

University of Twente

Faculty of Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences

Bachelor Thesis in the subject of European Public Administration

Title: *The development of the voting cohesion of the states of the 'Eastern Partnership' in the United Nations General Assembly with Russia and the EU from 2004 onwards*

Name:	Thomas Berning
1. supervisor:	Dr. Andreas Warntjen
2. supervisor:	Kira Killermann
Date of submission of final draft:	10.07.2015

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List of abbreviations

CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
EP	Eastern Partnership
ENP	European Neighborhood Policy
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPAP	Individual Partnership Action Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
TEU	Treaty on the European Union
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States
USSR	Union of the Socialist Soviet Republics

1. Executive Summary

This thesis sets out to analyze the voting behavior of the states of the 'Eastern Partnership' ('EP') on United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions vis a vis the voting behavior of the European Union (EU) respectively Russia. It does so in order to gain insights into the development of the states of the 'EP'. This thesis in particular focuses on the changes of the voting behavior vis a vis the EU and Russia from 2004 up to the present day.

Therefore it relies on quantitative data analysis namely regression and an interpretation of these data by means of literature research.

It finds that voting cohesion of the states of the 'EP' with the EU positively correlates with the similarity of domestic principles in particular democracy and that the degree of voting cohesion with Russia depends on whether a state of the 'EP' considers Russian politics as a danger for itself. Voting cohesion seems not to be influenced by degree of economic involvement and importance that the 'EP' states have with the EU as such.

2. Introduction and scientific & social relevance

This thesis deals with the topic of the voting behavior of regional organizations in the UNGA. It aims at analyzing changing patterns of cooperation and conflict in the UNGA. In particular this thesis will focus on the voting behavior of a selected number of states in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus Region namely the states of the 'EP' with whom the EU intends to have an institutionalized dialogue under the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). It is here particularly interesting and relevant to put the voting behavior of the states of the 'EP' in relation to both the EU and Russia both of whom are willing to bind those states closer to themselves. This has been true ever since the break up of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and especially since the EU Eastern Enlargement starting in 2004 which put the states of the 'EP' directly in the buffer zone between the EU and Russia. Moreover 2004 marked the year of the Orange Revolution in Ukraine which was essentially seen as a turn from Russia to the West and the EU in particular. Against the backdrop of the ongoing territorial conflict between the Ukraine and Russia and the war between Georgia and Russia in 2008 it has become even more necessary to focus on this region.

When doing this via means of studying voting behavior of those states in the UNGA one could think of all kinds of dimensions of global divisions that might cause a state to vote different or similar to another state or other groups of states.

For me the most important against the backdrop of my knowledge of this region seems to be the fact that the states of the 'EP' are faced with strategic choices regarding their overall geopolitical, societal and economic foreign orientation. Since none of the states of the 'EP' seems to be able to form its own 'block' it is necessary for them to find their right allies. Russia and the EU seem to be natural choices and maybe natural alternatives which are internally disputed in the states of the 'EP' and also fostered by the increasing dualism between Russia and the EU. Therefore it makes sense to focus in the first place on the voting behavior of the states of the 'EP' vis a vis Russia and the EU in order to be able to derive trends in the overall orientation of these states. Comparing the states of the 'EP' with other states in the world would not lend itself for making statements about the overall foreign orientation of these states simply because other states or

groups of states except for maybe NATO can not offer such fundamental alternatives as Russia and the EU can.

When looking at the EU one can see that the ENP finds its legal basis in Art. 8 Treaty on the European Union (TEU) which formulates the goal for the EU to develop a special relationship with its neighboring countries with the aim of establishing an area of prosperity and good neighborliness which is founded on the values of the EU. The states of the 'EP' cover Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine in Eastern Europe and Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in the Caucasus Region. The 'EP' complements the ENP which moreover covers the states south of Europe stretching from North Africa to the Middle East to parts of the Western Balkans under the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean. The 'EP' was launched at the Prague Summit in May 2009.

In general cooperation between the EU and third states or international organizations is based on Art. 216 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) that permits the EU to conclude agreements with states and international organizations.

In order to shed more light on the development of the different states of the 'EP' in recent years it was chosen to approach this topic via assessing the voting behavior of those states on resolutions put to a roll-call vote in the UNGA. The guiding research question is formulated as follows "How can the changes in the voting behavior of the states of the 'EP' on UNGA resolutions in relation to the voting behavior of Russia and the EU after 2004 be explained?"

An analysis of UNGA voting behavior is a frequently chosen approach for analyzing the cohesiveness of regional organizations on issues of global political relevance be they issues of 'high' or issues of 'low' politics. The distinct advantage of UNGA voting behavior analysis for approaching research questions is the use of quantitative data analysis relying on given data which makes the data analysis more reliable than alternative approaches.

The starting point that was chosen as a basis for this thesis is the work of Hosli et al (2010) who addressed the question of how to describe and explain the structure of cooperation and conflict in the post cold war period by analyzing UNGA voting behavior. Similarly to Hosli et al. this thesis will try to analyze changing patterns of conflict and cooperation between the states of the 'EP' on the one hand and Russia respectively the EU on the other side.

This thesis will add to the existing body of knowledge by combining an in-depth study of a particular region's namely the states of the 'EP' international political orientation with international relations theory and with a quantitative multilevel data analysis of the voting behavior of the states of the 'EP' vis a vis Russia respectively the EU.

The acquired knowledge might potentially be of relevance for policymakers on the EU and the nation state level who seek to fine tune their policy approaches towards the states of the 'EP' and thus come closer to the goals laid down in Art. 8 TEU. In the same vein also other international organizations, Non Governmental Organizations (NGO) and possibly multinational companies might find this thesis to provide information that makes them adjust their approaches towards these states in a particular way.

3. Research Question

The research question formulated for this thesis reads as follows “*How can the changes in the voting cohesion of the states of the EP with Russia and the EU after 2004 be explained?*”.

The phrasing of this explanatory research question is open in so far as it seeks to figure out causes of effects. Accordingly the research question only explicitly mentions the dependent variable. Moreover the research question is open in so far as it is not mentioning a particular development of the dependent variable. Doing this would not have been possible since actually the concept of voting cohesion in the context of this thesis could appear to show heterogeneous patterns of change meaning that the voting cohesion between one state of the ‘EP’ and the EU could be constantly growing over the analyzed time span whereas the voting cohesion between another state of the ‘EP’ with the EU could be constantly decreasing over the analyzed time span.

4. Theoretical Background and formulation of hypotheses

4.1. UNGA voting behavior analysis

There has been a considerable amount of academic literature on the analysis of voting behavior of regional organizations on UNGA resolutions. According to Hosli et al (2010,p.5) despite critique concerning the largely symbolic nature of UNGA voting the UNGA provides as an organ of the UN which is the international organization with the largest membership of sovereign states a forum in which those states can debate about and vote on issues concerning the international community as a whole. Hosli et al (2010,p.6) claims that studying voting behavior over time and across issue areas will enable an identification of global lines of conflict and cooperation.

The analysis of changing voting patterns of the states of the ‘EP’ on resolutions voted on in the UNGA in the roll-call mode as is intended with the research question can offer valuable insights into general trends underway in each of the states of the ‘EP’. Due to the availability of voting records for all years or rather sessions since the foundation of the United Nations (UN) and the availability of voting records of each UN member state since the beginning of their memberships in the UN the analysis of voting behavior offers a unique possibility for the comparison of different states’ and international organizations’ voting behavior throughout different policy areas and the possibility for measuring voting cohesion between states and regional organizations in a very reliable manner.

What can however not be adequately pictured by the voting behavior alone is why states vote the way they do, whether they vote according to their preferences or just align themselves with certain stable blocks of states (Hosli et al,2010,p.187).

Generally it can be said that literature on UNGA voting behavior is broad in the sense that it focuses

on very different questions with similar though in their details remarkably different techniques, meaning ways of measuring relevant concepts such as voting behavior and voting cohesion, These different techniques are further discussed in the operationalization part of this thesis. What concerns substantive questions discussed and approached by means of UNGA voting behavior analysis topics cover a wide range of issues. Jakobsson (2009) analyzed the impacts of the EU

Eastern Enlargement on overall internal EU voting cohesion and Jin and Hosli (2013) tried to identify the impacts the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty had on EU internal voting cohesion. Apart from institutional changes in international organizations such as the 'widening' and the 'deepening' of the EU various authors such as Panke (2013) have focussed on why international organizations differ in their ability to speak with one voice in international organizations such as the UNGA and why some regional organizations are more successful than others. Similarly to Jakobsson (2009) and Jin and Hosli (2013) Panke (2013) though for a broader sample of regional organizations analyzed the impact of a certain set of factors such as financial, bureaucratic and ideational capacities at the disposal of regional organizations' member states the regional organizations' degree of internal homogeneity and the size in terms of member states of a regional organization.

