

BĚLA PLECHANOVÁ *

**DECISION-MAKING IN THE EU COUNCIL AFTER THE FIRST EASTERN
ENLARGEMENT: THE RELEVANCE OF THE EMPIRICAL FINDINGS FOR
THE VOTING RULES**

Decision-making rule in the Council of the European Union is the long-term topic both for the academic and political discussions. The Council, being the most powerful decision-making body of the EU, and the scope of the legislative powers of the European Union being constantly expanding, hence the attractiveness of the topic may be easily understood. The paper aims at pointing to the empirical findings about the decision-making in the Council after the first eastern enlargement of the European Union and elaborates briefly about the possible relevance of the findings for the question of the decision-making rule for the Council as a long-term matter of contention in the recent debates on institutional reform of the EU.

The paper is structured as follows; first, the problem of the relationship between the process of the enlargement and the institutional reform in connection with the Council is briefly introduced; second, the findings of the recent empirical research on the decision-making in the Council after the first eastern enlargement are presented and compared, and third, inference on the implications for the question of the decision-making rule for the

* Charles University Prague

International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
Nacolin European Centre, Warsaw
October 12-13, 2007

Council are derived from the patterns of decision-making in the Council after the first eastern enlargement.

I

Political system of the European Union has undergone considerable change during the period after its creation, i.e. since 1993. We may see that the drive for the institutional reform grows in general higher; the external forces of the previous period (economic competitiveness and political cohesion of the Cold War alliances) were superseded by the internal factors, enlargement process being the most significant stimulus. We have to remind that in this particular case the first 'enlargement' of the 1990's – reunification of Germany was the most important. As a result, reunified Germany emerged as a nation which impaired the balance among European Community member countries – significantly more populous, economically stronger and politically motivated to achieve political status adequate to these factors. The request for corresponding changes in the EC/EU institutions came as a logical corollary in the early 1990's during the negotiations about the consequences of the reunification of Germany for the EC, but was resisted by the other member states (particularly, the request for higher number of votes in the Council for Germany was refused by France recalling the original deal on parity between the two countries from the time of establishing the European Coal and Steel Community in early 1950').¹ Even it may seem weird to evoke circumstances that old in connection with the institutional reform of the EU in recent period, we argue that this single factor, i.e. the aspiration of Germany for adequate political status, influences strongly the whole process and has significant consequences for the political choices on decision-making rules for the Council of the EU.

International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
Natolin European Centre, Warsaw
October 12-13, 2007

Next to Germany also the other large countries of the EU joined the demand for a change of the decision-making rules in the Council, as all the acceding EFTA countries and majority of the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe awaiting the membership were small or medium sized. As a consequence the level of representation of the large countries would drop due to the degressively proportional allocation of votes in relation to the size of the population of the member country.

In mid-1990' with the EFTA enlargement imminent, the new democracies of the Central and Eastern Europe seeking the accession to the EU and the reform IGC approaching the request for adjustment of the main institutional triangle – the Commission, the Council and the European Parliament – appeared back on the table with the question of the effectiveness of the institutional system in the legislative process. It seemed logical that the EU would not be able to operate as before when the number of the member states would grow significantly reaching up to 30 in ten to fifteen year's time horizon. As a result the Amsterdam Treaty (AT) and to a lesser degree the Nice Treaty (NT) extended the range of the application of the qualified majority voting (QMV) in the Council. This argument still remains to be politically the most influential in the recent debate on the institutional reform of the EU.

To mention also other factors entering the debate in recent period – these are clear demand for higher standard of political legitimacy (evident since the ratification process of the Maastricht Treaty) and transparency (arriving in the end of the 1990'), both became an integral part of the reform debate ever since.

As a result of these factors the decision-making rule for the Council was changed in the Nice Treaty in 2001, the scale of weighted votes allocated to member countries being extended from 2 to 10 votes to 3 to 29 votes, the large countries being accommodated in their demand for higher share of votes. Germany has not succeeded to win more votes than the

International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
Nacolin European Centre, Warsaw
October 12-13, 2007

other three large partners, once again reminded by French president Jacques Chirac about the deal on parity between France and Germany, but was able to put through additional criterion for defining the qualified majority in the Council, the possibility to check whether the qualified majority of votes supporting the proposals qualifies at the same time for at least 62 percent of population of the EU. This criterion gives Germany the symbolic difference in representation in the Council compared to the other large countries, allowing her blocking the proposal with only two allies while the others need three as minimum.

