieving compromise is not the first best solution coming out of the processes of deliberation.

Landwehr proposes a model of preference transformation through communication and develops a typology of modes of political interaction that distinguishes *discussion*, *deliberation*, *debate* and *bargaining*. This serves as a framework for the analysis of the conceptual and empirical relationship between communication and political preferences and the institutional preconditions for preference change and co-ordination.

Empirical studies hence seek to unveil institutional scope conditions for endogenous changes in actors' preferences resulting either from arguing or alternatively from bargaining. But before engaging in identifying potential institutional scope conditions conducive for arguing or bargaining, we need to have some confidence in the fact that the outcome which is studied indeed entails elements of either bargaining or arguing.

One possible strategy in that relation is to focus on properties of the negotiation outcome. That is because effective arguing leads to a reasoned *consensus*, whereas processes of pure bargaining typically result in *compromises*.

Nevertheless, it can be argued that a correlation between various institutional scope conditions and particular negotiation outcome does not yet allow the researchers to clearly identify the causal mechanism (whether arguing or bargaining) leads to the decision-making outcome.

What is more, operationalizing 'arguing' and 'bargaining' in terms of typical speech acts for both types of speech entails that the researcher has knowledge and insights of the discursive process with many more participants, which as it was argued before is not a feasible task for an outside student observer. Especially, if one is to have in mind the secrecy surrounding the Council's negotiations, the researcher in this institutional settings is contented with imperfect knowledge of the actors' preferences.

As a result, although one can agree completely with the latter point that the proposed research design has its shortcomings, nevertheless, it served its purposes of being specific on the definitions used for arguing and bargaining and consequently measuring them empirically using an online survey. As it can be seen from the previous theoretical part of the paper, in this case the categories that are the focus of the research – *arguing* and *bargaining* – are defined partly on the basis of the motives of the actors. Therefore, it is necessary to assume that the Bulgarian permreps know why they give reasons in the working groups of the Council in order to make sense of these concepts.

Moreover, some scholars argue that studying motives is a futile exercise, since motives are unobservable or even illusive, pointing in the meantime at impossibility of 'getting inside people's heads'. Having said that, as Naurin has it (2007, p. 567), the methodological difficulties involved in studying motives are much exaggerated in parts of the literature and according to his view, 'the most straightforward way of analysing motives is asking people about them in interviews' (Naurin, 2007, p. 560). The advantages and disadvantages of using survey research will be summarised in the following paragraph.

To begin with, the main advantages with survey research in this context are two. First, as argued before, for both the proponents of arguing/deliberation and for those of persuasion perspectives, it is difficult to distinguish arguing from bargaining without considering the motives of the actors (Checkel, 2001, p. 565; Naurin, 2007, p. 16). According to Checkel, given their own professed concerns, students of deliberation do need to take care whether the 'force of the better argument' has convinced someone (internalization) or whether arguments are being deployed strategically (incentives). And, methodologically, this will require greater attention to agent motivation (2001, p. 8).

In addition to that, as it can be seen from the next section, giving reasons is as compatible with cooperative bargaining as with arguing, the difference lies in the motive. Therefore, in

order to distinguish arguing from bargaining empirically, researchers need to study not only if the actors give reasons for their positions, but also why (Naurin, 2007, p. 16). In interviews one can, under certain conditions, ask people about their motives.

What is more, the advantage of the survey approach is that actors can even be asked about tactics that do not show up in official transcripts or cannot be captured through participant observation. In other words, only the participants themselves know which intentions they had when using a specific tactic (i.e. whether a proposal for compromise was sincere), and how they perceived the tactics used by other negotiators.

Secondly, as Naurin has it (2007, p. 569), much of the research on deliberation at the elite level has been based on case study research, using process tracing. Survey data may complement such studies by providing the basis for general conclusions on aggregate levels of the presence of arguing and bargaining. And what is more, in this particular case of Bulgaria, the most likely research design of the current paper may test hypotheses suggested by large-N studies adding up new data on variation in actors' behaviour depending on institutional and other contextual factors.

On the other hand, the downsides of using interviews and surveys are well known in the literature. In particular there is always a possibility that the respondents adjust their answers to norms of appropriateness as they may have an incentive to respond in a specific manner. Based on Naurin (2007, p. 570), questions giving rise to serious problems of political correctness should be avoided, but not all questions do. It all depends on the questions asked, who is asked and for what purpose.

Following from Babbie (2010, p. 318), in a survey, the researcher has a set of questions that must be asked with particular words and in a particular order. As it can be seen later on, this method is used in practice by the way the questions are put forward in the questionnaire which makes it highly unlikely that norms of appropriateness have biased the answers.

According to Naurin (2007, p. 570), there is simply no reason to believe that a negotiator in the Council of the EU, who admitted that he or she gave reasons mainly to clarify his or her position in the negotiations rather than tried to convince others to change their minds about the merits of this position, would in any way be stigmatised or feel ashamed of the answer. Therefore, one of the shortcomings of surveys has been overcome in the current study.

However, problems and challenges remain with three more specific. First, respondents to the survey may have difficulties recalling the specific tactics they used in a negotiation that took place some time in the past. Another problem with surveys, according to Dür and Mateo (2010, p. 689), is that it is often difficult to get access to key participants in this case Bulgarian permanent representatives.

Missing in this operationalisation, as Naurin has it (2007, p. 19), is the element of reciprocity which characterises the normative ideal of deliberation. Just because the actor him/her-self argues – gives reasons in order to convince others – that does not necessarily mean that he/she is prepared to be convinced by the arguments of others.

With reference to *Table 1* above, this operationalisation means that one cannot be sure whether arguing is competitive or cooperative in each single case. This is the methodological price that must be paid here for choosing to use survey research as the main method of analysis. The latter, according to Naurin (2007, p. 571) puts the researcher in a dilemma between asking too much (risking political correctness in the answers) and too little (not being able to distinguish genuine deliberation from rhetorical action). In this paper, as well as in the broader project on which this survey on Bulgaria is based, the method used leaned towards the second, being content with capturing the distinction between arguing and bargaining. It is more difficult to see how one could in survey research distinguish between rhetorical action and 'genuine' deliberation. As Naurin has it (2007, p. 20), this concern is less severe when studying aggregate levels of arguing and bargaining.

Ergo, the conclusions which can be drawn from this study concern primarily the distinction between arguing and bargaining rather than between communicative and strategic action. As it was argued above, asking the respondents whether they consider themselves as being 'open for the arguments of others' or whether they sincerely believe in the arguments they put forward to others' is almost the same as asking whether they were lying or cheating, which according to Naurin (2007, p. 570), is something completely different from engaging in a cooperative bargaining exchange. And what is more, the credibility of the answers to such questions would be difficult to evaluate.

Before proceeding, one comment is in order. Namely, the micro focus of this research on the behaviour of the Bulgarian permreps in the working groups of the Council inevitably loses the big picture. That is, whether the style of interaction between all the other, at present 26 member states, changed accordingly during the time the broader survey among all states in 11 working groups of the Council was conducted and the time being. It can be that the dominant mode of interaction in this socialization dynamic changed over time, as suggested by Checkel (2001, p. 5).

Therefore, how we would know that decision-making styles in the Council in general have changed from for example, arguing towards bargaining. In a sense, old rules, new game as the title with the same name would suggest (Hagemann & De Clerck-Sachsse, 2007). In the literature, it has been discussed extensively that a moderate weakening of COREPER's notorious '*esprit de corps*' can be observed (Lempp, p. 8). What is more, member states more frequently resort to formal statements to make their point. This enables government 'to affect a sense of the old culture of consensus without at the same time sending a political signal of having deviated from their initial policy preferences' (Hagemann et al., 2007, p. 14).

Results from some studies on decision-making in the Council suggest that 'an adaptation process for both the old and new members has certainly influenced Council decision-making since the 2004 enlargement' (Hagemann et al., 2007, p. 19). This supports the thesis that all countries have to learn a new 'game' rather than the new ones simply adapting. It seems that this game is one of compromise bargaining with the formal statements providing the possibility to signal to external actors that an alternative position was held by a single or a number of governments, without those actually having to make the drastic step of vetoing a given proposal (Hagemann et al., 2007, p. 30).

In sum, deliberative theory needs operationalisations of the theoretical constructs it seeks to investigate. According to Naurin (2007, p. 572), the researchers on the Council cannot use the two volumes of Habermas's *Theory of Communicative Action* as their empirical yardsticks.

For Master Thesis research in particular the operationalisations must be fairly narrow, and, as it was discussed above, it will therefore always be easy to be criticised for not capturing all aspects of deliberation. However, it has to be accepted that students of deliberation cannot observe 'the whole phenomena' at a time, but must rely on different indicators. Some of these indicators for distinguishing arguing from bargaining in empirical research will be discussed in the following section, where some of the operationalisation fallacies to avoid will also be noted.

Operationalization Fallacies to Avoid

Case studies suggest that sometimes civil servants in the Council could support more than one member state's position in order to accommodate the interests of as many of the participants as possible (Lewis, 2005). Having said that, does this indicate that arguing is the dominating type of social decision procedure within this institution?

