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“EU Subregions on Global Human Rights Issues: The Nordic and Visegrád Groups at the UN General Assembly”

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KEY ABBREVIATIONS

AI – Agreement Index
C or CO – Cohesion Ratio
CEDAW – Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CFSP – Common Foreign and Security Policy
COMECON – Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
CSDP – Common Security and Defence Policy
EC – European Communities
EEAS – European External Action Service
EFTA – European Free Trade Agreement
EPC – European Political Cooperation
ESS – European Security Strategy
EU – European Union
FPA – Foreign Policy Analysis
GA3 – United Nations General Assembly Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural)
GDP – Gross Domestic Product
HRC – United Nations Human Rights Council
ICTY – International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
INSTRAW – International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
IR – International Relations
IVC – Index of Voting Cohesion
NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PPP – Purchasing Power Parity
RAM – Rational Actor Model
RCI – Rational Choice Institutionalism
UN – United Nations
UNGA – United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
V4 – Visegrád Group
VF – Visegrád Fund
WEOG – Western European and Others Group
WNIS – Western Newly-Independent States

INTRODUCTION

Three distinct motivations—academic and personal—would have originally triggered work on this study. Firstly, the inquiry was motivated by a puzzle which I faced as I was working on my master's thesis at Central European University, between 2010 and 2012. At that time, I was searching for an answer to a simple question: how, if in any way, had the Lisbon Treaty, which had endowed the European Union (EU) with new mechanisms of the foreign policy coordination and representation, influenced the foreign policy cohesion of EU member states. For very similar considerations to those that have been at play during the present study, I chose to use the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) as a 'testing ground.' Along the way, I learned a great deal from the scholarly literature, and a wee bit from my own study, about thematic and temporal patterns of EU voting cohesion, as well as about myriad methods that can be used to analyze it.

Importantly, I encountered the puzzle that in global human rights issues, EU member states showed remarkably high levels of unity, yet they would be outvoted in the UN all too often. Most of the related literature would—commonsensically—attribute this outvoting pattern to the simple mathematical logic of plenary UN bodies: that every member state had a single vote, and decisions required simple majority. This strand of logic would have the EU, which accounted for most countries of the 'Global North' or 'the West' in the UN, simply *outnumbered* by the 'non-West' on supposedly 'Northern' or 'Western' approaches to human rights. This approach, while it does have strong explanatory power, would not only (over)simplify the human rights domain by reducing much of its subject matter to a 'West v. rest' dichotomy, it would also not account for potential internal factors of the impaired agenda-pushing capability of the EU group.

This gap in the literature was met with the second motivation which would eventually lead to the research framework of the present study: my existing interest and previous studies in comparative regionalism. This academic interest would turn my attention towards the subregional groups of the EU, and possible fractions of agendas that they might be representing which could in turn impact how the EU majority would position itself globally.

Thirdly, two EU subregions to which I had comparably high personal affinity—one which I hail from and another in which I had studied—seemed to present themselves, arguably not entirely co-incidentally, as compelling objects of comparative analysis: the Nordic and Visegrád (V4) subregions. Comparable in size (but for Poland, the 'elephant in the room'), the countries of these two subregions presented fascinating (if superficial) contrasts to the analyst: old v. new EU members; well-studied v. understudied actors in International Relations; institutionalized

v. 'light' regionalism; progressive v. more traditional values; NATO membership v. neutrality—and so forth.

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The dissertation is organized into three Chapters, which explore the potential subregional agendas related the above-mentioned puzzle in particular, but also what countries of these two subregions have to say (and vote) about global human rights debates more broadly. The time-frame of the analysis extends to ten years before and ten years after the EU accession of the V4 countries (1994–2014); an arguably substantial and formative twenty years of their post-bipolar existence. The aim, on the one hand, is to compare the V4 to the Nordics and thereby create new knowledge; and on the other, to validate and further explore existing knowledge about the Nordic and, mainly indirectly, the EU group on global human rights affairs, using the UNGA as the 'testing ground.'

Chapter I provides a (non-exhaustive) account of relevant bodies of scholarly literature—mostly empirical approaches to voting behavior and 'actorness,' as well as historical-descriptive accounts of subregional integration efforts, focusing on foreign policies. Chapter II describes the theoretical and institutional frameworks relevant to the study, effecting in the end a hypothesis- and empirics-driven rather than a theory-driven research framework. Chapter III describes the data and provides a mixed-methods account of their analysis, offering exploratory insight as well as testing the hypotheses outlined in Chapter II. The two final parts of the dissertation summarize the results of the hypothesis-test, and impart ideas for possible directions of further research.