Again other authors have analyzed the impact of a wide range of other potentially factors relevant for explaining differences in voting behavior across states or groups of states not directly related to a regional organization's internal constitution respectively the 'depth' of integration as is the case in the EU or the size or degree of homogeneity of a regional organization respectively the 'width' of the EU.

Among these factors are economic factors such as whether financial crises especially the one occurring in 2008 (Persson,2012), party politics as the election of a new president of the US (Persson,2012) and the impact of IMF programs discussed by Dreher and Sturm (2012).

Again another perspective on voting behavior is offered by Voeten (2000) who analyzed voting behavior and voting cohesion for specified issue areas such as disarmament or political rights.

All this literature serves to show that a reasonable analysis of the voting behavior of the states of the 'EP' requires caution in doing voting behavior analysis and a stable theoretical underpinning. Based on these insights it seems useful to reach back to the relevant international relation theories which lend themselves for analysis will be taken as a starting point as the basis for further going research.

For the purpose of this thesis after having highlighted the ongoing relevance of each of the broad international relation theories a testable hypothesis is derived from the theories which relates to the states of the 'EP'.

4.2. Realism

Realism as a major theory of international relations argues that states as unitary actors which are all similar in their basic characteristics with the aspiration to either maximize their power as is the case in offensive structural realism or to maximize their security as is the case in defensive structural realism are the central actors in international relations. Since states are expected to measure their power and security against other states meaning they care only about relative gains they are fundamentally interested in gaining power at other states' expense (Mearsheimer,2001,p.52). Cooperation between states thus seems very difficult and can only occur on an ad hoc basis.

Mearsheimer (1990) was also among the first to argue that the end of the cold war was likely to bring about violent conflicts in Central and Eastern Europe. In the same way Waltz (2000) argued that realist thinking was still relevant in post cold war Europe. In particular Waltz (2000) claimed

that proponents of the 'democratic peace' hypothesis were not right in saying that democracies would no longer fight wars. In fact Waltz (2000) held that democracies would still fight wars against authoritarian regimes. Against the backdrop of about 25 years of post cold war history it can be said that Mearsheimer's predictions have partly turned out to be true.

While the transformation in the former satellite states of the USSR was largely peaceful, civil wars in former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, the war between Russia and Georgia in 2008 and the ongoing conflict over parts of Eastern Ukraine between Ukraine and separatists supported by Russia as well as the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia serve as examples for Mearsheimer's dire projections.

Since realism has proven its ongoing relevance in the post cold war period by offering true future predictions it makes sense to assess realist literature on the development of the post soviet space in more detail in order to be able to derive a testable hypothesis concerning the UNGA voting behavior of the states of the 'EP'.

Vasfilow (2014, p.28) hypothesized that the whole of the Post-Soviet space excluding the Baltic States and Russia would be subject of a level of competition between the EU and Russia that is higher than necessary in the international system.

Neoclassical realism tries to answer the question of why global and regional pressures transform into one specific foreign policy.

In particular Vasfilow (2014,p.34) showed that despite encouraging signals such as United States (US) and Chinese expansionism, China's rising position in the international hierarchy, the diminished ability of great powers of exerting influence on smaller states and the weakened ability of states to use international organizations in their interest, EU-Russia relations have become increasingly uncooperative declining from a relatively productive cooperation in the 1990s which by the end of 2003 had become explicit. Instead competition between both developed and strengthened.

Vasfilow (2014,p.35) identified two groups of intervening variables those related to the human psyche and human nature on the one hand and those having to do with the internal structure of international actors on the other hand that can lead to the actors not adequately processing the signals mentioned above sent by the international system.

In this microcosm of international relations Vasfilow (2014,p.37) argues all post-soviet states except Russia and thus also all states of the 'EP' can be perceived of as objects of competition between the EU and Russia who have but one option namely to choose between seeking closer cooperation with either Russia or the EU.

It seems logical that a state of the 'EP' that perceives Russian foreign policies as a threat to its national interests will not be likely to intend to pursue closer cooperation with Russia.

Instead this state will be expected to seek closer cooperation with the EU as it is according to Vasfilow (2014,p.37) the only viable alternative.

However in fact a state of the 'EP' may even in the face of perceived presumptuous foreign policies from Russia seek cooperation with Russia in order to ensure its independence and the survival of its political model (Majander, 1999,p.78). This phenomenon has been named Finlandisation.

The case of Finland in the cold-war period serves as a case in point here. Despite two wars fought between Finland and the Soviet Union in the course of World War 2 in 1948 the Soviet Union and Finland concluded 'The Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance'.

Yet the case of Finland can not belie the relative rarity of such phenomena which can also be seen in the fact that the case of Finland has been eponymous to the concept of Finlandisation.

Accordingly it is safe to hypothesize the following:

H1: The more aggressive and uncooperative Russia's foreign policy is perceived by a state of the 'EP' the less likely that state is to vote similarly to Russia on UNGA resolutions particularly on issues of 'high politics'.

4.3. Liberalism

Liberalism much as realism is a rationalist theory about international relations. Rationality means that actors are goal oriented utility maximizers. Different from realism however liberalism regards cooperation between states as something normal rather than exceptional which is based on the foundational assumption that states as central actors on the international stage seek to maximize their wealth and therefore are interdependent. States can be quite diverse in liberal theory which is not the case in realist theory. A state's interest in liberal theory is not given but subject of a national preference formation process. In a second step on the international stage states bargain and reach certain outcomes (Moravcsik,1993,p.483). Interstate agreement according to liberal theory is facilitated by the assumption that states are more interested in absolute not in relative gains as is the case for realism meaning that states do not seek advantages at the expense of other states (Powell, 1991,p.1303).

A well established proposition based on liberalism is the 'democratic peace' thesis which holds that democratic states virtually never go to war with one another. According to Hosli et al (2010,p.7/8) democratic states can not only be expected to live together peacefully but also are likely to hold similar policy perspectives.

Based on these assumptions it can be seen as likely that the states of the 'EP' will vote in line with the EU states on UNGA resolutions. However the validity of this relationship is constrained due to the fact that first the degree of democracy of a country is usually not and in this thesis neither understood as a binary variable and therefore the EU due to its largely though not homogenous democratic nature can not function as a perfect benchmark for democracy. Second, either as a result of the varying degrees of democracy of EU states or due to different reasons EU states are also not always completely cohesive in their voting behavior.

Yet it can be justified as an assumption that voting cohesion between the EU and the states of the 'EP' ceteris paribus can be expected to increase the more a state of the 'EP' resembles the EU in terms of democracy.

Against the backdrop of these theoretical considerations it seems reasonable to formulate the second hypothesis as follows:

H2: The more a state of the 'EP' resembles the EU in its degree of democracy, the more the voting behavior of a state of the 'EP' on UNGA resolutions is likely to be similar to the EU's voting behaviour particularly on issues of 'low politics'.

4.4. Constructivism

Constructivism according to Adler (1997) straddles a middle ground between rationalist (realist and liberalist) and relativist interpretive (postmodern, post-structural and critical) approaches. Constructivists perceive of international reality as socially constructed by cognitive structures that give meaning to the material world (Adler, 1997,p.319). According to Checkel (2001,p.553) compliance with norms embedded in international institutions and regimes can be explained both by rationalist theories and constructivism. Checkel (2001,p.554) proposed the model of social learning and argumentative persuasion. He propped up the theory of social choice and interaction which is essentially constructivist with rationalist elements in order to understand better processual mechanisms that lead states to comply with an international norm. Checkel (2001,p.568) argued that domestic politics and the history of a state's political institutions delimited the causal role of social learning for norm compliance.

With respect to the newly gained independence of Ukraine Checkel (2001,p.572) argued that constructivist accounts would fare better to explain norm compliance due to the fact that domestic institutions were not as deeply ingrained as was the case in Germany.