Following from the previous theoretical part, the definition of the four types of interaction summarised in *Table 1*, and in particular the distinction between arguing and integrative bargaining, the answer is no. That is because cooperative behaviour should not be confused with arguing. According to Naurin (2007, p. 14), there are three potential ways in which empirical studies of deliberation have mixed up arguing with cooperative bargaining:

- 1) Mistaking consensus-seeking for arguing
- 2) Whether the actors gave reasons or not for their positions
- 3) Whether they changed their positions or not

Each of these three potential errors for the presence of arguing will be discussed one at a time in the paragraph to follow.

First, it is especially important to stress the distinction between integrative bargaining and the two modes of arguing. That is because, as Naurin has it, 'in many cases, and not only in studies of the EU, researchers have failed to make the distinction between arguing and cooperative bargaining' (Naurin, 2007, p. 14). Cooperative behaviour is as compatible with integrative bargaining ('if you give us X, we'll give you Y') as with arguing ('X is the best alternative, because of argument Z'). A highly cooperative attitude by the parties does not in itself indicate whether they are arguing or bargaining (Naurin, 2009, p. 39).

Second, whether the actors gave reasons for their positions also cannot be taken as evidence for the presence of arguing. Although justifying one's position is the most fundamental part of arguing and reason-giving thus seems to be more connected to arguing than to bargaining, bargainers also use justifications, although not for the same reason as actors who are arguing.

According to Naurin (2007, p.15), actors involved in distributive bargaining use justifications to show their opponents how committed they are to a certain position. Alternatively, justifying one's position may be a useful strategy to communicate a certain degree of flexibility. Moreover, it can be argued that reason-giving is even more important in cooperative bargaining, as the participants need as much information as they can get about each other's preferences in order to find optimal compromise solutions (Naurin, 2009, p. 40). Hence, the mere presence of reason-giving cannot be taken as evidence of arguing without taking into consideration the actor's motivation behind giving reasons.

Third, whether the actors change their positions or not during a negotiation process is sufficient but not enough evidence for the presence or absence of arguing. That is because, people usually resist change and as Naurin (2007, p. 565) has it, changing someone's mind about worldviews and normative principles is not something which is done in a minute.

Thus, actors clinging on to their initial positions also at the end of a negotiation process is not evidence that arguing was not present during the process, with actors trying to change the minds of others but having no, short-term at least, success (Naurin, 2007, p. 15).

In the end, following from these three potential errors before the operationalisation of arguing and cooperative bargaining, that were summarised above, the conclusion is that different modes might predict the same or very similar results – observational equivalence (Warntjen, 2009, p. 13). Meaning that, the same evidence could be used in support of different models (Lewis, 2008, p. 168).

Hence, the question prompted by the need of considering alternative explanations: would a rationalist, bargaining game based on strategic calculations better explain the Bulgarian permreps behaviour?

Although the rationalist alternative predicts the same outcome as those of arguing – reason giving – the actors' motivation that led to it is different. Moreover, one should not forget that the four modes of social action that were conceptualized in the previous theoretical part of this paper (*Table 1*), namely deliberation, rhetorical action, distributive and integrative bargaining, represent ideal types that rarely occur in pure form in reality.

According to Risse (2000, p. 18), 'we often act both strategically and discursively – that is, we use arguments to convince somebody else that our demands are justified – and by doing so we follow norms enabling our interaction in the first place (language rules, for example)'. Hence, giving reasons is as compatible with cooperative bargaining as with arguing, the difference lies in the motive (Naurin, 2007, p. 16).

As a result, the empirical question to be asked is: what were the actors' motivations for giving reasons. Was it to convince others of the merits of their position, or to facilitate a compromise? The survey presented in the next, data and analysis part of this paper, like the previous broader study on the representatives of all by that time 25 member states in the Council, puts the same question of 'why give reason?' but this time to the Bulgarian permreps in the working groups of the Council. Hence, by making an effort at triangulation of this previous survey, the analysis will be enriched by making juxtapositions between the outcomes of the current paper and the previous large-N study's results.

DATA AND ANALYSIS

The goal in the previous theoretical part of this paper was to define and conceptualize arguing and bargaining as two distinct modes of decision-making in the Council. Afterwards, in the methodological part, the aim was to operationalise those concepts in a manner amenable for empirical measurement. The goal in the current analytical part of the paper, however, is to give an illustration of how survey research can be used in practice to study the motives of the Bulgarian permreps behind reason-giving in the working groups of the Council.

Arguably, the most straightforward way of analysing motives is asking people about them in interviews. This method and triangulation across multiple data streams were taken use of in the current research in various ways:

First, a rapport was established with a Bulgarian permanent representative in Brussels in order to gain that person's assistance. That is because, according to Babbie (2010, p. 316), 'an open and trusting relationship is especially important in qualitative research between the researchers and the people they are observing'. In making direct, formal contact with the Bulgarian permreps, it was required to give them some explanation of the purpose of the study. To this end, an extensive review of the literature was undertaken by making content analysis of books, major journal articles and data mining in various websites on the Internet concerning the Council and in particular, the behaviour of the national delegations in COREPER.

Second, in a sense, the researcher also make use of the most obvious method of making observations, namely qualitative field research, by observing and participating in the process of the Bulgarian accession to the EU during an active autumn internship in *the Bulgarian Ministry of State Administration and Administrative Reform /MSAAR/*. The internship was held in a key period for Bulgaria /August-October 2007/ during its first year of participation

in the EU Institutions. Therefore, it was useful for the current research mainly in two ways among all the others.

On the one hand, during the internship, the researcher was not confronted with decisions about the role that have to be played as an observer and the relationships with the people who are observed since at that time the current research was not undertaken yet.

On the other hand, there is a corresponding vice that comes out together with the previous virtue. Namely, that the observations lack more clear direction and particular focus as the internship was held before the idea of this paper to be born in mind.

Nevertheless, the advantages of making an internship and having the opportunity to observe, participate directly and make sense of a social behavior, in this case, the behavior of the Bulgarian national officials in the EU Institutions during the first year of its membership, outweighed the disadvantages. In particular, establishing rapport with the Bulgarian permreps in Brussels would not be possible have it not been for the contacts gained during this internship.

Third, after having established a rapport with one of the Bulgarian permreps in Brussels, all the other representatives were interviewed using an online questionnaire:

http://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?hl=en_GB&pli=1&formkey=dHV4OGFLSTFhTElSYWEzUEozUkpvZFE6MQ#gid=0 (to be found also in Appendix II).

The response rate was a success, 50 percent, making it 23 Bulgarian respondents in all from 11 working groups of the Council of the EU. Although not a random sample, at least this is a broad sample of Bulgarian representatives in the Council, allowing for triangulation to be made between them and all the other permreps from 25 member states in eleven working groups of the Council of the EU.

Names and contact details of the respondents were collected from the website of the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Bulgaria to the European Union in Brussels, Belgium (<http://www.mfa.bg/en/95/pages/menu/501>) and from personal contacts with them.

The selected interview persons were first approached with a letter, written in Bulgarian language, in order to explain without the language barrier the purpose of the research and the types of questions addressed. The introductory letter also included more specific information on the goal of the study pointing out explicitly that the questionnaire makes an effort at triangulation of a broader project concerning communication within the working groups of the Council conducted among all the other, at that time February-March 2006, 25 member states.

The survey was motivated by the need of asking the same questions since Bulgaria was not officially a member country at the time this broader project was held and hence, there is a lack of data for the Bulgarian permreps behaviour in the working groups of the Council. The respondents were assured complete anonymity and at the end of the introductory letter there was a link to access the user friendly online questionnaire, that was assured will not take more of a couple of minutes of their time to complete and which was in English.

In order to get to the core issue of motivations for giving reasons, a three-step question that was described in detail by Naurin (2007, pp. 17-18), was followed. First, the respondents were asked to think of a particular issue of their own choice that was discussed in a recent meeting, where they were holding a certain position. It was preferable that the issue contain some controversy, meaning that there was no agreement right from the start. The respondents were not asked to reveal detailed information about the issue once they had chosen one. The motivation behind this is 'to play it safe with the interviews'. It would most likely be considered sensitive information by many, and therefore, there is a risk that the people would refuse to answer the core questions on giving reasons.

Hence, although not asking about the content of the particular issue comes with some analytical costs, such as impossibility to analyse the effects of issue-specific factors like the

nature of the issue /whether it was an old or new one/, or whether it was publicly politicised issue or not, it was sufficient that the interviewee had a certain issue in mind, without revealing which issue this was.

As the choice of particular issue would benefit from some preparatory thought, the respondents had been given as much time as they need to think about an issue since the questionnaire was conducted online and there were no time limits. Moreover, the benefits of making online questionnaire became even greater if one had in mind that the respondents can chose a comfortable time to fill it in without being disturbed by outside observer or adverse outside conditions.

The corresponding disadvantage of conducting online questionnaire which was observed in practice, was that sometimes, the respondents had to be reminded about the questionnaire since once they have seen it and decided that they will filled it in later on, they forgot to do it because of workload and other factors, even though initially they had the good intentions to reply. Later on, it will become clear how, in the current research, attempts were made to try to overcome this downside and minimise it by finding ways to kindly remind the Bulgarian permreps to fill in the questionnaire and by so doing increase the response rate.

