

Decision making in the European Union before and after enlargement

A Network Perspective



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Why study dynamics of the EU decision making with a focus on the Council of Ministers?

- EU is the furthest reaching form of international integration
- Enlargement ranks among the most important events of recent history
- The Council is the most powerful of the European institutions despite paucity of research (Moravcsik and Schimmelfennig 2009)



Why study network relations in the Council?

- Consensual decision-making makes informal contacts important
- Data on member states' network relations have been collected, but not yet analyzed systematically



Research Questions

- **Descriptive**
 - How have the relations among member states changed since the 2004 and 2007 enlargements?
 - How do these relations vary across different policy areas?
- **Explanatory**
 - **Causes:** What factors explain variation in the relations among member states?



The concept: network relations

- Conceptual: A recurring interaction within a dyad of states in which information is shared and policy positions coordinated
- Operational: “Which member states do you most often cooperate with within your working group, in order to develop a common position?”
(Naurin 2010)
- A directed/asymmetrical network tie



Theory building

- Rational choice institutionalism
 - Interest based: a member state is more likely to form a network relation with another state if that other state
 - has similar policy positions on specific issue
 - Power based: a member state is more likely to form a network relation with another state if that other state
 - has a larger population (voting power)
 - has a higher GDP per capita



Theory building

- **Constructivism**
 - **Culture based:** a member state is more likely to form a network relation with another state if that other state
 - shares a border
 - has the same status in terms of old / new membership

Data

Dependent variable:

Cooperation among member states

- Data source: Centre for European Research at Gothenburg University - dataset on cooperation patterns among the member states' representatives in the Council in 2003, 2006 and 2009 in six working groups

Independent variables:

Policy agreement

- Data source: Decision-making in the EU (DEU) dataset

Population size

- Data Source: World Bank

GDP per capita

- Data Source: World Bank

Border-sharing

- Data Source: a dummy variable between each dyad of states

Membership status

- Data Source: a dummy variable on actor's level

Independent variables: Structural effects of the network

- Outdegree (density)
- Reciprocity

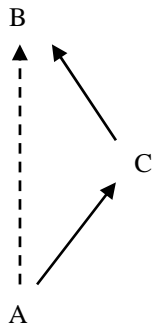
State A is more likely to cooperate with state B if B cooperates with A

- Indegree popularity

State A is more likely to cooperate with state B if state B is already reported by many other states

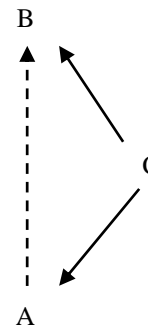
- Transitivity

State A is more likely to cooperate with state B if A cooperates with many third states who cooperate with B