Since all the states of the 'EP' can look back at a history resembling Ukraine's with respect to the duration and length of existence of their state's institutions it is fair to say that theoretical considerations with regards to Ukraine can without much loss of meaning be transferred to the other states of the 'EP'.

Checkel regarded norm compliance as a dependent variable (2001,p.554), however different from earlier researchers whom he criticized for more focusing on later stages of compliance where full internalisation of international rules had already taken place Checkel put a focus on the underlying mechanisms of social protest/mobilization and social learning.

Different from rationalist learning social learning in a constructivist context does not rely too strongly on methodological individualism forms of which can be found in game theoretic models.

The idea of argumentative persuasion was defined by Checkel and Moravcsik (2001,p.221) as 'an activity or process in which a communicator attempts to induce a change in the belief, attitude or behavior of another person through the transmission of a message in a context in which the persuadee has some degree of free choice'.

Delcour (2008,p.5) argued that in the same way as territories, regions can be thought of as social constructs. Delcour's argument is that social, political, cultural and economic interaction among players located in contiguous geographical space help creating a common regional identity. While Delcour's (2008) argument refers to the integration of the states of the 'EP' among themselves it can be argued in the same vein that interaction of any of those states with the EU can help creating a common identity of both.

In the context of this thesis this could be interpreted such that the EU tries to induce a change of mind on issues of global politics dealt with in the UNGA.

Against the backdrop of Delcour's reasoning that interaction among states can help creating a common identity of the participating players it can be argued that the EU by means of economic cooperation with the states of the 'EP' intends to build a common identity with the states of the 'EP'. Moreover it can be reasoned that the strategy pursued by the EU in order to build this

common identity involves elements of facilitating economic cooperation. This again can be taken to argue that facilitated economic cooperations is likely to boost mutual economic relations. In a nutshell it seems thus reasonable to hypothesize as follows:

H3: The more a state of the 'EP' interacts economically with the EU, the more likely that state is to have a voting behavior that is similar to the EU.

5. Operationalization of the main concepts (developing measurable variables)

5.1. Operationalization of the dependent variable

The dependent variable central to this research is the voting behavior of individual states on UNGA resolutions decided by roll-call vote. In principle there are four ways a state can express his vote. It is possible for a state to approve of, to disapprove of and to abstain from a vote. Moreover it is possible for a state to be absent when a resolution is put to a vote. The variable voting behavior is usually operationalized such that approving of a resolution is coded as 1 and disapproving of a resolution is coded as 0. Among scholars it is however disputed how to handle abstentions.

This thesis essentially requires measurements of voting behavior of individual states, of voting behavior of a group of states, of voting cohesion between two states, of voting cohesion within a group of states and of voting cohesion between an individual state and a group of states.

The concept of voting behavior intends to capture adequately the position of actors on the international stage on specific policy issues whereas the concept of voting cohesion intends to picture the degree of unity among actors on the international stage on policy issues which each actor having its own position on policy issues.

An assessment of voting cohesion necessarily presupposes that clarity as to how the voting behavior of each of the units between whom voting cohesion is to be analyzed is conceptualized and operationalized.

Regarding the voting behavior of individual states, the treatment of absences is essential.

Thomas Volgy et al. and Eric Voeten (Hosli, M. O., Van Kampen, E., Meijerink, F., & Tennis, K., 2010, p.16) interpreted abstentions as a softer form of a 'no' and coding both alternatives the same way for purposes of data analysis due to the fact that abstentions cause a vote not to reach the threshold necessary for its adoption.

Hix coded all voting alternatives separately (Hosli et al, 2010,p.16/17).

Absences are also treated differently from scholar to scholar. Some leave out absences all together whereas others treat absences and abstentions the same way.

The voting behavior of a group of states is a necessary concept in this thesis since the first hypothesis requires a test of the voting cohesion between the EU as a group of states on the one side and the individual states of the 'EP' on the other side.

In principle different ways are thinkable. One could calculate the EU position by taking the average of the individual EU member state votes for a resolution. One could also find out what the relative majority of the EU states voted for on a given resolution.

While the latter option is less time consuming, the former option has the advantage of providing more valid results that can picture more adequately the nature of 'divided' votes with two similarly large subgroups.

Burmester and Jankowski (2014,p.5) discussed the two most prominent voting indices namely the Agreement Index by Hix and the Index of Voting cohesion by Lijphart .

Hix' index is mainly suited for calculating the cohesion of a group of states such as the EU whereas the Index of Voting Cohesion by Lijphart is used for analyzing dyads.

Lijphart's index is calculated as follows: "Index of Voting Cohesion = $(a + 0,5*b)/t$ " with a standing for the count of identical votes cast in the assembly, b standing for the number of solidarity votes meaning votes in which one state abstains from a vote whereas the other state votes yes or no and t standing for the total number of votes cast.

This index is perfectly suited for measuring the voting cohesion between Russia and each of the states of the 'EP' individually which is necessary for testing the first hypothesis.

For the second and third hypothesis however the voting cohesion between a group of states on the one side and an individual state on the other side must be calculated.

Since there is no readily available way of calculating the voting behavior of a region one can think of different ways of measuring this.

On the one side one could search for the relative majority position for each resolution and treat the group as a single state and use the Lijphart Index. The drawback of this method is however that it exclusively relies on the mode of voting and does not take minority positions into account.

Another method would be to calculate a group position by taking the average of the coded voting positions. This method however has the disadvantage of solely calculating a group position while not taking into account possible internal voting cohesion of the group of states.

Yet since the second hypothesis does not directly require an index for the internal voting cohesion of the EU, it makes sense to follow the latter option.

When doing this, it is possible to amend Lijphart's Index of Voting Cohesion such that for each resolution the sum of the difference between the EU position and a particular state of the 'EP' is calculated and divided by the total number of resolutions put to a roll-call vote.

Put in a nutshell this means that abstentions will be coded as a 0,5 and abstentions will be omitted. Lijphart's Index of Voting Cohesion will be used for the first hypothesis and an amended version thereof for the second and third hypothesis.

In particular this means that for the EU for each resolution the average voting position is calculated. In a next step similar to Lijphart's Index of Voting Cohesion the EU average values will be put into relation with the voting behavior of the different states of the 'EP'. However due to the fact that the voting distance between the states of the 'EP' and the EU might take any value between 0 and 1 Lijphart's Index of Voting Cohesion which is based on the idea that voting distance is either 0, 0.5 or 1 must be remodeled such that it can take into account voting distances other than the mentioned. However this is not too much of a problem since the idea of the Index of Voting Cohesion is to calculate average voting distances for a number of different votes. The same can also be done with all values other than the ones mentioned above. By

following this approach calculating the average voting distance for a particular UNGA session between the EU and the states of the 'EP' is effectively possible.

Data for resolutions have been retrieved from the General Assembly of the United Nations: (<http://www.un.org/en/ga/documents/voting.asp>)

5.2. Operationalisation of the independent variables

Perception of aggressive and uncooperative behavior of Russia

The states' of the 'EP' perception of aggressive and uncooperative behavior of Russia in its foreign policies towards the states of the 'EP' can not easily be operationalized such that it can be easily coded solely by applying existing operationalizations since there are either very few or none. At least they were not possible to be found.

Instead a new way of operationalization will be developed and applied.

According to realist thinking every state will either seek to maximize its security or its power in order to ensure its survival.

Walt (Williams,2012,p.21) an exponent of defensive structural realism in his 'balance of threat' theory argues that states form alliances to protect themselves. How states act is determined by how they perceive threats and the power of other states.

Based on this theory it is possible to perceive of the degree of alliance between the single states of the 'EP' with the Russian dominated Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as a consequence of a perceived threat to their national security. The relative position of each of the states of the 'EP' vis a vis Russia and NATO can be rank ordered on a spectrum with the CSTO being the one extreme and NATO the other. The CSTO besides Russia consists of Armenia and Belarus who have been members since 1994, the year the CSTO was founded. Azerbaijan and Georgia had also been members from the beginning but discontinued their membership in 1999.

From the Individual Partnership Action Plans between NATO and the states of the 'EP' appears that Armenia, Azerbaijan and Moldova had no intention of joining NATO. Georgia since 2006 and Ukraine since 2005 have been undergoing an Intensified Dialogue concerning the "full range of political, military, financial and security issues relating to possible NATO membership". This dialogue has been designed for those states aspiring to NATO membership to keep them in touch with NATO.