The aim of the second step in the questionnaire was to make the broad distinction between arguing and bargaining. When the respondents decided on an issue, they were subsequently asked whether they found it necessary to explain why Bulgaria was holding this particular position, or alternatively, it was sufficient for them to communicate the Bulgarian position. If the answer was 'yes' and the respondent gave reasons for their positions, then, as discussed in the previous theoretical part, this is not sufficient evidence for the presence of arguing. One step further is needed in order to distinguish between arguing and integrative bargaining.

Thus, the purpose of the third step in the questionnaire was to ask the respondents to differentiate between two different motives for giving reasons. On the one hand, if their purpose was to clarify their own position in order to make it easier to find a compromise, then, integrative bargaining is occurring. If, on the other hand, they have tried to convince others to change their minds about the merits of their position, then arguing is observed.

Nevertheless, 'just because the actor him/herself argues – gives reasons in order to convince others – does not necessarily mean that he/she is prepared to be convinced by the arguments of others' (Naurin, 2007, p. 19). Therefore, the element of reciprocity which characterises the normative ideal of deliberation cannot be accommodated by this operationalisation of arguing. Meaning that the difference between communicative and strategic arguing cannot be made and hence, the conclusions which can be drawn from this study concern primarily the distinction between arguing and bargaining.

However, one indicator for evaluating the open-mindedness of the actors in a particular arena is discussed by Naurin (2007, p. 20). Namely, if the Bulgarian permreps try to convince other delegates to change their minds, they assume that it is possible, otherwise they would not bother. Following from that if there is very little reason-giving with the purpose of convincing among the Bulgarian permreps one of the reasons probably could be that the other actors are not open for preference change. To test the latter, whether the other actors are open or not for preference change, will require careful process tracing which is beyond the scope of the present paper. Nevertheless, one possible interpretation could be in support of previous findings (Checkel, 2001, p. 16) that 'agents in the transition (or new) states of East Europe and the former USSR – who come from domestic settings marked by weak political institutions – will be more open to being convinced, with the opposite holding true for political elites from the 'old' states of Western Europe'. On the contrary, if there are a lot of attempts at convincing among the Bulgarian permreps, it seems reasonable to assume that actors are relatively often open for being convinced.

In order to corroborate the main findings and sift out arguing from bargaining, one last question was included in the questionnaire as a robustness check. This question was prompted by previous results of the Council that ‘package deals across issues – which is a particular type of integrative bargaining – is especially common in this context’ (Heisenberg, 2005, p. 79).

Hence, the respondents were asked to compare whether communicating salience, which, following from Naurin (2007, p. 21), is interpreted as ‘the bargaining currency’ of package deals, is more or less important for them than communicating reasons.

If, on the aggregate level, communicating salience turn out to be more important than giving reasons, this would be an argument against arguing being the most important mode of communication for the Bulgarian permreps in the Council. If it is the other way around, this would mean that arguing is indeed important.

As it was mentioned previously, attempts were made to boost the initial response rate by sending to the respondents a subsequent ‘thank you note’ e-mail in which they were kindly reminded of the questionnaire and gratitude was expressed to those who found time to respond.

Then, after analysing the data gathered by the online questionnaire, a presentation of the aggregate results was made:

http://docs.google.com/present/view?id=dcjwk7ck_22s9jb3sfs (Appendix III).

As well as an online form for giving feedback:

https://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?hl=en_GB&formkey=dEZ2MFZ2WHVKRIF0dDd1UlpHWnBkZmc6MQ#gid=0

The link to access this presentation together with the feedback form were subsequently send to the Bulgarian permreps in order to give them an opportunity to react on the results. This step in the research is motivated, based on the knowledge gained during the course on Q-methodology, where it is considered a good idea to send to the respondents the outcomes of the survey.

While analysing the data gathered during the survey, it was noted that the answers of the Bulgarian permreps that are similar can be grouped in clusters forming six different perspectives on their motivation for giving reasons in the working groups of the Council. Consequently, the aim of the presentation and the feedback form that were send to the respondents was to analyse to what extent each of the respondents adhered to each of the six perspectives that were given in the presentation by using respectively six short narratives. Some respondents showed pure loading on one perspective, others were a ‘mixture’ of perspectives.

In this way, the Bulgarian permreps could make themselves familiar with the perspectives and consequently use them in their communication within the working groups of the Council. Moreover, it was considered useful to send the outcomes of the study and the six perspectives, resulting from it to the participants because these could help them to better grasp the complexity of the interaction context they are participating in, to understand why other permreps draw other conclusions, or which presumptions they have when discussing issues in the Council (whether the actors are bargaining or arguing).

After these efforts were made, the response rate has risen up with 6% from the initial 44% and in the end of the survey, reached half of those Bulgarian permreps contacted via e-mails. Thus, the analysis that follows in the next section is based on the data gathered by 23 respondents providing their main motivation for giving reasons (if they gave reasons) on an issue at a recent meeting which contained some controversy.

Findings

The first immediate reading of the data seems to corroborate the findings from previous research on the Council that: 'stating positions without backing them up with reasons is very uncommon' (Naurin, 2009, p. 44). Hence, the question: Are there durable expectations that derogations are to be justified with reasons? (Lewis, 2009, p. 14) For the majority of the Bulgarian permreps it seems that the answer is in confirmative since 83 percent (19 out of 23) of them claimed that they had explained at the meeting not only which position Bulgaria was holding, but also the reasons why they were holding this position (*Table 2*).

Apparently, these results confirm that 'negotiators who intervene at meetings to present their positions almost always give some arguments in favour of their position as well' (Naurin, 2007, p. 22). The answers of the Bulgarian permreps on this first question seem to be in congruency with those given by the 25 other member states in the large-N study.

Thus, as Naurin has it (2009, p. 44), 'if reason-giving alone was taken as evidence of arguing, the Council of the EU would seem to be a truly deliberative institution'. Moreover, as it was mentioned above in the theoretical part of this paper, reason-giving is not sufficient evidence for the presence of arguing. Due to observational equivalence giving reasons is as compatible with arguing as with bargaining.

Therefore, it is necessary that the motivation behind reason-giving is also considered. The second column of *Table 2* gives the answers to the question: what was the most important motivation for providing arguments – to clarify one's own position in order to facilitate compromises or to try to convince others to change their minds about the merits of their position?

What makes immediate impression when triangulating the answers given by the Bulgarian permreps with those by the other 25 member state representatives is that, in comparison with their colleagues, for the large majority of the Bulgarian delegates who did give reasons the main motivation for backing up their position with arguments was to clarify their position.

Therefore, following from the conceptualisation and operationalisation of arguing and bargaining in the previous theoretical and methodological parts, it can be concluded that integrative bargaining is clearly an important mode of communication among the Bulgarian permreps. The data shows that 69 percent (13 out of 19 permreps who did give reasons) clarify their own position in order to facilitate a compromise in comparison with 42 percent of the delegates from the other 25 member states asked the same question.

Nevertheless, for 26 percent (5 out of 19) of the Bulgarian permreps the main motivation for providing reasons at the meetings was to convince others about the merits of their position. Twice as many (52%) of the other 25 member state's delegates claim that their main motivation for giving reasons is to convince and argue in favour of their position. Hence, according to the data presented in *Table 2* below, arguing is exactly half as much important for the Bulgarian permreps in contrast with the other delegates from 25 member states.

Table 2. Aggregate levels of reason-giving and signalling salience (N in parenthesis)

		Bulgaria 2010	25 Member states 2006
Did give reason for position?	<i>Yes</i>	83% (19)	91% (211)
	<i>No</i>	17% (4)	9% (20)
Why give reason?	<i>Clarify</i>	69% (13)	42% (88)
	<i>Convince</i>	26% (5)	52% (109)
	<i>Both</i>	5% (1)	5% (11)
Signalled salience?	<i>Reason giving</i>	61% (14)	58% (134)
	<i>Salience</i>	35% (8)	30% (69)
	<i>Both</i>	4% (1)	12% (28)