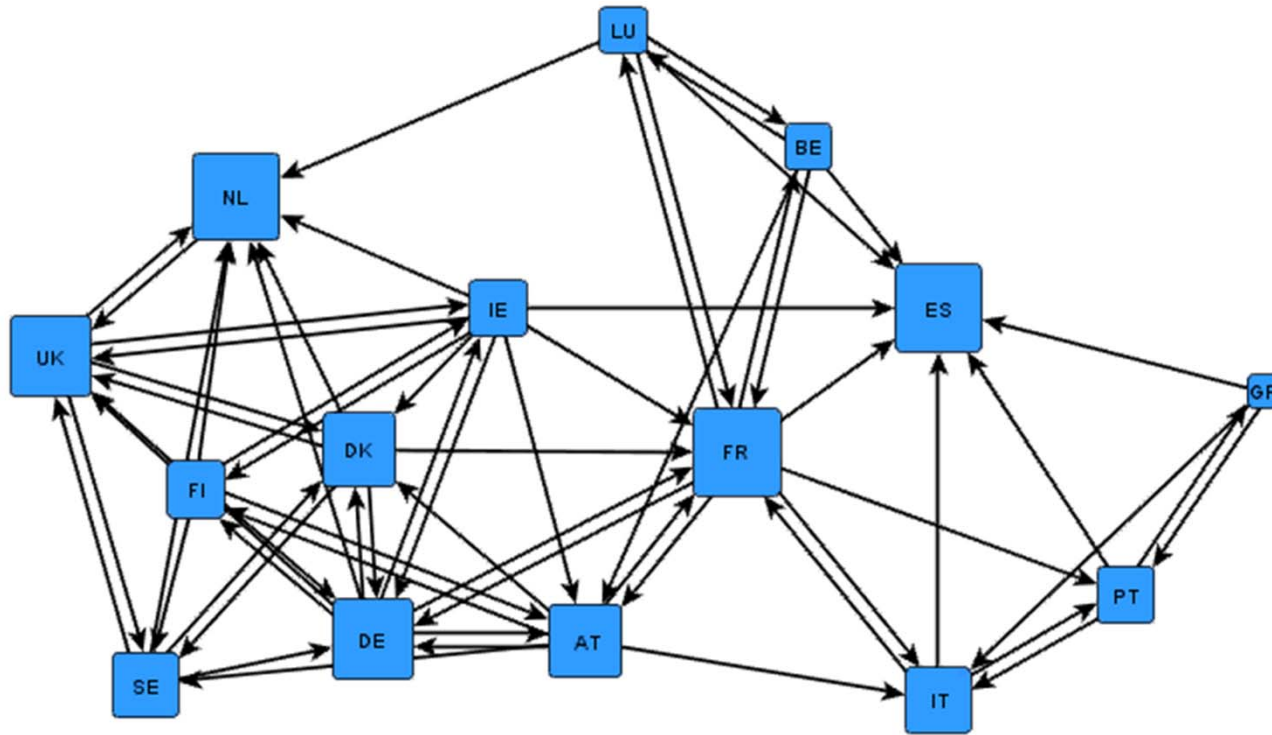


- In-structural equivalence (facilitating links)

State A is more likely to cooperate with state B if there are many third states who say that they cooperate with both A and B