Bearing these facts in mind it makes sense to rank states with a CSTO membership and without International Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) lowest. States with CSTO membership plus IPAP should be ranked next, then neutral states without any plans of joining an alliance should follow and lastly states having an Intensified Dialogue with NATO should follow. Where two or more states score equal the existence of 'frozen conflicts' over parts of the 'EP' states sovereign territory should be taken into account. In particular states will be assigned a value between 1 and 6 for each observed year with 1 standing for a very low degree of risk perception and 6 for the highest perception among the six 'EP' states. This can be seen in Graph 5 where Belarus and Armenia receive the lowest value of 1.5 throughout the time due to them being CSTO members and Georgia and Ukraine an prospective NATO aspirants ranking between 5 and 6.

Degree of Democracy

The degree of democracy of a state's government is a variable that has been intensively analyzed so far. Hence it makes sense to fall back on existing data sets.

Freedom House which regards itself as an independent watchdog organization annually publishes the Freedom in the World survey. This index encompasses indicators of both Political Rights and Civil Liberties. Depending on exceeding certain thresholds a state can qualify as an electoral or in the more democratic case as a liberal democracy.

The methodology of the Freedom in the World Index is subject of constant review taking into account evolving ideas about political rights and civil liberties which frequently lead to adjustments of the used indicators. As those changes fail to encroach upon existing data-sets there is no perfect comparability of the data of the different years.

The scores given to a certain state for a particular dimension or indicator of the index represent the consensus reached by a discussion among 60 analysts and 30 advisers which contributes to a high reliability for each particular year though not necessarily throughout several years. This might endanger overall internal consistency.

Yet Freedom House claims to only make incremental changes which do not impair the overall comparability of the data-sets over time.

In particular the Freedom in the World Index assigns each state every year a value between 1 and 7 for its freedom rating with increments of 0.5 with 1 meaning that a state is labeled as 'free' and 7 meaning that a state is considered as 'not free'. This index is made up by two sub-scores one for political rights including such dimensions as 'electoral process' and 'political pluralism' and one for civil liberties including dimensions such as 'freedom of expression and belief' and 'rule of law'

The Freedom in the World Index (Freedom House, Freedom in the world) is strongly and positively correlated with three other democracy indices (Mainwaring,2001,p.53) which is a sign of a high criterion validity.

Freedom House claims to maintain a view of freedom which is not culture-bound but is instead based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the UNGA in 1948.

Various political scientists including Mainwaring (2001,p.52) have disputed that view and accused Freedom House of ideological bias favoring Christian over other countries and favoring left-wing governments over non left-wing governments.

Moreover the Freedom in the World Index has been blamed for shortcomings concerning its overall construct validity. Landman and Hausermann (Giannone,2010,p.69) hold that the index practically can be and has been used for measuring a variety of related yet distinct phenomena which causes a conceptual overstretch.

In order to take care of all the aforementioned criticisms it makes sense to pay special attention to abrupt changes in scores for individual states from one year to the next. Should there be abrupt changes, an in-depth study of possible changes of indicators and how these changes affected the outcome should be considered.

Since apart from Azerbaijan all the other 'EP' states as well as all of the EU states have predominantly Christian populations an ideological bias on grounds of favoring Christian

dominated states will not reduce the comparability of the different data sets since all but one data set are suspected of being biased the same way. Thus overall internal validity is not threatened.

Degree of economic interaction

The degree to which a state of the 'EP' interacts economically with the EU can be approximated by a range of different indicators. The European Commission for example provides statistics concerning its trade in goods relationships with each of the states of the 'EP' from 2004 onwards.

In fact economic interaction is a much wider concept which if truly comprehensively dealt with would need to stretch much further and cover also trade in services mutual Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) , the flow of labor and capital etc.

Yet for reasons of time constraints trade in goods which is among other indicators a very frequently used indicator for describing economic interconnectedness of states and regions will function in this thesis as estimate for economic interaction between the states of the 'EP' and the EU.

However a few things must be taken into consideration. First of all the data provided by the European Commission display the total absolute amount of imports and exports in million Euro.

Here it is worth bearing in mind that the total amount of trade in goods between the EU and each state of the 'EP' is more telling when it is put into relation to the overall global trade volume of an 'EP' state and especially to the trade volume of that state with Russia since this thesis essentially builds on the polarity of the European and Post-soviet space.

Additionally third factors such as global or regional economic crises, monetary policies and other factors can potentially have high influence on trade volumes between the states of the 'EP' and the EU.

For the sake of simplicity it will not be attempted to develop an indicator such that it becomes resistant against the adulterant influence of third variables.

The data upon which the analysis will be based will be derived from the European Commission Directorate-General for Trade.

5.3. Differentiation between policy fields

The differentiation between high and low politics as applied in this thesis roughly models itself on the approach chosen by Hosli et al(2010). In fact by means of keyword search Hosli et al (2010,p.21) arrived at a categorization of issue areas which looks as follows: human rights, decolonization, Middle East, security, UN internal, development and environment. The latter two of which were merged due to scarcity of resolutions for each keyword individually. This thesis will employ a similar approach. Resolutions relating to 'security' can be categorized as belonging to 'high politics', whereas human rights, environment and development can be counted to 'low politics' (Hosli et al,2010,p.26). In fact for the purpose of this research the automatic keyword research has been replaced by a manual check of the titles of a specific resolution. No specific keywords have been chosen in order to assign a resolution or a sub-part of a resolution to 'high' respectively 'low' politics. However any time when instead of automatic keyword search for each resolution an individual decision has been made based on the keywords given by Hosli et al but

not strictly limited to them. Particularly the keywords chosen by Hosli et al that do not have a region or time specific aspect and instead can be applied in a wider range of contexts. This includes for instance all resolutions including 'arms', nuclear' and 'missiles' for 'high politics' and 'democracy/democratic', 'development' and 'right to food' for low politics. For the tests of two of the first and the second hypothesis this implies that possible influences of factors such as risk perception and degree of democracy can better be traced and falsified or not than would have been the case if the whole of UNGA resolutions was taken as a basis for testing the hypotheses. Not all resolutions voted upon in the UNGA have been assigned to either 'high' or 'low' politics. The resolutions not assigned were mainly resolutions on the Middle East and UN internal resolutions.

6. Discussion and formulation of appropriate research designs

In this study a non-manipulable, non-randomised correlational research design will be employed. In fact all three hypotheses will be tested independent from one another. Yet for none of the three hypotheses experimental conditions guaranteeing neither manipulability of the independent variable by the researcher nor effective randomization of the 'treatment' variable on the units of analysis are practically or theoretically feasible. The chosen sample will feature both data of a number of units of analysis greater than one and data for different years for each unit of analysis. Effectively this will be a times-series cross-sectional type of study. This type of study will thus enable both an assessment of individual states' development over time for each of the chosen tests plus a comparison of changing voting patterns over time across different states of the 'EP'. This research design is superior to a cross-sectional design since a cross-sectional design falls short of explaining likely changes over time. The research design is also superior to a longitudinal design since it can better reflect on changes affecting the region as a whole than would have been the case if only one state was sampled. In each case a census is better qualified for analyzing a population than drawing only a sample from it.

7. Case Selection and Sampling

As a basis for answering the research question the data of all the UNGA resolutions from 2004 onwards that were decided upon by roll-call voting will be used. More concretely since the UNGA does not record votes in terms of years but in terms of sessions which begin in autumn each year and can have, depending on the UNGA agenda, varying durations. For the purpose of this thesis it was chosen that those resolutions decided upon by consensus voting as well as those resolutions that already failed in their draft phase will be omitted.

In case a resolution has been voted upon several times, each time that a paragraph or sub-part of a resolution has been voted upon will be counted as an individual case and treated as such. This offers the advantage of gaining more valid insights into the overall voting behavior of a state simply by means of effectively increasing the number of cases. However this is also potentially damaging for the overall validity since a few resolutions in a particular session might actually skew the result for a whole year. Yet this approach has already been chosen by Birnberg (2009,p.100). It is therefore useful to still use this approach.

In fact it would have been possible to pick all resolutions cast from 1992 respectively the 47th UNGA session onwards since this year marked the year that the last of the states of the 'EP' became a UN member.

However the year 2004 respectively the 59th session of the UNGA was chosen as the cut-off year for analysis since 2004 marked the year of the 1st round of EU Eastern Enlargement. This is important since the membership composition of the EU in 2004 roughly resembled the current membership composition.