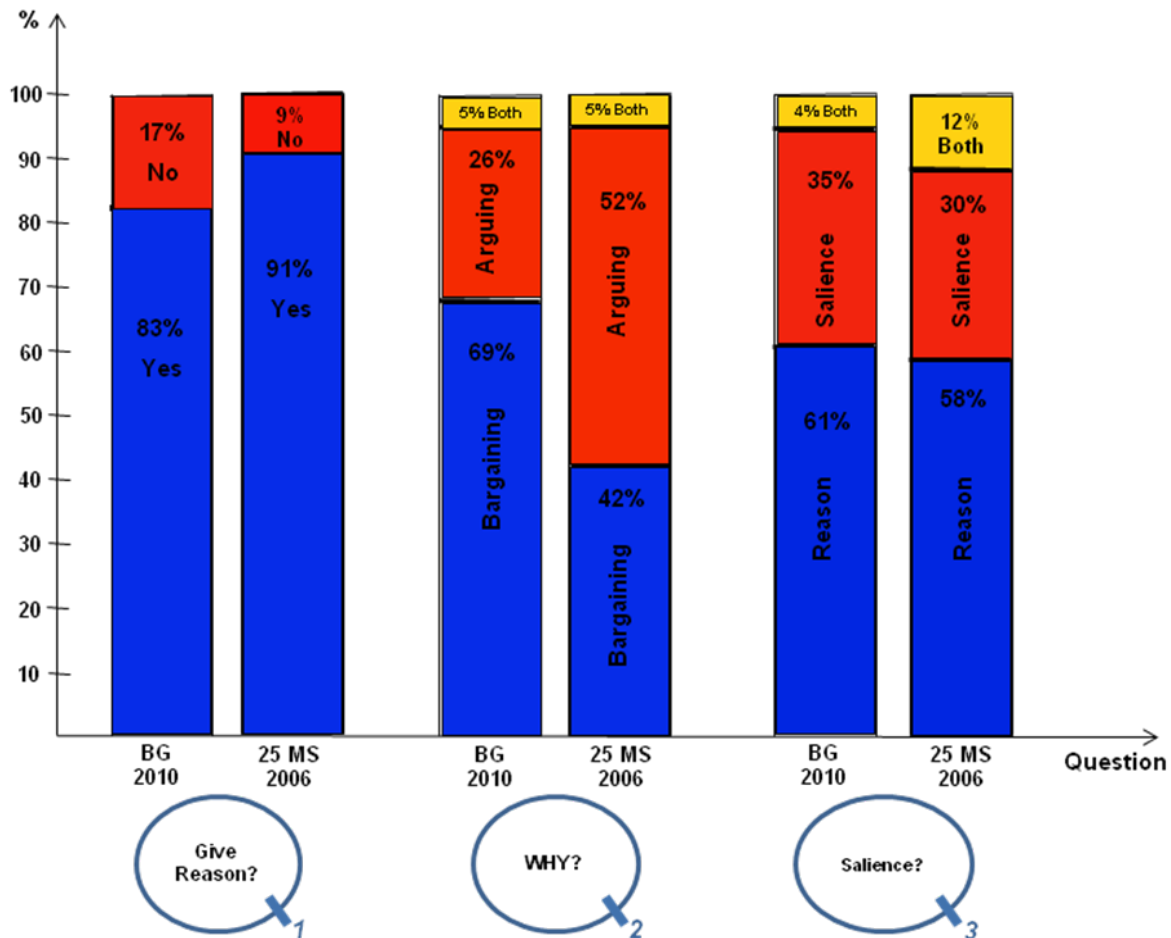
Source: Adapted by Naurin (2007, p. 23) in an effort at triangulation.

The last column of *Table 2* again shows similarity between the answers of the Bulgarian and the permreps of the other 25 member states as it shows the share of respondents that communicated the importance of the issue for their country. This time, the last question in the questionnaire asked the interviewees to compare which of the two was more important for them: to communicate reasons in favour of the Bulgarian position or to signal the importance of the issue for Bulgaria.

Reason-giving was said to be most important by a clear majority of the respondents – 61 percent – while 35 percent answered that signalling salience was most important, and 4 percent considered both as being equally important. Hence, the results on this last question show very similar trend between Bulgaria and the other 25 member states.

For comparative reasons and in order to give a better overview of the data presented in *Table 2* above, the following *Figure 2* will be used:

Figure 2. Comparative levels of Arguing & Bargaining for Bulgaria 2010 and 25 Member States 2006



As it can be seen from *Figure 2* above, the biggest variation of the answers between Bulgaria and all the other countries can be observed for *Question 2* (Q2 on the abscissa). The other two questions show rather similar trends among the countries. In sum, the difference between levels of arguing and bargaining between Bulgaria and the other countries points to opposite directions.

In the case of Bulgaria, according to the majority of the respondents, bargaining is the predominant mode of interaction in working group meetings. Meaning that Bulgarian permreps give reasons with the intention to clarify their position whereas, the reverse is true for the other delegates from 25 member states. They argue in favour of their position, i.e. give reasons with the intention of changing the minds of other actors.

Hence, the hypothesis suggested by the results of the large-N study that: trying to convince others is more often the main motivation for giving reasons than clarifying one's position in order to facilitate a compromise, has not been corroborated in the case of Bulgaria.

Rather, the findings seem to be in accordance with the opposite suggestions that: representatives of smaller (which in the Council of the EU in practice means less powerful) states argue considerably less often than bigger states (Naurin, 2007, p. 29). Although, such comparisons between the countries are beyond the scope of the present paper, it is to be expected that older member states – which can be assumed to be more well-connected in the informal networks and more accustomed at how to ‘play the Brussels game’ – argue significantly more than the newcomers, most of which are from Eastern Europe (Naurin, 2009, p. 47).

Hence, as Bulgaria is small, Eastern European newcomer in the Council, it is explicable that when looking at ‘small states, there is a big difference between old and new member states’ (Naurin, 2007, p. 29).

Generally, after having completed the survey, it can be concluded that the questions worked out very well. None of the respondents refused to answer the first question, and only five percent indicated that they found the distinction between ‘*clarifying*’ and ‘*convincing*’ impossible to answer. Reason-giving is also more common and considered to be more important than communicating salience.

As Naurin (2009, p. 43) cautions against making far-reaching conclusions from the three step question outlined above, in the next section, the findings will be interpreted carefully as an indicator of the presence of arguing and bargaining rather than evidence per se.

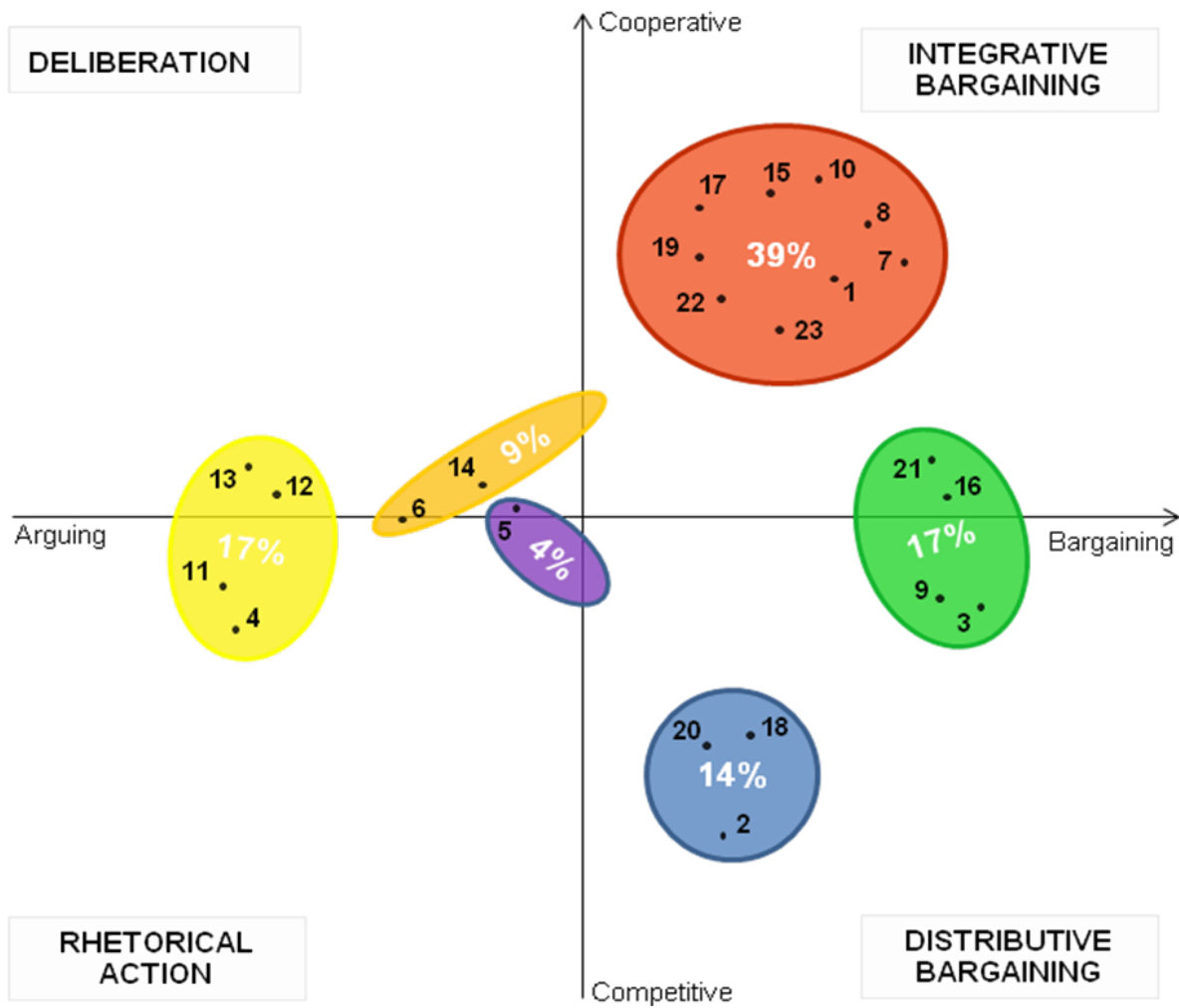
Interpretation of the findings

According to Naurin (2007, p. 20), the main risk with this operationalisation of arguing and bargaining is that the respondents include elements of cooperative bargaining in their interpretation of ‘convince other delegates to change their minds’. Hence, the assumption made that ‘the amount of arguing that comes out of this survey should therefore be considered the maximum level’.