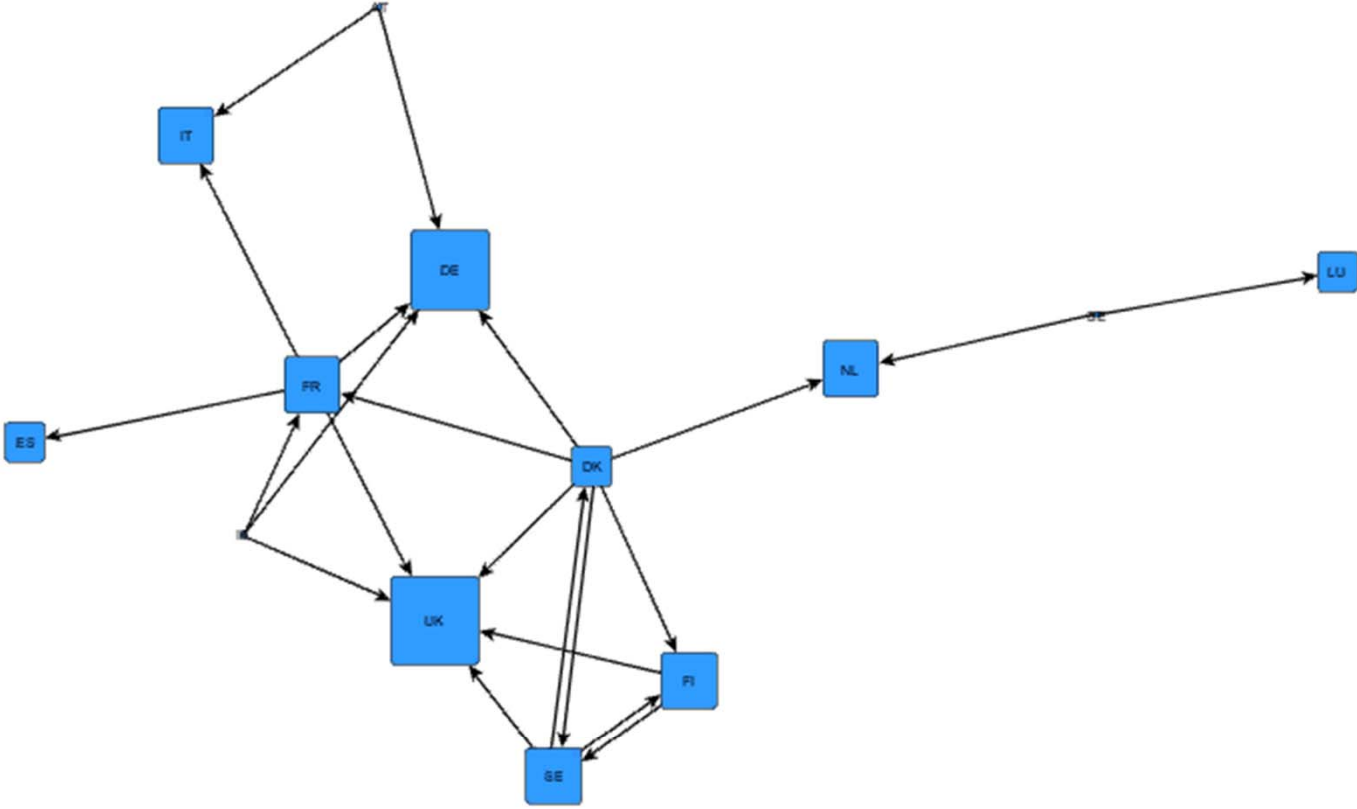
Agriculture: 2003/2006/2009



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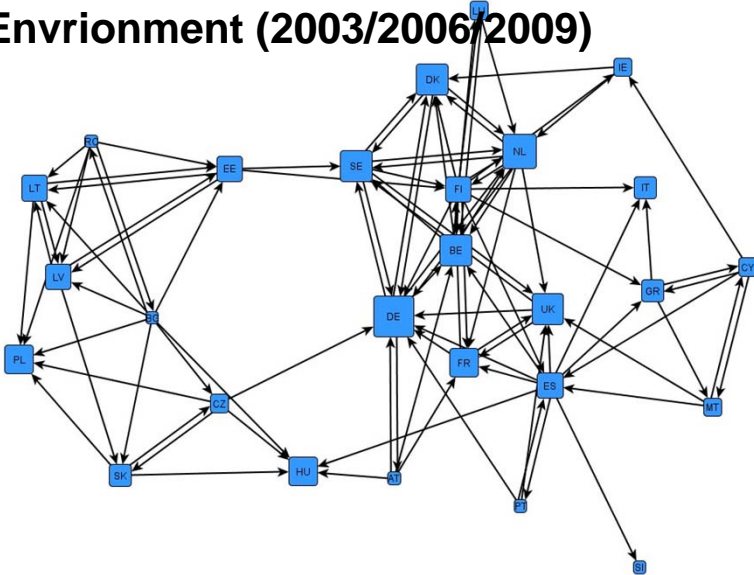
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Coreper: 2003/2006/2009