CHAPTER I:
LITERATURE REVIEW

The first Chapter provides an overview of the scholarly field to which the present dissertation seeks to contribute. The Chapter is divided into five sections, and proceeds as follows. The first Subchapter provides a survey of literature studying voting blocs in the United Nations (UN), particularly the European Union (EU) bloc. The EU context is considered particularly relevant because it is the institutional and political 'region' of the two subregions that form the objects of the study. As EU affairs is a dominant dimension of the foreign policies of all the countries studied, addressing studying the EU also opens up opportunities to canvas the foreign affairs of the Nordic and V4 countries—as candidate countries and member states alike. Much of the focus here is on recent literature, and the state of the art in terms of quantitative methods for studying cohesion.

The second Subchapter provides a more qualitative account—that of the debate on 'actorness' of the EU in global human rights affairs, or the ability of the EU to act as a norm-setter.

The third Subchapter provides an overview of the studies written on Nordic and V4 foreign affairs vis-à-vis the EU integration project.

The fourth and final Subchapter summarizes the key implications drawn from the literature review, and identifies the gap in the literature which the dissertation aims to fill.

1. EU Voting in the UN

This Subchapter provides an overview of the literature—especially recent scholarship—on voting behavior in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). It affords emphasis to the research completed to date on the voting cohesion of EU member states. While data on roll-call votes in the UNGA are, owing to the work of a handful of scholars, available in machine-readable form up until 2015 at the time of writing, the academic community is far from being united on how to treat these data, and what conclusions to draw from any given type of quantitative inquiry. As van Kampen (2012) puts it rather shrewdly:

> 'Voting in international organizations, and in the UNGA in particular, is not fully understood. Although the issue of voting blocs and persistent lines of conflict in the context of the UNGA has been frequently analyzed, it is not one on which scholars are in agreement.' (p.20)

A further problematic point is that not only are the data themselves confusing, so are, oftentimes, the analyses performed on them. Particularly when one surveys some of the earlier studies, one is confronted with major difficulties concerning transparency and reliability, as, at times, 'it is unfortunately unclear as to exactly which method is used to measure cohesion. This critique is also relevant regarding the way in which most researchers have divided the data on roll-call votes into separate issue sub-categories (i.e. 'Human Rights', 'Security' etc.)' (van Kampen, 2012:p.32)[1]

As the dissertation's temporal focus is limited to the period between 1994 and 2014, so is the focus of its literature review. Both the agenda and membership of the UN, as well as of the European integration project, have changed so drastically following the end of the Cold War, that, for the purposes of this study, whose main aim is to study subregional groups, the inferential power of a longer time series would be minimal. Because of this, and in agreement with van Kampen (2012)'s criticism above, the study make only brief mention of earlier studies on voting cohesion in the UN—i.e. from the early days of the UN and European Communities (EC)—, but make a point of mentioning studies whose conceptual or methodological approach has been applied in more recent accounts—whether in its original form, or with modifications.

Notably, as most contemporary scholars, I consider Lijphart's classic study of UN voting (1963) a landmark—one which continues to inspire scholarship, as well as to draw sharp criticism—to the present day, and I use his Index of Voting Cohesion (IVS) as an important point of departure.

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[1] It is possible to group resolutions by submitting Main Committee or based on the UN Yearbook, which lists all adopted resolutions by topic (Rasch, 2008). Van Kampen (2012) uses an iterated keyword search in the short descriptions and long descriptions of resolutions, as provided in Voeten's 2006 dataset. Note: this is no longer available at the time of writing. See *References* for the more recent version of the dataset, used in the present dissertation (Voeten, 2013).

What to Measure and How?

Most authors studying bloc voting in the UN—and, notably, those focusing on European countries in particular—have employed descriptive statistics to characterize voting cohesion within blocs, as well as to measure policy distance between pairs of countries and/or blocs, or between countries and bloc majorities.[2] These authors have typically employed so-called dyadic indicators to measure policy distance in terms of differences on singular votes, and subsequently aggregated these differences and express them as a measure of voting cohesion. On the other hand, some studies focusing on voting behavior in the UN more broadly have employed inferential statistics, including factor analysis, complete analysis and cluster-bloc analysis (Rasch, 2008:p.207; Birnberg, 2009:p.46).