Indeed, the aim of this section is to show, in the case of Bulgaria, that the latter holds true and that the level of arguing is in fact overestimated by adding up to it a category of permreps for whom the communication mode in the Council is a mixture of both arguing and bargaining. In order to make this point convincingly, the interpretation of the findings will proceed as follows:

First, arguably, Naurin based his estimations about the levels of arguing and bargaining mainly on the answers received by question two of the questionnaire described above. However, when one is to take into account the cumulative effect of all three questions on the levels of arguing and bargaining, then the following picture emerges */Figure3/*:

Figure 3. Aggregate levels of arguing and bargaining for Bulgaria 2010



Basically, in the left-hand side of the picture above are illustrated the permreps who gave reasons in order ‘to convince’ the others about the merits of their position whereas, on the right-hand side are those who gave reasons ‘to clarify’ their position in order to facilitate a compromise.

In particular, the yellow bubble is composed of permreps who gave reasons, in order to convince and for whom giving reasons is more important than signalling salience. The red circle represents those permreps who gave reasons, to clarify their position and for whom again reason-giving is considered more important than communicating salience. The blue bubble consists of delegates, who gave no reasons for their positions, whose aim in their communication with the others is to clarify and thus, only exchange information about fixed preferences and for whom signalling salience is more important than giving reasons.

The other three circles, that left, represent permreps who see the communication within their working group as a mixture of the other three modes. Namely, the green bubble stands for those who gave reason, to clarify one’s position but for whom either salience is more important than giving reasons or both (salience and reasons) are considered equally important. Therefore, they are situated on the border between integrative and distributive bargaining. The orange colour is reserved for those of the Bulgarian permreps who did give reasons, either to convince or to clarify their position and who considered it important to both signal salience and give reasons. Last but not least, the violet bubble describe those who gave

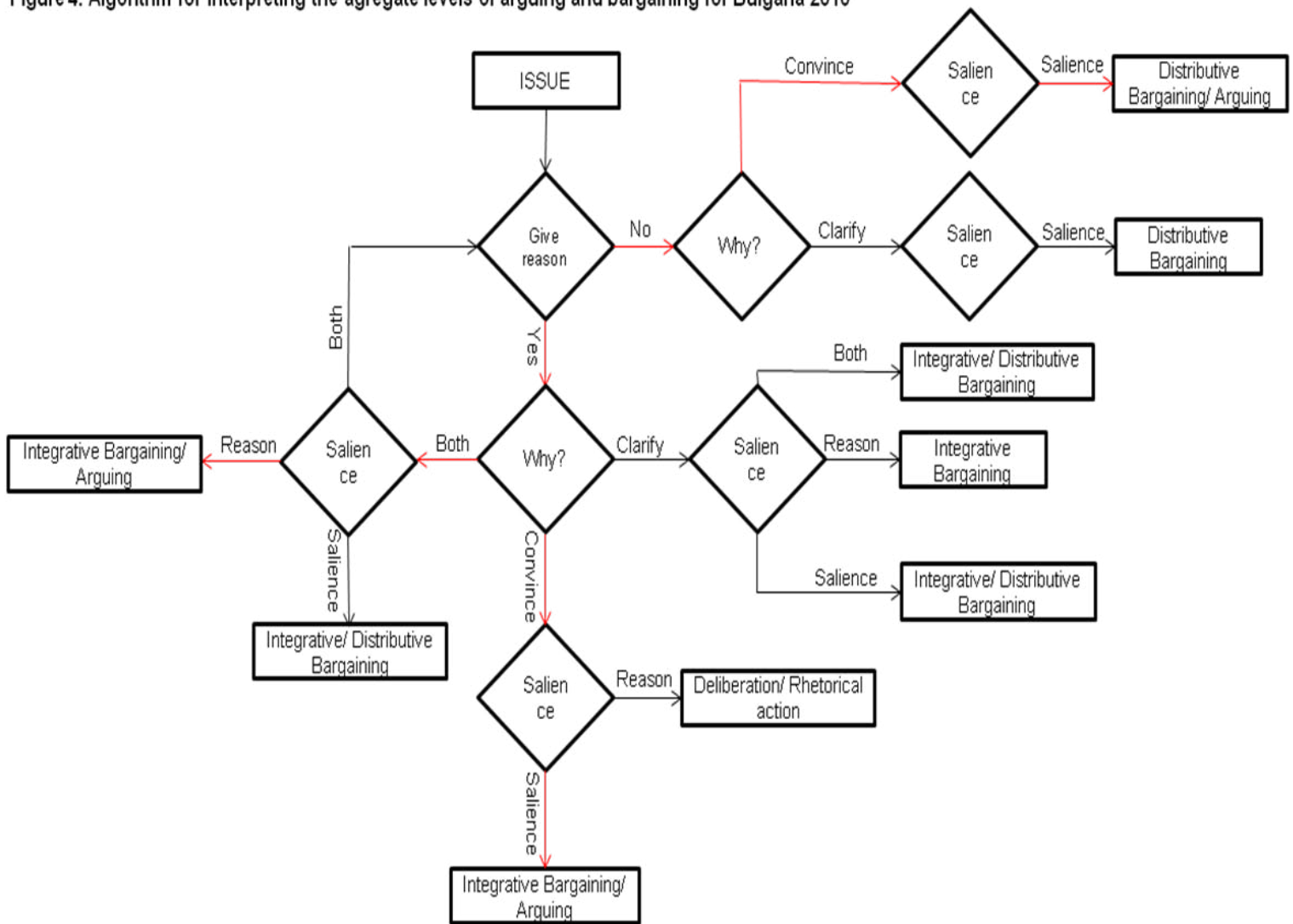
no reason, but nevertheless try to convince the others about the merits of their position and who considered it more important to signal the salience of the issue than to give reason.

It has to be noted, however, that the aim of *Figure 3* above is to group the respondents according to the similarity between the answers given by them and not to distinguish between cooperative and competitive behaviour. As a result, six perspectives emerge out of this analysis, which were described, taking into consideration the literature on the issue, in six short narratives describing briefly some of the main features of each of the groups. The figure, together with the six narratives were sent to the participants in the survey in the form of presentation of the results to see whether they adhere to the characteristics described in the narrative they fell in.

One other remark, concerning *Figure 3* above, is in place before proceeding further to the algorithm used to come out with this picture. Namely, that it is difficult to see how in survey research consisting of three short questions one can distinguish clearly between rhetorical action and deliberation. The latter is one shortcoming of the findings that the distinction between the two modes of arguing cannot be made. But this weakness is overcome if one is to have in mind that the Bulgarian aggregate result shows that the predominant mode of interaction is one of the two modes of bargaining whether integrative or distributive. Hence, the distinction between the two styles of arguing is irrelevant in this case and will have no influence on the final results of the study.

Therefore, as Naurin has it (2007, p. 19), it is possible in survey research to differentiate between arguing and integrative bargaining and the key for doing this is to study the actors' motivation for giving reasons. Hence, the following algorithm will be used for the interpretation of the results:

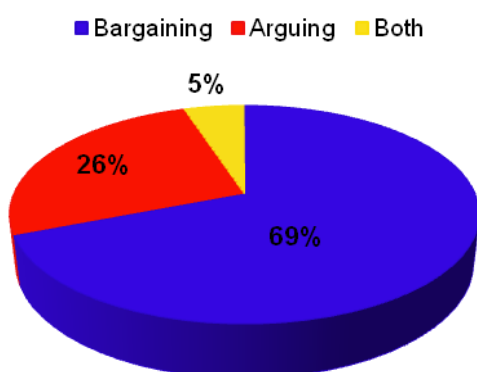
Figure 4. Algorithm for interpreting the aggregate levels of arguing and bargaining for Bulgaria 2010



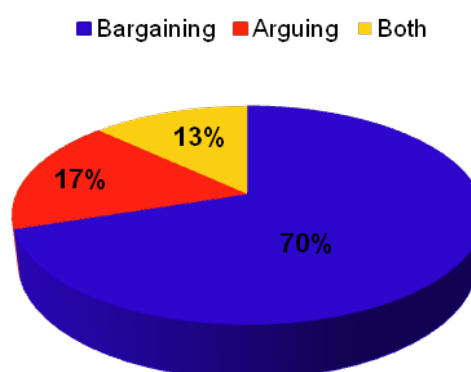
As it can be seen from the figure above, there are indeed cases, when the permreps ‘include elements of cooperative bargaining in their interpretation of ‘convince other delegates to change their minds’ as it was suggested by Naurin (2007, p. 20). What is more, the case of Bulgaria shows that there are also instances of permreps not giving reasons of their position at all but who nevertheless try to convince the others about the merits of their position. Or, there are those who did give reasons with the intention to convince but in the end considered salience as more important than reason-giving, which creates doubts whether these are not traces of integrative bargaining in their answers.

In the pie-charts below, the aggregate results for arguing and bargaining are summarised in order to compare and contrast their levels according to the data from *Table 2* and *Figure 3*:

Arguing vs. Bargaining /Table 2/



Arguing vs. Bargaining /Figure 3/



From the pictures above, it can be concluded that when taking the data for arguing and bargaining only from the answers of *question 2*, the level of arguing is indeed higher than its rate after considering the cumulative effect of all three questions asked in the questionnaire whereas, the share of bargaining remains unchanged. Two main conclusions can be made:

First, as Naurin suggested (2007, p. 20) the amount of arguing that comes out of this survey should be considered the maximum level. That is because there are permreps who claim that their main motivations for giving reasons in the Council are ‘*to convince*’ the other delegates about the merits of their position but who afterwards consider signalling salience more important than reason-giving.