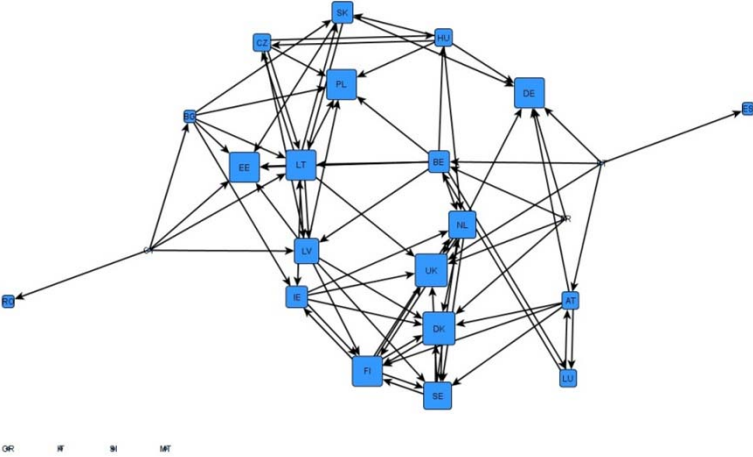


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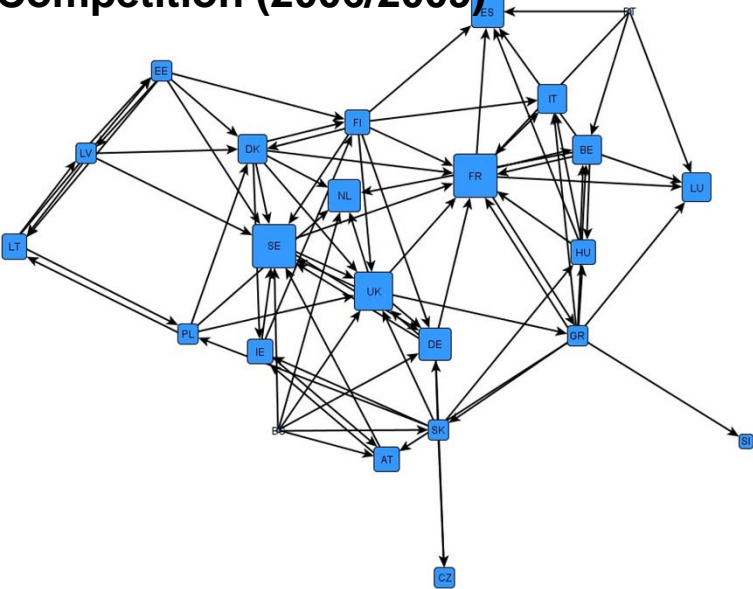
Environment (2003/2006/2009)



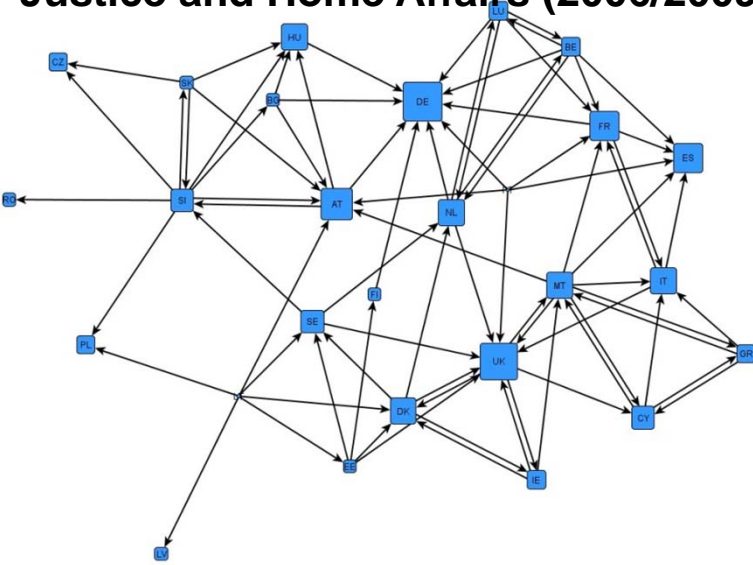
Tax (2003/2006/2009)



Competition (2006/2009)



Justice and Home Affairs (2006/2009)



Descriptive indicators

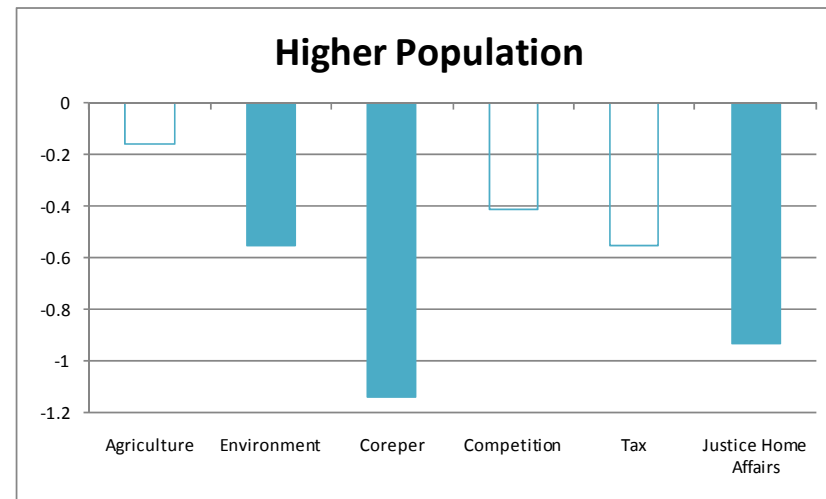
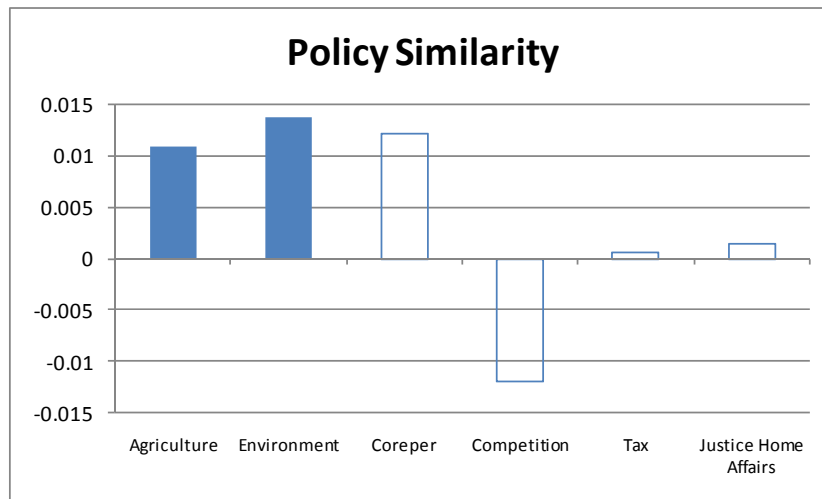
	Agriculture	Coreper	Environment	Tax	Competition	JHA
Density (year 03)	0.09	0.04	0.06	0.05	-	-
Density (year 06)	0.24	0.16	0.14	0.15	0.17	0.18
Density (year 09)	0.22	0.13	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.12
Average Degree (year 03)	2.46	0.93	1.47	1.26		
Average Degree (year 06)	6.19	4.25	3.67	3.96	4.51	4.76
Average Degree (year 09)	5.63	3.24	3.85	3.90	4.01	3.20
Jaccard (03->06)	0.25	0.13	0.13	0.14		
Jaccard (06->09)	0.42	0.36	0.34	0.30	0.23	0.33