8.Data Analysis

8.1. Formal Data Analysis

In order to analyze the generated quantitative data in a way that is conducive to answering the research question and testing the formulated hypotheses statistical regression will be applied. In principle based on Lijphart's Index of Voting Cohesion respectively the chosen amendment thereof for each resolution and each sub-part of a resolution the difference of the voting behavior between two relevant actors will be calculated. After having defined ways of operationalizing the variables and having justified the used sampling method a next useful step would be to aggregate cases in an appropriate way. Relevant literature has often chosen to aggregate all cases of a specific year respectively a specific UNGA session.

This approach will also be chosen for this research. In fact that means that the average of the absolute values of the differences in voting behavior between the EP states and Russia and between the EP states and the EU on all resolutions of a particular UNGA session will be calculated.

This results in a number of 'aggregated cases' of 132.

With this approach it is basically possible to pick out a particular combination of a year and a country or a country that is deviating from the rest throughout the years under investigation or a year which is different in some respect for all states of the 'EP' from the majority of the other years. All these kinds of deviations can be subject of a deviant case analysis. In the latter cases the aggregated data are subjected to a further step of aggregation. This does not allow for direct analyzes of particular resolutions however this would also not be exactly desirable since this thesis intends to figure out and explain general trends of changes in voting behavior rather than explanations for why a particular state voted like it did on a particular resolution.

In this spirit the deviant case analysis will not try to distill the particular reasons that led the states of the 'EP' respectively Russia or the EU to vote the way they did.

A last thing that needs to be noted is that data for the independent variable are related to specific calendar years while the dependent variable reasonably is to be aggregated for a UNGA session which is not completely congruent with a calendar year. However the effect of this 'shift' is likely to be insignificant.

Moreover the Index of Voting Cohesion is not taken directly for purposes of calculation but an equivalent calculation method. In particular the absolute value of the difference between the voting behavior of the states of the 'EP' and Russia respectively the EU is calculated for each resolution and the average of a session's absolute voting differences is taken.

8.2. Substantive data analysis

With regards to the UNGA voting cohesion between the EU and the different states of the 'EP' between the 58th and the 69th session in the field of 'low politics' (Graph 1) the first thing that can be noted is that there are basically two different groupings of states within the 'EP' countries that resemble each other quite strongly in their respective voting cohesion with the EU whereas they are much different from the other grouping of states in this regard. Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine exhibit the lowest degree of difference in their voting behavior vis a vis the EU. In fact disagreement throughout the entire observed time span never exceeded 0.1 except for Ukraine in the 58th session.

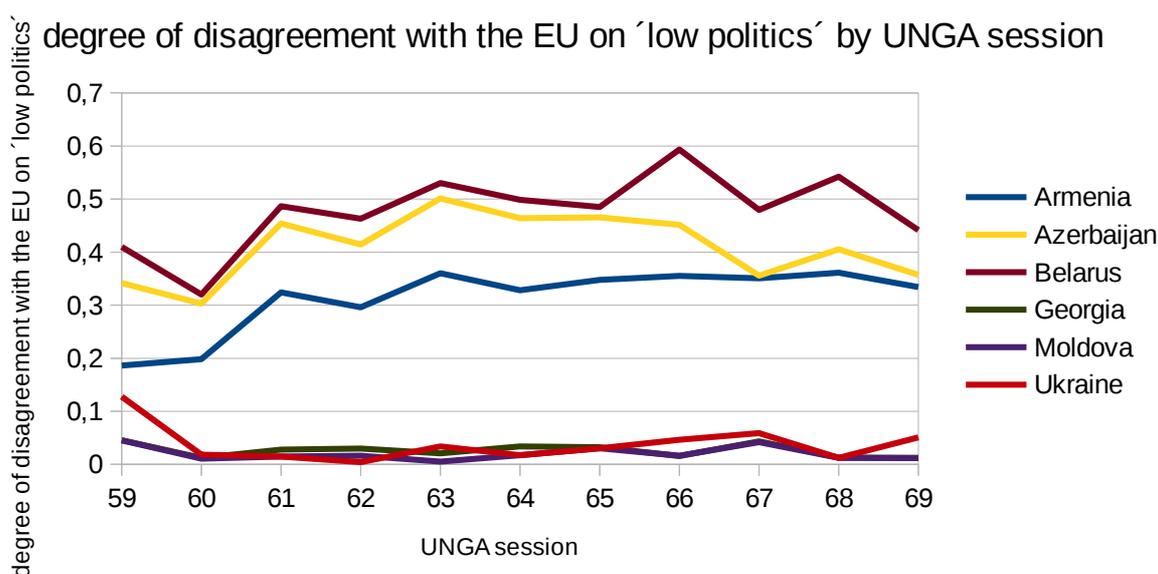
Basically it can be said that the voting cohesion of these states with the EU has remained rather stable with the trend-line indicating only a very modest decrease of the degree of disagreement which is however the strongest for Ukraine.

The situation for Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus presents itself quite differently. The degree of disagreement between the EU and Belarus has been fluctuating between a minimum of 0.3 and a maximum of 0.6. Much the same holds true for Azerbaijan which has seen fluctuations in its level of disagreement between 0.3 and about 0.5. Slightly different is the case of Armenia whose degree of disagreement has been fluctuating between roughly 0.2 and 0.4.

For all three states the trend-lines indicate increases of the level of disagreement over time, however in the case of Belarus and Armenia these changes are the most extreme also in comparison to the changes of the degrees of disagreement in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

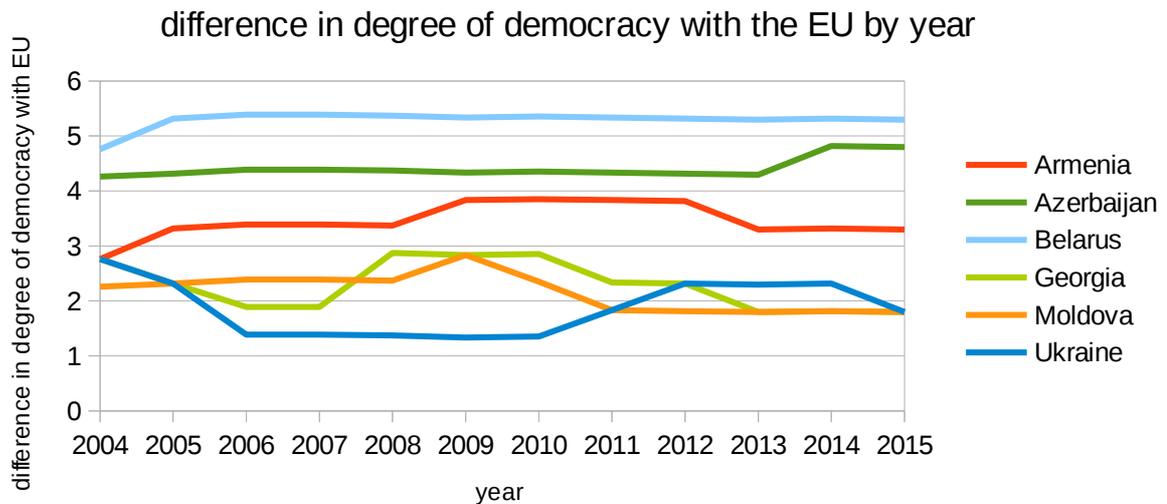
Interestingly the degree of disagreement on low politics in the observed time span of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus vis a vis Russia is lower than is the case for Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Moreover what has been changing most, have been the voting cohesions of Georgia and Ukraine with Russia both of whom have experienced fast increases of their degree of disagreement with Russia. The degrees of disagreement of the other states with Russia have been comparatively stable.