Hence, this creates doubts whether those respondents do not include elements of cooperative bargaining in their interpretation of ‘convince other delegates to change their minds. As a result, their answers do not point at the same direction to show enough consistency to be placed either as bargaining or arguing. Therefore, they can be interpreted as belonging to the column: ‘both’ instead of counting them as arguing.

Second, the findings from *Figure 3* indicate that integrative bargaining is indeed the predominant mode of interaction among the Bulgarian permreps. These results are consistent with previous research on Council newcomers. New Central and Eastern European delegates began attending various Council sessions nearly one year prior to formal accession. A similar initiation occurred before the Nordic enlargement. In the literature, interviews with practitioners ‘track similar learning curves for newcomers, even those with different backgrounds and from different national administrative cultures’ (Lewis, 2005, p. 952).

Moreover, Lewis (2008, p. 178) argues that Sweden, which was part of the Nordic enlargement, shows socialization features to the Council consistent with what Checkel (2005, p. 804) calls ‘*Type I internalization*’, where agents may behave appropriately by learning a role – acquiring the knowledge that enables them to act in accordance with expectations – irrespective of whether they like the role or agree with it.

Therefore, it is expected that in the case of Bulgaria, the socialization mechanism that is in operation shows characteristics of *Type I internalization* and not yet fully internalized roles or group-community norms. Hence, a plausible explanation for the result that Bulgarian permreps use predominantly integrative bargaining as their mode of interaction during meetings could be that their socialization in the ethos of the Council is not yet completed and they do not fully internalized the norms to the extent of ‘taken for grantedness’.

At the same time, these familiar findings give confidence of the validity of the interpretation made in this paper.

CONCLUSION

This paper presented the case of Bulgaria as Council newcomer to the ethos of this environment. It has been argued that since the country joined the EU on 1 January 2007, after a large-N study on the communication patterns in the Council was overtaken among all the other at that time /February-March 2006/ 25 member states, there is a gap in the literature that the current study attempts to remedy. Namely, the question whether the Bulgarian permreps argue or bargain in the working groups of the Council remains '*terra incognita*' for the researchers.

It has been found by previous research that 'arguing is an important mode of communication in the Council and that trying to convince others is more often the main motivation for giving reasons than clarifying one's positions in order to facilitate a compromise' (Naurin, 2007, p. 31).

Hence, the goal of this paper was to make an effort at triangulation of this previous broad study in order to test the same hypothesis in different point in time and new data. Moreover, it can be argued that following from the literature on the issue, Bulgaria is a most likely case for corroboration of these previous findings since it is a small and new country which makes the Bulgarian permreps more susceptible to norm compliance.

Nevertheless, after triangulation across the three-step question described in detail by Naurin (2007, pp. 17-18), it became clear that integrative bargaining is the most important mode of communication in the case of Bulgaria. Trying to clarify one's position in order to facilitate a compromise is more often the main motivation for giving reasons than convincing others about the merits of the Bulgarian position. Only looking at reason-giving and/or consensus-seeking would give a picture of the Bulgarian permreps' behaviour as almost totally dominated by arguing.

In 83 percent of the interventions at working group meeting, the Bulgarian representatives provided arguments in favour of their position. However, in only about a quarter of those cases was the main purpose to try to convince others to change their minds. Communicating information on salience, which is the currency of package deals, is usually considered less important than giving reasons.

At an aggregate level, therefore, which is where the research question of this study is to be found, an important general argument coming out of these findings, and in accordance with some previous research (Naurin, 2007), is that actors are more likely to engage in arguing when they feel confident and in control of the decision-making situation. Increasing the pressure on the actors by raising the degree of coercion and the risks involved with losing the outcome of the deliberations tend to draw them more towards a bargaining mode.

Hence, this is one plausible explanation of the results that integrative bargaining is the predominant mode of interaction for the Bulgarian representatives since, they should feel 'safe enough to argue', as the article with the same title suggests (Naurin, 2007). To put it differently, as one of the respondents suggests: 'in comparison with the positions that UK receives, for example, where they have indications regarding their '*marge de manoeuvre*', in 90% of the cases the Bulgarian permreps do not have such details, but if they do – their attitude in the working groups changes respectively'. Some of the other interesting findings and insights that have been discovered besides the immediate answer to the main research question will be summarised below.

First, from the rapport established with the Bulgarian permreps in Brussels and their comments it became clear that according to their view: 'EU is not an ordinary international organisation in which the member states participate in order to achieve their own specific national interests'. 'What is even more important, are the dialogue and the consensus over the mechanisms to achieve the common goals'. Based on this statement coming from Bulgarian

representative, it can be concluded that Bulgaria has undergone the initial period of adaptation described in the literature with 'the necessity to consistently put the national interest on the back burner, which at first was very difficult for many new members' (Lempp, p. 15). The latter is confirmed if one is to have in mind the case of Sweden as unsocialized newcomer to the Council during its first year of membership described in the literature by Lewis (2008, p. 176). Another pattern described by previous researchers is that 'newcomers initially tend to view their counterparts as rivals' (Lewis, 2005, p. 953). The evidence received during the dialogue with the Bulgarian permreps suggests that this initial period of adaptation to the Council's normative environment is passed.

Second, closely related with the previous one, is that before Bulgaria officially joined the EU in January 2007, it underwent intensive preparation. By signing the Treaty of accession to the EU of the Republic of Bulgaria on 25 April 2005 the country acquired the status of 'active observer' in the decision-making process of the EU Institutions. Bulgarian ministers were thereafter entitled to participate in the European Council's sessions (with no voting right until full membership) and the experts from the Bulgarian administration were actively involved in the preparation and coordination of national positions, which were presented to the Council and the sectoral committees. In this way, the Bulgarian representatives were actively involved in all negotiations within the Council, the COREPER, and the working groups. Moreover, although the observers did not have the right to vote, they were able to influence the negotiations by participating in discussions, delivering persuasive statements and even alluding to future voting behaviour.

Third, from the rapport established with the Bulgarian permreps in Brussels, it seems that they are well acquainted with the fact described in the literature that 'in COREPER arguments matter as well as votes' (Lewis, 2005, p. 950). That is evident by the way they described the procedure for decision-making and the division of the agenda on points 'A' and points 'B'. It is possible, that 'A' points are adopted by the Council without formal discussions. Nevertheless, the Bulgarian permreps are aware of the described in the literature opportunity before a member country to make a formal statement (Hagemann & De Clerck-Sachsse, 2007) without hampering the decision-making process. The latter comes to suggest that the Bulgarian permreps have been very quick to internalise the prevailing norms of the EU decision-making process, particularly the 'culture of consensus' due to the process of their preparation during the country's 'active observer status'.

Fourth, the Bulgarian permreps know the different meaning of the abstention under Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) and unanimity. During the process of informal negotiation with them, one of the permreps noted that: 'when the voting rule is unanimity, the abstention from one country does not stop the adoption of the act whereas, due to the high threshold under QMV, the abstention is counted as equal to vote against the decision'. According to the same representative there are different situations we are facing in the Council and the presented scenario may vary depending on the political importance of the issue, the positions of the other MS (QMV counting), etc.

Following from the comments received on the three-step questionnaire, one of the respondents claim that: 'sometimes we could support more than one MS's position from the different points of view'. These latter comments may remind one for the Janus-like face of the permreps based in Brussels, which was described in the literature by Lewis (2005). He claims that representatives in COREPER 'go neither wholly native nor remain totally unchanged by their interaction context'. They are looking to accommodate both the local-national- and the global/international interests while performing their duties. The complexity of this 'glocalisation' (deriving from the combination of the two words: global and local) arena of Council proceedings has once been described in the literature by Helen Wallace as 'complex and chameleon-like beast' (Wallace, 2002, p. 342).

Fifth, one particularly useful comment received by Bulgarian permrep after looking at the presentation of the results is that: ‘the word play is also not to be underestimated’. When asked about the meaning of the latter, it was explained that: ‘sometimes, the inclusion of more general formulations of otherwise the same issue, may satisfy all participants’. Put differently, COREPER has its own locution with signals, key phrases and unspoken meaning invisible for the outside observer.

Sixth, concerning the question of power, when asked about preconditions for exercising influence in the Council, the Bulgarian permrep with whom a rapport was established, explain that ‘knowledge about what are the Bulgarian positions and national priorities is necessary’. What is more, ‘despite the EU Commission (EC) being the single body which has the right to initiate legislation, member states can inform the EC, using different methods to do that, concerning the proposals they would like to see on the table or about the way they would like certain proposal to be prepared’.

Hence, there is one view among the Bulgarian permreps on the question of power that: ‘the joint actions with another member state concerning issues on which there are mutual interests, is often the best way to raise one’s own authority’. Moreover, special importance is placed on establishing good contacts with the other EU Institutions and permreps from other member states. According to one Bulgarian representative: ‘in Brussels a great deal of attention has to be paid for the creation of good personal contacts with the other colleagues in the various committees, working groups of the Council and the EU Commission’. By so doing, ‘a conducive working environment can be achieved which can lend a helping hand for the achievement and the convincing power of the Bulgarian arguments’.