Results

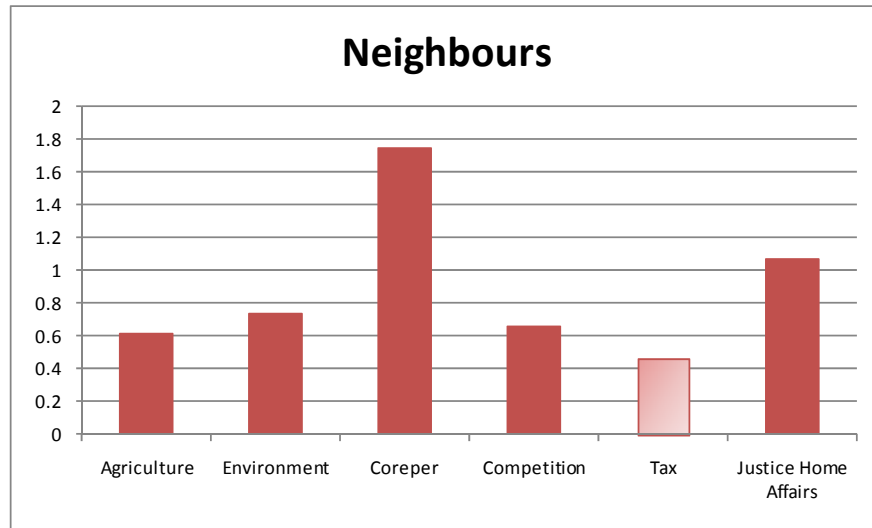
	Agriculture		Coreper		Environment		Tax		Competition		JHA	
	par	s.e.	par	s.e.	par	s.e.	par	s.e.	par	s.e.	par	s.e.
Rate parameter period 1	7.93	1.84	7.19	2.74	11.27	4.00	9.46	2.46	-	-	-	-
Rate parameter period 2	9.04	1.26	5.59	0.95	6.27	1.00	8.40	1.34	12.23	2.57	7.81	1.28
Outdegree (density)	-1.97	0.30 ****	-2.52	1.96	-1.96	0.49 ****	-2.37	0.58 ****	-2.72	1.04 ***	-2.44	1.20 **
Reciprocity	0.45	0.19 **	0.28	0.65	0.50	0.30 *	0.75	0.36 **	0.74	0.60	0.34	0.56
Transitive triplets	0.09	0.04 **	0.08	0.47	0.25	0.10 **	0.22	0.08 ***	0.23	0.10 **	0.23	0.12 *
Indegree - popularity	0.12	0.04 ***	0.19	0.49	0.04	0.13	0.20	0.14	0.14	0.16	0.14	0.18
In-struct equivalence	0.14	0.04 ***	0.59	0.60	0.11	0.11	0.26	0.15 *	0.17	0.16	0.27	0.20
Policy agreement	0.01	0.00 **	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.00 ***	0.00	0.00	-0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00
Membership (same)	0.26	0.16	1.20	0.67 *	0.89	0.29 ***	0.94	0.24 ****	0.47	0.24 **	0.02	0.28
Neighbours	0.62	0.20 ***	1.75	0.80 **	0.74	0.22 ****	0.47	0.25 *	0.66	0.29 **	1.07	0.35 ***
GDP p.c.	0.20	0.14	-0.93	0.46 **	-0.09	0.19	-0.76	0.25 ***	0.08	0.25	-0.30	0.27
Population	-0.16	0.15	-1.14	0.50 **	-0.55	0.23 **	-0.19	0.22	-0.41	0.34	-0.93	0.38 **