Even the institutional reform of the NT was considered to be the precondition for the eastern enlargement, the result was strongly criticized for various reasons and opened up a new phase of institutional reform started by the Convention on the future of the EU convened in 2002 and rounded out – up to now – by the signature of the second version of the constitutional treaty in December 2007. The reform of the decision-making rule for the Council was repeatedly the most controversial and contested item of the reform agenda, finally bringing substantial change in the rule but also significant delay in its application, the second attempt for ratification of the constitutional treaty being just started.

II

The institutional setting being constantly questioned in connection with the enlargement process, the debate provoked a considerable interest in the empirical research of the decision making in the European Union in general and in the Council in particular, the policy of transparency allowing the access to relatively wide segment of the EU institutions' documents. This paper brings certain findings and hypotheses for further research based on the results of one such project aiming at creating as complete as possible database of

International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
 Natolin European Centre, Warsaw
 October 12-13, 2007

proposals on which the Council on the ministerial level took decision after the first eastern enlargement.

The database was created by a thorough data survey of the Council documents for the period between 1st May 2004 the end of December 2006. The data were collected from the provisional agendas of the Council meetings, lists of A points, Council minutes, monthly summaries of the Council acts and Council press releases, occasionally the data were cross checked and added also from the PreLex database. More than 900 source documents were examined to collect the data. The basic aim was to identify positions of member governments on all these proposals, i.e. to have the information if the proposal was approved by consensus (defined as unanimity), or whether the Council took vote and in that case what the positions of individual members of the Council were. Consequently this information should allow us to assess the present theoretical claims about the coalition behaviour of the EU members in the Council and to compare the findings with the results of the empirical research on the Council decision-making before the eastern enlargement.

Table 1. Proposals decided upon in the Council 2004-2007 - by presidency

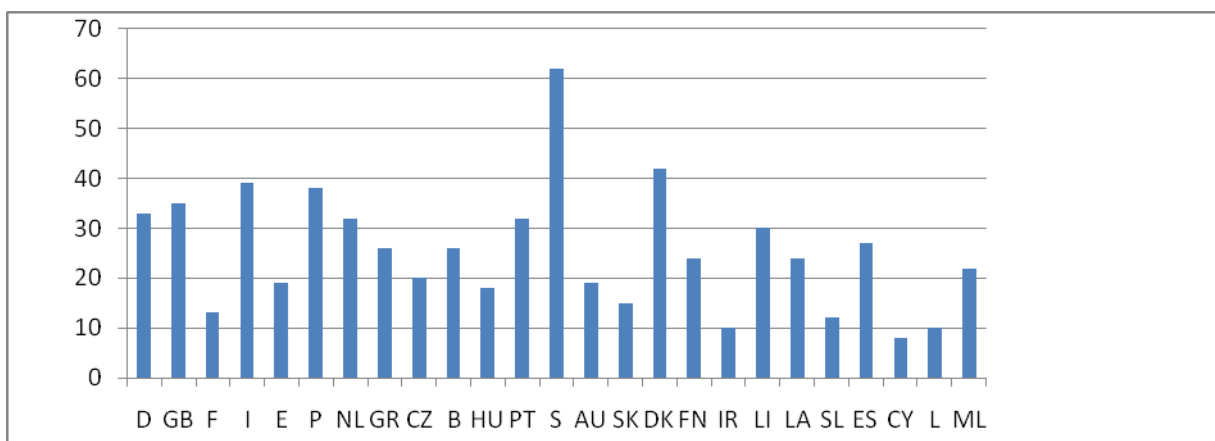
Presidency	period	sessions		No. of sessions	points	points per session	voted points	contested by pres.	% voted
IR	May 04-Jun 04	2580	2593	14	237	16,93	8	0	3,38
NL	July 04-Dec 04	2594	2633	40	744	18,6	32	1	4,3
L	Jan 05-Jun 05	2634	2671	38	556	14,63	28	0	5,04
GB	July 05-Dec 05	2672	2702	31	607	19,58	40	3	6,59
AU	Jan 06-Jun 06	2703	2740	38	594	15,63	49	9	8,25
FN	July 06-Dec 06	2741	2774	34	661	19,44	50	10	7,56
Total	32 months			195	3399	Ø 17,5	207	23	5,85