Last but not least important insight into the coordination mechanism on EU affairs in Bulgaria is the established ‘good practice’ in the capital, when the formal position of the country for its participation in the different Council formations is adopted, to organise briefings with the colleagues from the delegations of the other 26 member states in Bulgaria. This briefing is lead by experts or deputy minister from the respective administration. This is how, in advance of the formal meeting and its tight formal time schedule, it is shared on which topic Bulgaria will take up a position and sometimes, the countries which have similar to this positions, can be identified beforehand.

Finally, one possible limitation of this survey and potential field for future research is that the research question of this study is to be found at the aggregate level, where the general distinction between arguing and bargaining can be made. Therefore, this paper makes no pretence that it can capture each individual’s motivation in full. Moreover, it is difficult to see how in survey research composed of three short questions, the distinction between rhetorical action and deliberation, that are the two forms of arguing, can be seen.

Hence, the herewith proposed direction for future research is to employ Q methodology as an innovative way to study people’s subjectivity. The merit of Q methodology is that it can uncover perspectives or positions in a debate, without imposing predefined categories. Thus, it is a bottom-up way of analyzing stakeholders’ motivations, without using proxies for perspectives. It is expected that if factor analysis of the data is used, than there would be six factors that will emerge pointing out to six perspectives respectively (as it was illustrated using *Figure 3*, p.30). Thus, the six perspectives, coming out of the current survey on the Bulgarian permreps’ motivation for giving reasons in the Council, can be used as a guiding light during the process of analysing the results from Q-methodology.

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ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

http://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?hl=en_GB&pli=1&formkey=dHV4OGFLSTFhTElSYWEzUEozUkpvZFE6MQ#gid=0

Why do the Bulgarian representatives give reasons in the working groups of the Council of the European Union?

PART I: CHOOSING AN ISSUE

This questionnaire concerns the communication within your working group. Please, think of one particular issue that was discussed in a recent meeting which you participated in, where you were holding a certain position which you communicated to the other delegates. Preferably it should be an issue where there was some controversy, i.e. on which there was no agreement right from the start. You do not need to tell which issue it was, but please keep this issue in mind for the questions that follow.

PART II: ARGUING vs. BARGAINING

During the discussions on this particular issue at the meeting, did you find it necessary to explain why your country was holding this particular position, or was it sufficient for you to communicate which position you were holding?

- Yes, it was necessary to explain why Bulgaria was holding this particular position
- No, it was sufficient to communicate the position Bulgaria was holding

PART III: ARGUING vs. COOPERATIVE BARGAINING

A follow up on this question, concerning why you gave reasons for your position: There may be different motivations for outlining the reasons behind a particular position. In this particular case that we are discussing, which of these two motivations was most important for you?

1. To clarify one's position – to make the others understand why you are in favour of this position
2. To convince other delegates to change their minds and to come to realize that this is actually a good position

PART IV: ROBUSTNESS CHECK – SIGNALING SALIENCE

During the discussions on this particular issue at the meeting, which of the two options below was most important for you?

- Signaling salience – that the issue was of particular national interest
- Giving reasons – providing arguments why you are holding this position

Table 1: Summary of responses

№	Date	Working Group	Question 1*	Question 2**	Question 3***	End Comments
1	01/06/2010	Structural actions	Yes	1. Clarify	Reasons	good compromise achieved
2	03/06/2010		No	1. Clarify	Salience	
3	03/06/2010	Politico-military	Yes	1. Clarify	Salience	
4	03/06/2010	PMG	Yes	2.Convince	Reasons	Other cases: different answers
5	03/06/2010	Structural actions	No	2.Convince	Salience	
6	03/06/2010	Tecom&INFSO	Yes	1. Clarify/ 2.Convince	Reasons	Q 2: both answers are valid
7	03/06/2010	Aviation	Yes	1. Clarify	Reasons	
8	03/06/2010	Environment	Yes	1. Clarify	Reasons	
9	03/06/2010	Forestry	Yes	1. Clarify	Salience/ Reason	Q 3: both answers are valid
10	03/06/2010	WPE	Yes	1. Clarify	Reasons	
11	03/06/2010	Public Health	Yes	2.Convince	Reasons	
12	03/06/2010		Yes	2.Convince	Reasons	
13	04/06/2010	CODEV	Yes	2.Convince	Reasons	
14	04/06/2010	Research	Yes	2.Convince	Salience	
15	04/06/2010	Intellectual property	Yes	1. Clarify	Reasons	
16	04/06/2010	Trade questions	Yes	1. Clarify	Salience	
17	04/06/2010	Enlargement	Yes	1. Clarify	Reasons	
18	04/06/2010	Mertens	No	1. Clarify	Salience	
19	04/06/2010	Customs Union	Yes	1. Clarify	Reasons	we could support more than one MS's position
20	07/06/2010		No	1. Clarify	Salience	
21	08/06/2010		Yes	1. Clarify	Salience	
22	17/06/2010	SQWP	Yes	1. Clarify	Reasons	
23	21/06/2010	Migration	Yes	1. Clarify	Reasons	It depends on the political importance of the issue, the positions of the other MS (QMV counting), etc.

Presentation of the Results: http://docs.google.com/present/view?id=dcjwk7ck_22s9jb3sfs



The Questionnaire carried out at the beginning of this month concerned the communication within Your working group. It contained three short questions, tied up with one particular issue of Your own choice:

Question 1*

During the discussions:

- Yes, it was necessary to explain the Bulgarian position
- No, it was sufficient to communicate the Bulgarian position

Question 2**

Why You gave reasons for Your position:

1. To Clarify - to make the others understand why You are in favour of this position
2. To Convince other delegates to change their minds and realize that this is actually a good position

Question 3***

Which of the two options below was most important for You:

- Signalling Salience - that the issue was of particular national interest
- Giving Reasons - providing arguments why You are in favour of this position

The answers of all 21 respondents are summarised in the Table below. Please, identify Yourself in the Table.

In case You did not fill in the questionnaire, You can always make it online at:

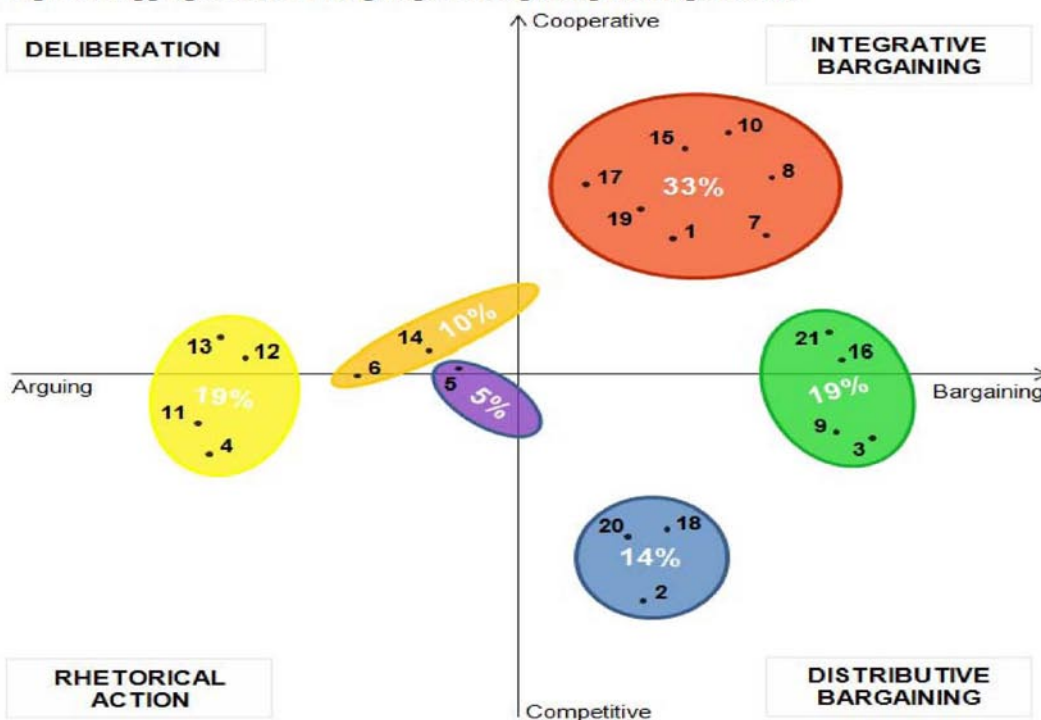
http://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?hl=en_GB&formkey=dHV4OGFLSTFhTEISYWEzUEozUkpvZFE6MQ#qid=0