*: p<0.1; **: p<0.05; ***: p<0.01; ****: p<0.001

Rational Choice Institutionalism



Constructivism

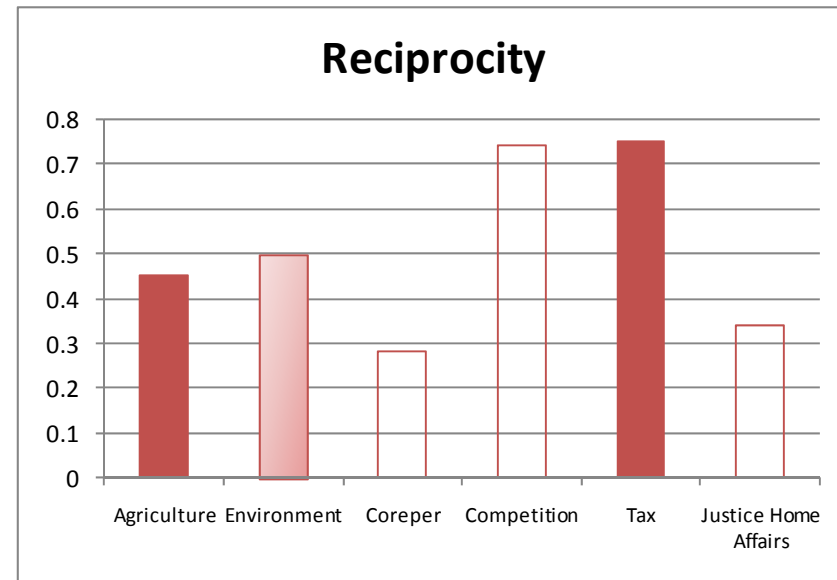
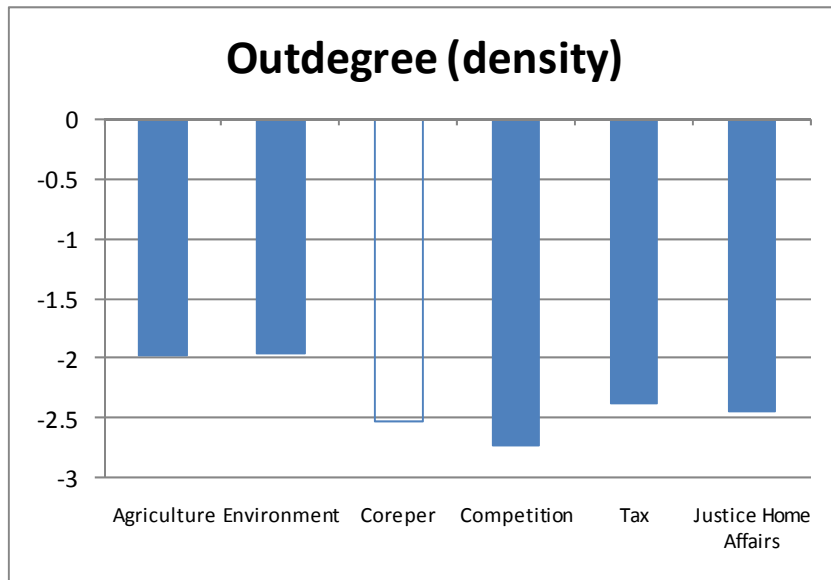