International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
 Natolin European Centre, Warsaw
 October 12-13, 2007

In total, 3520 proposals were identified by the survey, of which for app. 3,4 percent no relevant or complete data were available – key documents or their pertinent parts were not available from the Council web register and/or were not provided by the Council secretariat, or the documents indicate that voting took place but the positions of the dissenting governments were not put into the records (0,8 percent). Consequently, the basic data set consists of 3399 proposals. Of these 657 were legislative acts in various phases of their journey through the institutions of the European Union. From the basic data set 207 were contested proposals – 6,1 percent, proposals on which at least one member state voted against or abstained and for which the voting records were available. These represent the subset, which was subject of further analysis.

Each contested proposal was contested by three member states on average. More than one third of the proposals (78) were contested by single dissenter – 38 percent. Of the 207 contested proposals 24 were decided under the pre-Nice decision-making rule, 183 under the Nice rule applicable as from 1st November 2004; the analysis does not take the change of the decision-making rule into consideration, as none of the contested proposals decided upon under the pre-Nice rules would have a different outcome under the new rule.

Figure 1. Dissenting votes cast by member states (negative votes and abstentions)



International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
Natolin European Centre, Warsaw
October 12-13, 2007

After the data were collected and summarized, the cluster analysis was applied to the data set of the contested proposals with the aim to identify the patterns of behaviour of the members of the Council. We assume that the alternative position of member states is a binary relation; either the member states votes “yes” or casts a dissenting vote (“no” or “abstained”).² Cluster analysis is “an exploratory data analysis tool which aims at sorting different objects into groups in a way that the degree of association between two objects is maximal if they belong to the same group and minimal otherwise. Given the above, cluster analysis can be used to discover structures in data without providing an explanation/interpretation. In other words, cluster analysis simply discovers structures in data without explaining why they exist.”³ This “first trial” method should help us to assess whether any similarities do exist in the behaviour of member states in cases when they have decided to contest the proposal. There are numerous variations of the cluster analysis, here we use *complete linkage* method, using the ‘city-block’ distance metric for the measurement of the dis/similarity of the voting behaviour of the member states in the Council:

$$D_1(X_j, X_k) = \sum_{i=1}^{i=n} |x_{ij} - x_{ik}|$$

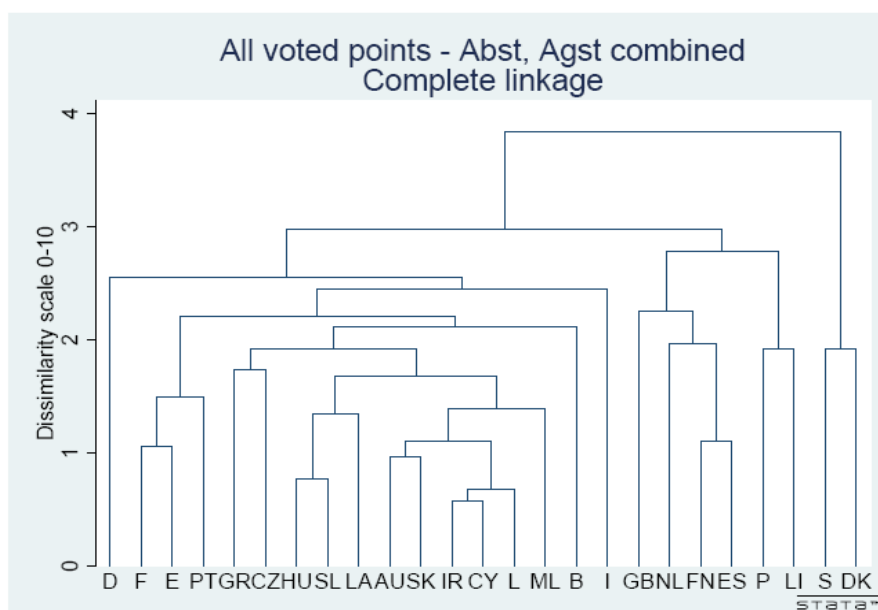
The distance between two clusters is the distance between their two furthest member points. This method should work well when we expect that the clusters form distinct clumps, which we hope for. The cluster analysis was already used for similar task for the data on Council voting before the eastern enlargement by Hayes-Renshaw et al.⁴, but the basic assumptions behind it were slightly different. These authors used the *single linkage* method as an indicative tool for looking for coalition behaviour, discarding the data where the proposals were contested by only single dissenter. We prefer to understand the aim more broadly – in terms of general similarity of voting behaviour – so we include also the voting records of