Graph 1



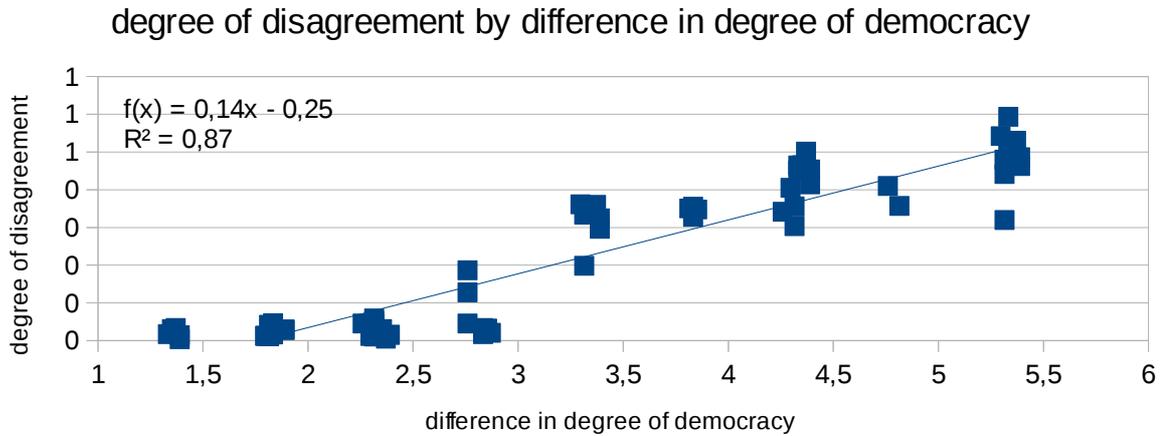
Looking at the independent variable of difference in degree of democracy between the EU and the different states of the EP (Graph 2) it can be seen that Belarus constantly has differed the most from the EU in its degree of democracy followed by Azerbaijan and Armenia following third. Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine over the whole course were the least different from the EU in terms of their degrees of democracy. Only in the 59th session did the degree of democracy in Georgia and in Ukraine differ from the EU as much as did Armenia's. The difference in degree of democracy here is the difference between the average degree of democracy of the EU for a particular year and the degree of democracy of a state of the EP in a particular year.

Graph 2



With regards to the hypothesis formulated it makes sense to correlate the values received for the degree of disagreement with the corresponding differences in degree of democracy (Graph 3). The resulting trend-line shows a strong increase of 0.14 in degree of disagreement for an increase of difference of degree of democracy. The R^2 of 0.87 also indicates that the calculated trend-line and its high correlation is actually a highly adequate description of the relationship between degree of disagreement and difference between degrees of democracy.

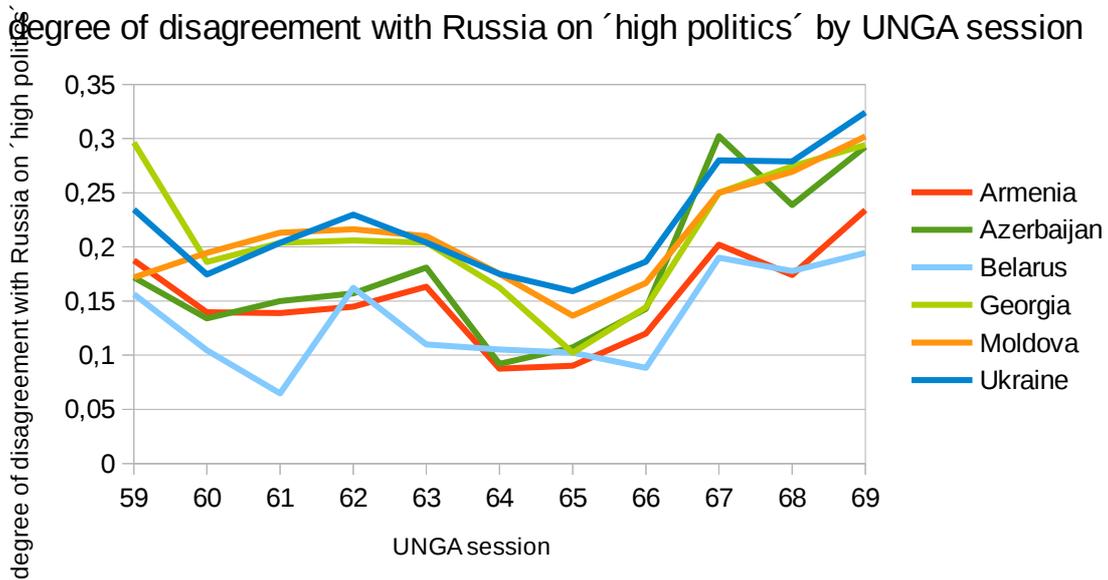
Graph 3



Looking at the degree of voting cohesion of the different states of the EP vis a vis Russia on matters of 'high politics' (Graph 4) shows that trends in this field are much less clear than in matters of 'low politics'. Most striking seems the fact that all trend-lines indicate an increase of the degree of disagreement on matters of high politics between the different states of the EP on the one side and Russia on the other side. This phenomenon is most clear in the cases of Ukraine and Moldova. The points in the scatter-plot below each represent the distance (difference) between a state of the 'EP' and the EU for a particular year.

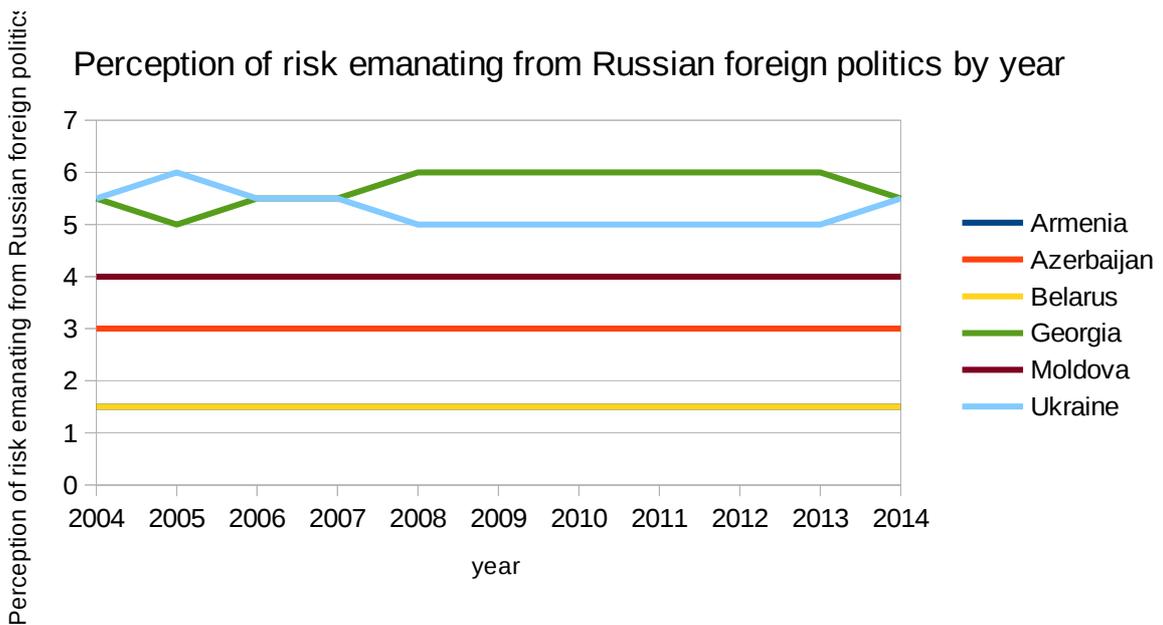
What concerns the degree of disagreement of the different states of the EP with the EU on matters of 'high politics' it seems that similar to the field of low politics Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine exhibit the lowest degrees of disagreement with the EU. Belarus throughout the whole course of time exhibits the highest degrees of disagreement with the EU on 'high politics' followed by Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Graph 4