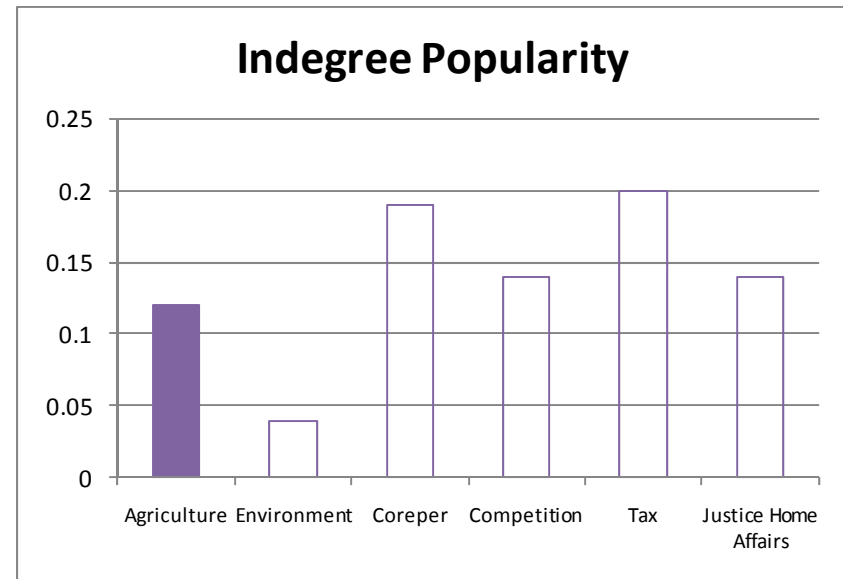
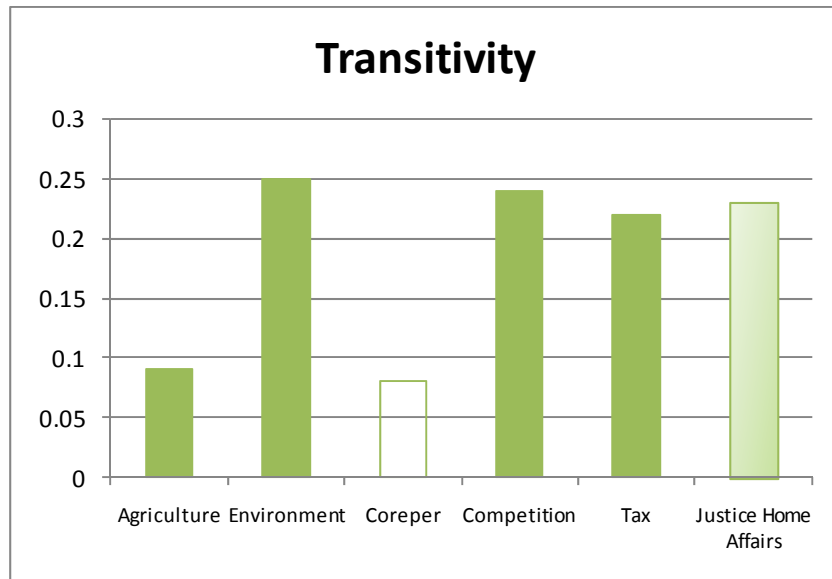
Evidence

- Slight evidence that countries cooperate as a result of similar policy
- Countries are less likely to cooperate with bigger or wealthier countries
- Countries with geographical borders cooperate more strongly
- Old (new) members are more likely to cooperate with old (new) members

Structural Effects



Structural Effects





Goodness of fit

- Should reciprocity, in-degree popularity and in-structural equivalence be included?
- Estimated the model without estimating the parameters of these effects

Goodness of Fit

	Overall	Reciprocity	In-degree Popularity	In-structural Equivalence
Agriculture	✓	✓	✗	✓
Coreper	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tax	✓	✓	✗	✓
Environment	✓	✓	✓	✓
Justice and Home Affairs	✓	✓	✗	✓
Competition	✓	✓	✗	✓



Conclusions

- Network's characteristics (outdegree density, transitivity) shape cooperation in the Council
- Policy positions prove significant in two working groups
- Neighbouring states are more likely to cooperate together
- New/old member state cooperates with the state if that other state has the same membership status
- States are more likely to cooperate with bigger states - power considerations matter



Should you have any further question, please contact us.

Thank you!