International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
Natolin European Centre, Warsaw
October 12-13, 2007

single dissenters, as we know that the number of cases when only one member cast dissenting vote in the data set was relatively high. When analysing the coalition behaviour from the data we are obliged to pay main attention to the blocking minority as the aim of the actors. But the number of cases in the dataset where the blocking minority under the qualified majority rule was reached is negligible (i.e., statistically insignificant). The interpretation of the results appears to be difficult, so the broader approach of the particular method used seems to be more appropriate then.

Analysing the whole data set of the contested proposals without discriminating any type (legislative acts, operational decisions, or other) brings an overall picture in the form of dendrogram outlining the mode of clustering of the objects – member states of the EU, being shaped by the distance matrix as its input. The clusters are identified by closed branches of vertical lines representing individual member states in horizontal direction: the higher the closing into the root, the more distant position the state has to its neighbour/s.

Figure 2. All voted points – Abst, Agst combined. Complete linkage



International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
Natolin European Centre, Warsaw
October 12-13, 2007

Results of the cluster analysis serve us as source of hypotheses we will try to test in the next step of the analysis.

III

Trying to understand what the picture of the dendrogram (**Error! Reference source not found.**) says about the positions of member states across all the contested proposals, we may identify three groups of members of the Council. First, the biggest group has Germany on the left side and Italy on the right side. It is clear that it is the least homogenous and most probably most difficult cluster to interpret. But let us start with the most tricky tasks first in this project since the first group encompasses three of the four largest members of the EU. The final part of the paper will concentrate on the more detailed analysis of the voting behaviour of the members of this particular group as we hope this may help us to tackle the central issue which the title of the paper promises: is there any relevant information we may derive from the empirical analysis of the decision-making in the Council after the first eastern enlargement which can lead our further research of the decision-making rules for this most powerful body of the European Union? Special attention will be given to the behaviour of the large members of the group, as two of them, Germany and Italy may have certain leadership potential *vis à vis* the other members. Next to this, we may try to bring some information about the behaviour of the large countries which could help to elucidate the motivation of these countries leading them to the request for the change of the decision-making rule for the Council. In the given context we consider as large countries only the largest four – Germany, France, United Kingdom and Italy.

In general, the low level of homogeneity of the group in terms of the similarity of the voting behaviour is basically given by the fact that we do not find a single proposal which

International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
Nacolin European Centre, Warsaw
October 12-13, 2007

would be opposed by all its members and just one proposal of the set where all the members supported the proposal against a dissenter/s from the other group/s. The group is principally constructed by the majority of concurrent positive votes, draws together the members who on average contest proposals less often (average value is 25,52, average value of the group is 21,75). What is interesting is the position of Germany and Italy towards the rest of the group, as both these countries have higher than average score of dissenting votes (33 and 39 respectively) and high incidence of single dissenting votes cast (9 and 8 respectively). We may even pose a question: can we consider them as a part of the cluster pointing to the fact that their branches join the cluster at the highest point which indicates that the distance from other members of the cluster is bigger. Aren't they just solitaires? What testifies against this conclusion is the fact that the number of concurrent positive votes of the group without these two states falls sharply. When we distract Germany from the group, the remaining countries were able to have common positive position only in 11 cases, when we do the same with Italy we come only to 9 common positive votes. And if we separate both these countries from the group, the remaining 15 EU members come to the common positive position only once. As majority of members belong to countries with low record of dissenting votes, it is practically impossible to interpret this group on the basis of some issue area where the members would meet each other in their dissent more often. Still we may hypothesise that this group forms what may be considered as a core: countries which on average cast few dissenting votes and support the proposals which are contested by the members of the other two groups who cast dissenting votes more often.