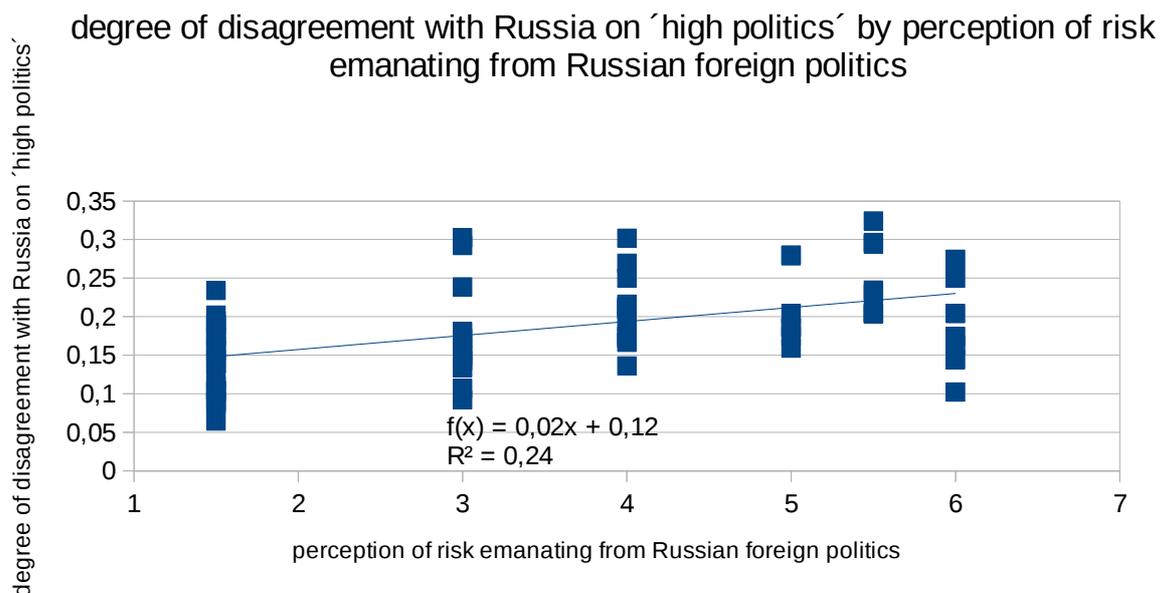
The insights gained by looking at the perception of risk and uncooperative Russian foreign policies in the states of the 'EP' (Graph 5) make obvious that Armenia and Belarus show the least signs of perceiving risks emanating from Russian foreign politics against themselves. Azerbaijan follows next and then Moldova. Ukraine and Georgia seem to perceive the most risks.

Graph 5



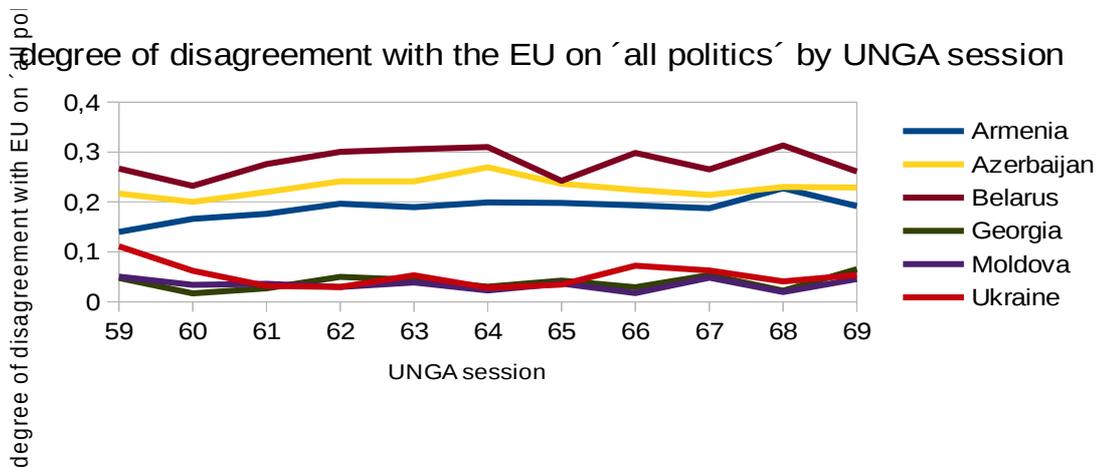
When looking at the trend-line that results when combining the data of the indicator perception of aggressive behavior from Russia with the degree of disagreement of the states of the 'EP' with Russia on matters of 'high politics' (Graph 6) a positive regression line with a slope of 0.02 can be seen. However the R² of 0.24 tells that the trend-line does not picture the real situation too well.

Graph 6



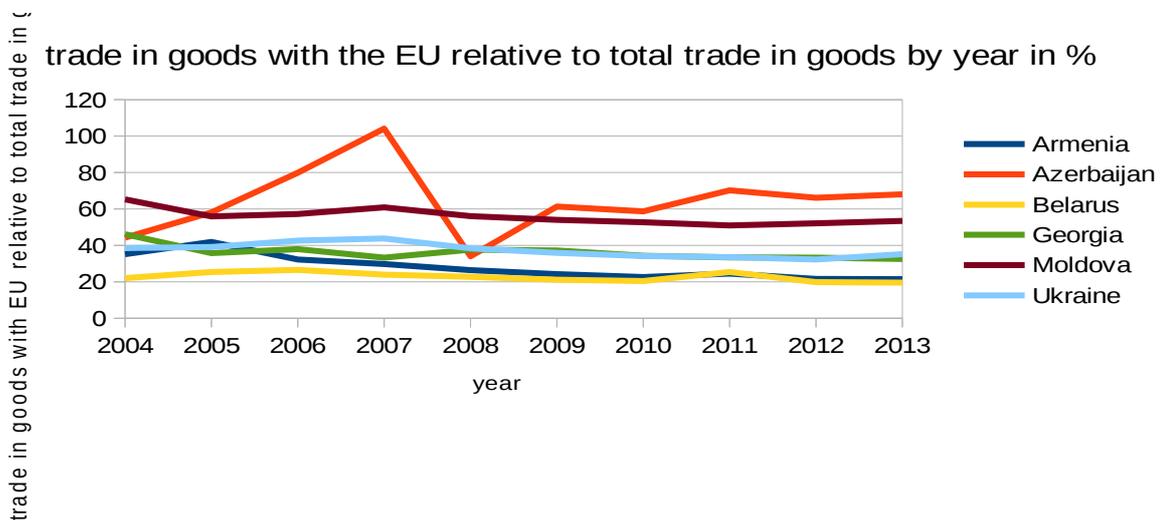
When having a look at the overall voting cohesion between the EU and the different states of the EP between the 59th and the 69th UNGA session (Graph 7) the following can be observed: Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine exhibit the lowest degrees of disagreement with those degrees very much resembling each other. Armenia comes next, followed by Azerbaijan and finally Belarus.

Graph 7



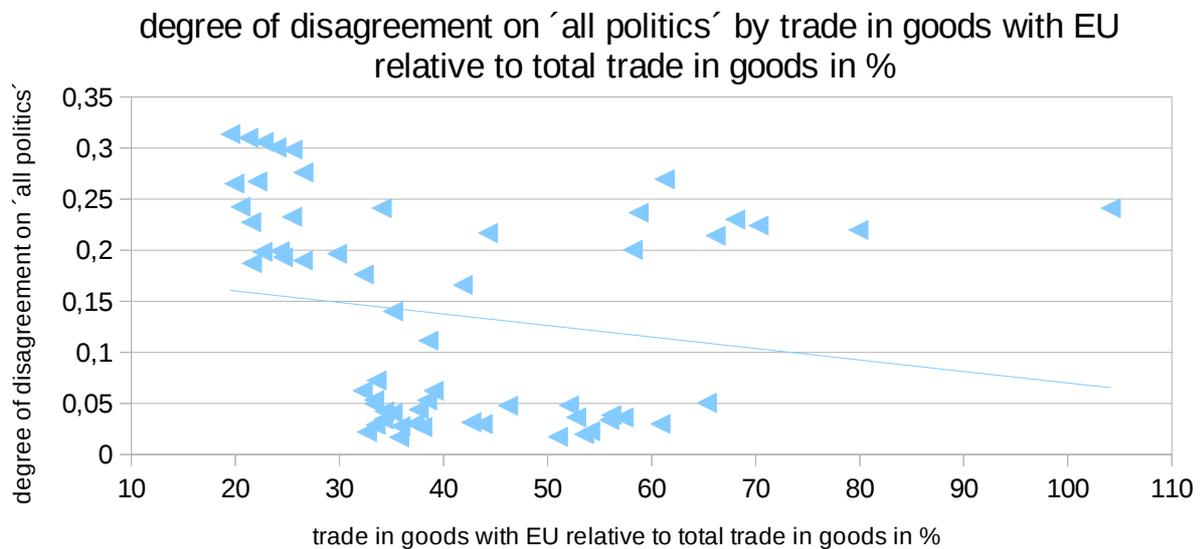
When looking at the share of trade in goods of the EU with the different states of the 'EP' (Graph 8) it can be seen that the share for most states relative to their total global trade remained rather stable over the whole course of time with Azerbaijan being the exception. Over most of the time Armenia and Belarus exhibited the lowest integration, Georgia and Ukraine followed next. Moldova and Azerbaijan seem to be most economically integrated with the EU with Azerbaijan however showing a high degree of fluctuations.