No	Date/Time	Working Group	Question 1*	Question 2**	Question 3***	Comments
1	01/06/2010 20:11:53	Structural actions working party	Yes	1. Clarify	Reasons	a good compromise has been achieved
2	03/06/2010 14:17:21		No	1. Clarify	Saliency	
3	03/06/2010 14:29:36	Politico-Military Working Party	Yes	1. Clarify	Saliency	
4	03/06/2010 14:31:22	PMG	Yes	2. Convince	Reasons	other cases - different answers
5	03/06/2010 15:04:00	Structural Actions Working Party	No	2. Convince	Saliency	
6	03/06/2010 15:34:46	Tecom&INFISO + POSTS	Yes	1. Clarify/ 2. Convince	Reasons	Q2: both answers are valid
7	03/06/2010 15:39:39	Aviation	Yes	1. Clarify	Reasons	
8	03/06/2010 15:59:45	Environment	Yes	1. Clarify	Reasons	
9	03/06/2010 17:48:34	Forestry	Yes	1. Clarify	Saliency/Reasons	Q3: both answers are valid
10	03/06/2010 17:48:34	WPE	Yes	1. Clarify	Reasons	
11	03/06/2010 19:34:40	Public health	Yes	2. Convince	Reasons	

No	Date/Time	Working Group	Question 1*	Question 2**	Question 3***	Comments
12	03/06/2010 20:01:34		Yes	2. Convince	Reasons	
13	04/06/2010 10:01:17	CODEV	Yes	2. Convince	Reasons	
14	04/06/2010 11:19:27	Research working group	Yes	2. Convince	Saliency	
15	04/06/2010 11:44:01	Intellectual property	Yes	1. Clarify	Reasons	
16	04/06/2010 13:39:29	EFTA, TPC, Trade questions	Yes	1. Clarify	Saliency	
17	04/06/2010 14:26:24	Enlargement & countries negotiating for accession	Yes	1. Clarify	Reasons	
18	04/06/2010 16:07:11	Mertens	No	1. Clarify	Saliency	
19	04/06/2010 18:58:43	Customs union - legislation and policy	Yes	1. Clarify	Reasons	Sometimes we could support more than one MS's position from the different points of view
20	07/06/2010 09:31:18		No	1. Clarify	Saliency	
21	08/06/2010 09:43:06		Yes	1. Clarify	Saliency	

Now, that You know Your identification number (1÷21), You can check Your communication profile:

Figure 1. Aggregate levels of arguing and bargaining for Bulgaria 2010



Integrative Bargaining

'Maximise own wants via the want-satisfaction also of others'

The majority (33%) of the Bulgarian representatives participating in the survey consider integrative bargaining as their main mode of communication. They bargain in favour of their position, i.e. give reasons with the intention of clarifying one's position. Reason-giving is also more common and considered to be more important than communicating salience.

However, the motivation behind giving reasons is to clarify wants of other and self, searching for optimal compromise solution. The leitmotif is: *'to achieve good compromise'*. To this end, *'sometimes permreps could support more than one member state's position in order to accomodate the different points of view'*.

Distributive Bargaining

'Maximize own wants at the cost of others'

Around 14% of the Bulgarian permreps participating in the survey view the interactions at their working group meetings as competitive bargaining games that governments play in Brussels. They give reasons, if they do at all, with the intention of clarifying one's position. Unlike Integrative Bargaining, in this mode of decision-making signalling salience is considered to be more important than reason-giving.

In sum, actors involved in Distributive Bargaining use justifications to show their opponents how committed they are to a certain position. By so doing, actors may want to give the impression that under no circumstances will they back down from their position.

Integrative/ Distributive Bargaining

'If you give us X, we'll give you Y'

In about 19% of the cases it may be a better strategy to communicate a certain degree of flexibility between Integrative and Distributive bargaining. Justifying one's position by giving reasons may be a useful instrument to facilitate compromise.

Therefore, permreps may sometimes be prepared to give concessions of their hard core bargaining positions. It depends on the subject whether they will consider signalling salience as more important than reason-giving since *'in practice there are both situations'*.

Deliberation/ Rhetorical Action

'X is the best alternative because of argument Z'

Again 19% of the participants consider the two modes of arguing as their main interaction style. Deliberation and Rhetorical action have in common the goal of convincing others to change their minds. However, they disagree on the best mechanism to reach that goal. For Deliberation, this is by dialogue and sincere efforts at reaching common understanding. Whereas, Rhetorical action means that arguments are used strategically with the purpose of persuading opponents rather than reaching common understanding.

In sum, just because the actors argue - give reasons to convince - does not necessarily mean that they are open for being convinced by the arguments of others.

Arguing/ Integrative Bargaining

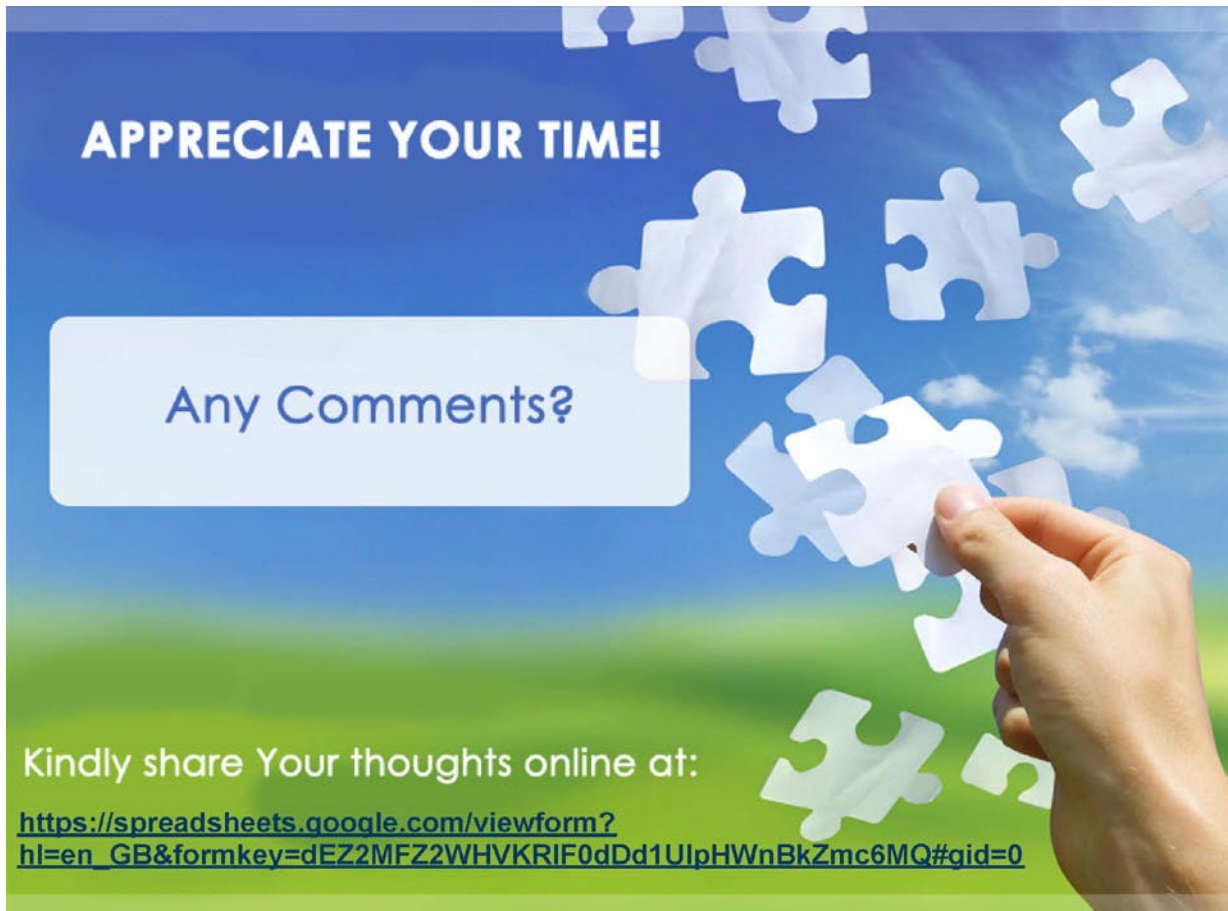
A small, but nevertheless important part of the participants (10%) view the interactions at their working group meetings as a mix of both Arguing and Integrative bargaining. Those respondents include elements of Integrative bargaining in their interpretations of *'convince others to change their minds'*.

The result is a mixture between consensus-seeking and arguing due to reason-giving being even more important in Integrative bargaining since the participants need as much information as they can get about each others' preferences in order to find optimal compromise solutions.

In the end, knowing why the other participant wants X may help to solve the problem.

Arguing/ Distributive Bargaining

Interestingly, for one of the participants, actors involved in Distributive bargaining may also use arguing in order to convince others to change their minds. This respondent, therefore, includes elements of Distributive bargaining in his/her interpretation of *'convince others to change their minds'*. In other words, he/she does NOT consider justifying one's position by giving reasons to be a useful strategy in his/her communication. Instead, he/she prefers using bargaining game techniques such as signalling salience, making strong commitments and using threats to persuade the others of one's preferred course of action.



Feedback Form:

Questionnaire: Results

Thank You for taking a couple of minutes to fill this form. Do You have any Comments or Suggestions after finding Your type of communication? Kindly share Your thoughts using the form below:

Working Group

How would You rate the level of comprehension of the three questions used in the Questionnaire?

1 2 3 4 5

Not Clear Clear

After reading the description of Your communication profile, how much do You agree with the results?

1 2 3 4 5

Totally Disagree Totally Agree

Any other Comments or Suggestions for Improvement?