Also the other two groups are basically defined by concurrent positive votes. The second group "lead" by Great Britain and consisting of six countries and third group formed by just two countries, Sweden and Denmark. The second may be defined by the highest

International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
Natolin European Centre, Warsaw
October 12-13, 2007

relative incidence of dissenting votes on internal market issues. The third – compared to all other bilateral relationships between any pair of EU member countries – forms a really cohesive group. Sweden and Denmark had voted together in more than 80 percent of the cases from the whole data set. In four of these contested proposals Sweden and Denmark stood against all the other EU members, in three of them on major pieces of legislation.

Do we finally come to any findings which may be relevant for the decision-making rule of the EU Council? Let's review what we may assess from the analysis so far. We start with assumptions – not always realistic – that member states are primarily motivated to decide according to their preferences and casting the dissenting vote indicates the will of the member state to block the proposal. Having some general knowledge about the motivations and behaviour of the member states in the EU we know that these assumptions often most probably do not hold, but we still may try to test them on the data available. In the sample of 207 dissenting coalitions, cases when at least one member state either cast negative vote or abstained, we find 6 cases of proposals which were not approved, i.e. the blocking minority was reached and as a result the act or decision was not adopted.⁵ In 78 cases the dissenting coalition had just one member ($N = 1$), of these 27 cases were proposals contested by single large country ($N = 1_L$). The remaining 129 coalitions consisted of more than one country ($N = 1+x$). Considering the assumption that the large countries can significantly more easily gather in the blocking coalition (the minimal number of member states constituting the blocking minority is 3 (3 large countries, incl. Germany), 4 in case that Germany is not a member of the dissenting coalition, we test if they are in practice really trying to reach it.

In the data set we find only 5 dissenting coalitions of 3 large member states and just one of them actually blocked the proposal. Four large countries took part in only 27 dimerous dissenting coalitions (2,2%), which is less than average score (2,4%). On the other hand, large

International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
Natolin European Centre, Warsaw
October 12-13, 2007

countries are often found in the winning coalitions backing the proposals contested by smaller countries; in the data set we find 110 coalitions where against all the large countries stands a dissenting coalition of the smaller ones (53%).

We also find very weak correlation between the membership in dissenting coalitions and the size of the country measured by population of the country ($r = 0,243$), the correlation getting slightly stronger if we measure the relationship between the voting power of the member states as of the Nice decision-making rule (measured by Bazhaf normalized index) and the membership in dissenting coalition ($r = 0,287$). But, if we subtract from the list Sweden and Denmark, members of the third cluster with the highest number of dissenting votes, we end up with values which may indicate that this relationship possibly should be investigated further ($r = 0,461$ for population/dissenting votes; $r = 0,505$ for VP/dissenting votes).

Digging through the data and looking for the patterns of behaviour of member states in the Council we come also to certain unexpected findings. One of the most interesting is that member countries in general and the large ones in particular under certain circumstances do not care much about the effect of their dissenting vote on the outcome of the proposal. We have found eleven cases of decisions when the qualified majority was not reached and still the proposal is deemed approved. Some cases may fall under the simple majority rule (as we have not complete information about the decision-making rule applied for all the proposals) but three cases of those eleven did not qualify even for the simple majority rule. No further investigation was done as to the reason of such behaviour but it seems that we cannot take it as pure exemption and should follow the practice of decision-making and the application of the particular decision-making rule more closely.

International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
Natalin European Centre, Warsaw
October 12-13, 2007

To conclude, even the findings of this research project are still preliminary and awaiting of more thorough study and theoretical reflection, we still may establish some results and try to formulate hypotheses which may lead the future research.

First, even the data on voting in the Council remain scarce after the enlargement by ten new members of Central and Eastern Europe and give only partial information about the behaviour of the member states in the main decision-making body of the European Union, we may discern certain more or less regular patterns of behaviour indicated by the results of the cluster analysis. These indicate the existence of the core group of states which supports the proposals more often than the others.