Graph 8



Correlating the share of trade in goods of the states of the EP with the EU relative to their total trade in goods with the degree of disagreement with the EU on UNGA resolutions (Graph 9) results in a trend line with a slope of -0.0018 with an R² of 0.0235 which means that basically no correlation between the two variables can be observed.

Graph 9



8.3. Data analysis and literature review

What can be seen with regards to the differences of the degrees of democracy between the different states of the EP and the EU and the degree of disagreement between the states of the EP and the EU is that not only is there a strong positive correlation between the two but also that no cases are so deviant from the overall trend that they require an extra analysis.

Still with regards to other research in the field of UNGA voting behavior analysis there can be seen indication for the assumption that the degree of democracy alone probably can not explain major parts of the degree of disagreement.

It can be noted that on the basis of all resolutions voted upon between the 62nd and the 65th session all individual EU member states displayed higher voting cohesion towards the mean of the EU than to the mean of the US (Persson,2012,p.41-42) despite the fact that the EU and the US do not differ substantially in their respective degrees of democracy.

This is in Persson's research even the case on the basis of resolutions that not only cover matters of 'low politics' despite the fact that in the area of human rights which stands for the majority of cases of 'low politics' the EU and consequently most of its member states have constantly displayed higher voting cohesion than the mean for all UNGA resolutions.

Other research such as (Birnberg,2009,p.134) has also shown that EU internal voting cohesion has been particularly high on issues of 'democratization' and 'human rights' both of which can be counted to the field of 'low politics'.

Accordingly the correlation between similarity in terms of democracy and voting cohesion between states probably becomes a lot weaker when having a more global sample of states.

This gives rise to the idea that in the case of the states of the 'EP' a factor or a group of factors that possibly set these states apart from other states in the voting cohesion with the EU irrespective of the degree of democracy possibly influences the degree of cohesion with the EU. It could for example be assumed that democracy as it is highly correlated with voting cohesion could possibly be influenced by aspirations for EU membership meaning that the more a state intends to join the EU or at least intends to cooperate closely with the EU necessarily demands a state to be democratic (Copenhagen Criteria, Art. 8 TEU). Thus a high degree of democracy might be a sign of a successful general transformation of a state with the goal of becoming more European.

Accordingly there is principled reason to assume that factors other than similarity in terms of democracy can account for differences in terms of voting cohesion and degrees of disagreement. Building on the insight that there is maybe a positive correlation between the perception of aggression and uncooperative behavior in Russian foreign policies towards the states of the 'EP' in the states of the EP and the degree of disagreement between the different states of the 'EP' and Russia on matters of 'high politics' it makes sense to have a closer look.

When looking at the internal EU voting cohesion on matters of 'security' politics it can be seen that over the whole analyzed course of time namely the 62nd until the 65th UNGA session, France and the UK displayed the lowest cohesion with the other EU member states which might be due to their permanent seats in the United Nations Security Council (Persson,2012,p.41). Also interesting to note is that over the whole course of time most of the EU members that have not been NATO members displayed lower than average voting cohesion with the rest of the EU states (Persson,2012,p.41).

Bearing the fact in mind that none of the states of the 'EP' is a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council it might be guessed that these two factors that seeming to influence the degree of voting cohesion within the EU but can not function to explain differences between the respective degree of cohesion with Russia and the states of the EP.

However the degree of disagreement between Russia and the states of the EP has been the lowest for most of the observed time for the states that belong to the CSTO namely Armenia and Belarus.

Moreover those states which have frozen conflicts over their respective territories namely Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine exhibit higher degrees of disagreement with Russia than is the case for Azerbaijan and Belarus.

With regard to the third hypothesis it probably must be concluded that it can be falsified.

Yet it seems useful to also provide a broader picture at this point.

Dreher and Sturm (2012,p.388) found that the fact whether a state receives certain types of International Monetary Fund (IMF) or World Bank loans makes it move closer to the voting behavior of the G7 states.

Dreher and Jensen (2013,p.188) moreover found out that trade flows and foreign direct investment can have ambivalent effects on the voting cohesion between the two states between whom such economic transactions occur. On the one side these figures might stand for

economic interdependence on the other hand they might stand for the domination of one state by the second state.

Actually even though it has not directly been looked up due to the enormous differences between the economic size of the EU and the states of the 'EP' it seems likely that the bilateral trade between these two partners stand for a much higher share of the overall trade of the states of the 'EP' than of the EU's overall trade.

Accordingly it could be argued that EU-EP trade relations are in a way rather one-sided and give the EU higher leverage and therefore power in this relationship simply due to the fact that the EU is probably less relying for its economic fate on the states of the 'EP' than vice versa.

Accordingly Dreher's and Jensen's idea concerning domination in trade relationships in the case of trade between the different states of the 'EP' and the EU might very well be true.

At least it can reasonably function as a basis for a new testable hypothesis.

9. Interpretation of results and self-critique

Based on the description of the development of the various independent variables and the dependent variable plus the correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable as well as the interpretation of the received correlations it seems fair to draw the following conclusions.

Different from what was expected in the beginning, the voting cohesion respectively the degree of disagreement of the different states of the 'EP' vis a vis Russia respectively the EU in neither of the samples displayed really so much changes for a particular state over the analyzed time. Instead the focus of this research rather shifted to analyzing which factors contribute to differences in voting cohesion between the different states.

While it seems true that the relation despite it being correlated in the right direction as hypothesized is very low and only has a low R^2 it can be seen that against the backdrop of other research there seems to be indication for the idea that the fact whether a state is a member of a security alliance (NATO) or not seems to be correlated with its voting cohesion with a certain grouping of states (EU) on matters of 'high politics' (Persson,2012,p.41), (Halloway, S, & Tomlinson, R.,1995,p.233). Moreover literature (Persson,2012,p.41) gave rise to the idea of whether a state has permanent membership status in the UNSC (France and the UK) which is a symbol of being a great power might possibly influence the state's voting behavior relative to those states that are not permanent UNSC members due to the fact that France and the UK displayed the lowest overall voting cohesion of all EU states with the EU.

It can be concluded that the hypothesized genuine relationship between being member of a military alliance and voting cohesion on 'high politics' has strong arguments speaking for itself however the way of operationalizing the independent variables in this research has probably been flawed. The ordinal variable in this approach could not properly reflect changes in the security environment in the states of the EP since it allowed only to compare states with each other however not with itself so that developments over time affecting a particular state did not become visible in the ordinal values. Moreover the possibly relevant factor of permanent UNSC membership, Russia is a permanent member compared to the EP states was not taken into account in the formulation of the hypothesis.

Accordingly it seems fair to say that the first hypothesis in the way it was formulated can not be falsified on the basis of this research.

Concerning the second hypothesis it can be seen that both the strength of correlation between similarity in terms of democracy and the degree of disagreement and the R^2 seem to support the formulated hypothesis. However when interpreting the correlation against a wider background it seems that probably a qualification of the relationship becomes necessary. The correlation does not seem to have universal character since it does not hold true for the EU-US voting cohesion to mention one example. Maybe a high degree of democracy also is a symbol for a particular political transformation. Yet this can not justify the falsification of the second hypothesis which only claimed a relationship for the particular sample of states used in this research.

What concerns the third hypothesis it turned out that more differentiated research probably could provide better insights. This would have to take into account power relationships.

With regards to the aspired methodology of research it can be said that the complexities of a truly comprehensive factor analysis would have overstretched the resources available for this thesis. Moreover it can be said based on this analysis that the combination of quantitative methods in particular statistical regression and interpretation of data by means of literature research has its own risks and chances.

Basically at all stages of formulating and testing the hypothesis all sorts of errors can creep in. This can be the case in the operationalization of variables as seems now likely in the case of the the first independent variable.

It can be the case when finding that expected x-y relations though they in reality are correlated as expected maybe cover a likely background variable or are so closely linked with another third variable that both become almost interchangeable as could be the case in the second hypothesis.

It needs to be noted that a hypothesis may it be false or not does not say anything about the relevance of the theories they were derived from in general nor about the relevance in the context of this research. A theory's nature at least in the case of this thesis is that it enables the researcher to derive hypotheses relating to a broad range of phenomena in a particular field to which the theory applies. It simply can be that a hypothesis was wrongfully derived from a theory or a hypothesis was derived that had little to do with the topic at hand.

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