Second, large countries as the members requesting the reform of the decision-making rule for the Council recalling mainly to the level of the blocking power as the main reason for their demand, seem not to behave in a way that would show that they really care about this blocking potential. Opposite seems plausible; we find the large countries mostly in the winning coalition backing the proposal which is at the end adopted, hence they use their voting power to put the legislation through.

Third, considering the two preceding points, we may hypothesise that the large countries are primarily motivated to get adopted legislation that would conform to their preferences and to invoke as little dissent from the other countries. As we find certain relationship between the voting power distribution according to the decision-making rule and the propensity to cast dissenting vote in the Council, their concern with the reform of the decision-making rule seems to be in correspondence with it. Other consequence may be that large countries will get more motivated to influence the content of the legislation even before the proposals reach the floor of the Council, i.e. in the Commission. And here again we should point to the relevance for the decision-making rule, as this may lead the Commission

International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
Natolin European Centre, Warsaw
October 12-13, 2007

to formulate the legislative proposals in such a way that they would have the backing of the minimal winning (or slightly bigger) coalition in the Council. The distribution of power in the EU may be shifted then in favour of the alliance of the Commission and the “core” countries and at the expense of the other groups.

REFERENCES

- V. BOEKHOORN, A. VAN DEEMEN, M.O. HOSLI, *A Cooperative Approach to Decision-Making in the European Union*, in: Thomson (2006).
- R. DEHOUSSE, F. DELOCHE-GAUDEZ, O. DUHAMEL, *Élargissement: Comment l'Europe s'adapte*, Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2006.
- M. GABEL, S. HIX, G. SCHNEIDER, *Who Is Afraid of Cumulative Research? Improving Data on EU Politics*, “European Union Politics” 2002, 3(4), pp. 481–500.
- F. HAYSRENSHAW, W. VAN AKEN, H. WALLACE, 2006A, *When and Why the EU Council of Ministers Votes Explicitly*, “Journal of Common Market Studies” 2006, 44 (1), pp. 161-194.
- F. HAYSRENSHAW, H. WALLACE, 2006b, *The Council of Ministers*. 2nd ed., Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- F. HEINEMANN, *The political economy of EU enlargement and the Treaty of Nice*, “European Journal of Political Economy” 2002, 19, pp. 17-31.
- D. HEISENBERG, *The institution of ‘consensus’ in the European Union: Formal versus informal decision-making in the Council*, “European Journal of Political Research” 2005, 44, pp. 65-90.
- S. HIX, *The Political System of the European Union*. 2nd ed., Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
Natolin European Centre, Warsaw
October 12-13, 2007

- M. J. HOLLER, *Forming coalitions and measuring voting power*, "Political Studies" 1982, 30, pp. 262-271.
- L. HOOGHE, G. MARKS, C. WILSON, *Does Left/Right Structure Party Positions on European Integration?*, "Comparative Political Studies" 2002, 35, pp. 965-989.
- M.O. HOSLI, *Coalitions and Power: Effects of Qualified Majority Voting in the Council of the European Union*, "Journal of Common Market Studies" 1996, 34(2), pp. 255-273.
- B. HOYLAND, *Allocation of Codecision Reports in the Fifth European Parliament*, "European Union Politics" 2006, 7 (1), pp. 30–50.
- T. KÖNIG, M. PÖTER, *Examining the EU Legislative Process: The Relative Importance of Agenda and Veto Power*, "European Union Politics" 2001, 2(3), pp. 329–51.
- T. KÖNIG, D. FINKE, S. DAIMER, *Finke Daniel and Daimer Stephanie (2005) Ignoring the Non-ignorables? Missingness and Missing Positions*, "European Union Politics" 2005, 6(3), pp. 269-290.
- J-E. LANE, S. BERG, *Relevance of voting power*, "Journal of Theoretical Politics" 1999, 11, pp. 309-320.
- J-E. LANE, R. MAELAND, *Enlargement and the Council of Ministers*, in: B. STEUNENBERG, ed., *Widening the European Union: The Politics of Institutional Change and Reform*, London: Routledge, 2002.
- A. LARUELLE, F. VALENCIANO, *Inequality among EU citizens in the EU's Council decision procedure*, "European Journal of Political Economy" 2002, 18, pp. 475-498.
- A. LARUELLE, M. WIDGRÉN, *Is the allocation of voting power among EU states fair?* "Public Choice" 1998, 94, pp. 317-339.
- D. LEECH, *Designing the voting system for the Council of the European Union*, "Public Choice" 2002, 113, pp. 437-464.

International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
Natolin European Centre, Warsaw
October 12-13, 2007

- M. MATILLA, *Contested decisions: Empirical analysis of voting in the European Union Council of Ministers*, "European Journal of Political Research" 2004, 43, pp. 29–50.
- M. MATILLA, J-E. LANE, *Voting in the EU Council of Ministers: Will enlargement change the unanimity pattern?* "European Union Politics" 2001, 2(1), pp. 31–52.
- R. PAHRE, *Formal Theory and Case-Study Methods in EU Studies*, "European Union Politics" 2005, 6 (1), pp. 113–146.
- R. PAHRE, *The Political Economy of the European Union in a Spatial Model*, in: E. JONES, A. VERDUN, eds., *The Political Economy of European Integration*, London: Routledge, 2004, pp. 179–90.
- B. PLECHANOVÁ, *Decision-making in the EU Council after Eastern enlargement*, Paper presented at the 4th General Conference of the ECPR, Pisa, 6-9th September, 2007, URL: http://www.ecpr.visionmd.co.uk/paper_info.asp?PaperNumber=PP105
- T. RAUNIO, M. WIBERG, *Winners and Losers in the Council: Voting Power Consequences of EU Enlargements*, "Journal of Common Market Studies" 1998, 36 (4), pp. 549-562.
- L.S. SHAPLEY, M. SHUBIK, *A Method for Evaluating the Distribution of Power in a Committee System*, "American Political Science Review" 1954, 48, pp. 787-792.
- S.K. SCHMIDT, *Only an Agenda Setter? The European Commission's Power over the Council of Ministers*, "European Union Politics" 2000, 1(1), pp. 37-61.
- T. SLOOT, P. WERSCHUREN, *Decision-making Speed in the European Community*, "Journal of Common Market Studies" 1990, 29(1).
- B. STEUNENBERG, ed., *Widening the European Union: The Politics of Institutional Change and Reform*, London: Routledge, 2002.

International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
Natolin European Centre, Warsaw
October 12-13, 2007

B. STEUNENBERG, T. SELCK, *Testing Procedural Models of EU Legislative Decision Making*, in: R. THOMSON, ed., *European Union Decides*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

J. TALLBERG, *Bargaining Power in the European Council*, SIEPS 2007, 1.

A. TEASDALE, *The Politics of Majority Voting in Europe*, "Political Quarterly" 1996, 67 (2).

R. THOMSON, ed., *European Union Decides*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

G. TSEBELIS, *Veto Players. How Political Institution Work*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.

G. TSEBELIS, X. YATAGANAS, *Veto Players and Decision making in the EU after Nice*, "Journal of Common Market Studies" 2002, 40(2), pp. 283-307.

M.P.C.M. VAN SCHENDELEN, *The Council Decides: Does the Council Decide?*, "Journal of Common Market Studies: 1996, 34 (4).

M. WIDGRÉN, J-E. LANE, *Why Unanimity in the Council? A Roll Call Analysis of Council Voting*, "European Union Politics" 2001, 2(1), pp. 31-52.

M.G. WINKLER, *Coalition-Sensitive Voting Power in the Council of Ministers: The Case of Eastern Enlargement*, "Journal of Common Market Studies" 1998, 36(3).

¹ Paradoxically, the political deal between France and Germany on equal status within the ECSC was considered to be a concession to Germany which in that time strived to get rid of the status of an occupied country and the stigma of the defeated nation of the World War II.

² This assumption holds in case of the QM rule of decision-making as the effect of the negative vote and abstention is the same.

³ <http://www.statsoft.com/textbook/stcluan.html#area> (15 November 2007)

⁴ Hayes-Renshaw et al. (2006)

International workshop
"Distribution of power and voting procedures in the European Union"
Natolin European Centre, Warsaw
October 12-13, 2007

⁵ In the original data set there were more cases of proposals which were not approved but most of them were not included into the data set, since the information about the voting behaviour of the member states was missing.