The most comprehensive data on UNGA voting behavior available to date is the dataset compiled by Voeten (2013), with data available on roll-call votes between 1946 and 2015, at the time of writing. In a recent study that analyzed these data in the extensive time series between 1946 and 2012, Bailey, Strezhnev & Voeten (2015) used a spatial model to construct UN member state ideal-point estimates, and positioned states according to their policy stance towards the U.S.-led liberal world order. The authors argue that, in general, ideal point estimates model policy shifts with a higher level of consistency with key qualitative insights—such as the impact of left/right government transitions on foreign policy shifts—than the models derived from traditional dyadic indicators (p.12). With reference to shifts in the UNGA agenda, the authors' primary argument against dyadic measures attacks a fundamental assumption that studies using dyads make, whether implicitly or explicitly: that the high incidence of voting together in the UNGA over an extended period of time can be interpreted as a strong and stable similarity between policy preferences more broadly. The authors point out the inherent conceptual weakness of this assumption with the following example:

> 'Suppose there are ten votes and that country A and country B vote identically on nine of them. In the next session, suppose that the countries' preferences do not change, but there happen to be ten additional votes on the single issue that divided the two countries. The similarity index of the two countries would drop from 90 percent on the first ten votes to 50 percent on all twenty votes even as their preferences did not change.' (Bailey, Strezhnev & Voeten, 2015:p.4)

As demonstrated in following sections, the UNGA's human rights agenda—the part of the agenda relevant for the present study—shows a relatively high level of stability over the time period analyzed, making it unlikely that dyadic indices would be prone to the above bias. That said, the minimum implication of Bailey, Strezhnev & Voeten's (2015) point of caution is that

[2] Exceptions are Birnberg (2009) and Jin & Hosli (2013), as outlined later on in this section.

dyadic measures must be applied with care, and sudden shifts in measured distance/cohesion must not automatically be interpreted as changes in policy preferences. At the end of the day, the subject matter of resolutions voted on in the UNGA must be monitored with a qualitative eye, and anytime there is a major shift in the overall subject matter—e.g. an ad-hoc human rights issue becomes dominant on the agenda, resulting in an unusually high number of votes being called on it—the validity of the measured cohesion should be cross-checked with different quantitative indicators, and/or further supported by in-depth qualitative inquiry.[3] Conversely, any quantitative findings on votes should be evaluated with a qualitative eye, including with 'deep dives' into specific votes or resolutions as necessary—this is also a guiding principle for the present dissertation.

It is for reasons not entirely unadjacent to the above that the majority of authors working with dyadic indicators have employed a selective method for including votes in their study in the first place. Their foremost consideration, however, is that including all resolutions adopted in the UNGA—or, for that matter, those that are not even put to a vote because of expected failure—would seriously hamper parsimony. Simply because of the working logic of multilateral bodies, the overwhelming majority of UNGA resolutions are adopted without a vote (i.e. with consensus), and, in the view of these authors, including these resolutions would unhelpfully increase the degree of agreement, and mask or marginalize the true debates that take place in the Assembly (Luif, 2003; Rasch, 2008). At the same time, Jin & Hosli (2012) have noted that including only recorded votes might paint a somewhat 'lopsided' picture of the UNGA's work, as it is only resolutions on relatively contested issues that are put to a vote in the first place—others are adopted without one (p.1281). Consequently, focusing on recorded votes only, might skew the results towards the most contested issues, seriously damaging the inferential power of studies vis-à-vis the broader global agenda, which—as evidenced also by the high number of consensus votes in the UNGA—arguably contains less contested, and even non-contested issues than contested. However, for studies focusing on a subset of UN member states—such as the present dissertation—, rather than the UN globally, a potential skew along the above can be expected to have minimal consequences.[4]

Beyond this baseline of consensus for the most restrictive selection criterion, some studies choose to focus on one or more single issue area—as does the present dissertation—in pursuit

[3] In fact, the phenomenon that (parts of) resolutions are voted on repeatedly, thereby producing a high number of votes on an issue, typically reveals the high importance of the issue. The weight increment that this causes in regard to the issue being voted on can be considered a qualitative element of studies. I am grateful to my doctoral supervisor, Dr. Paul Luif for highlighting this point.

[4] I thankfully acknowledge my supervisor, Paul Luif for making this point.

of answers to their research questions.[5] Beauguitte (2009), rather extraordinarily, goes two steps further, and chooses to omit all near-unanimous votes—notably on Palestine and disarmament, as, in his view, 'keeping them would only reinforce the marginal situation of Israel and United States at the UNGA' (p.4). Beauguitte (2009) omits all resolutions on which the proportion of 'yes' votes exceeds 95% (p.4).

Apart from some differences in their substantive focus, methodological nuances of existing studies also vary greatly. One common approach shared by authors of the dyadic school is to treat agreement and disagreement on a vote—typically on a resolution or part of a resolution—as an indicator of policy distance, or lack thereof. After standardizing and aggregating differences on single votes, these authors express policy distance as an aggregate agreement (or disagreement) between countries, groups of countries, or a country and a group of countries. Thanks to standardization, which makes these differences comparable across time and issue area, voting cohesion may then be expressed on a scale—ordinal or interval.

While the broad consensus within the dyadic school is to treat a full split on a vote (yes/no) as one end point of the scale—or one extreme category if votes are treated as discreet variables—and an agreement (yes/yes; no/no; or abstain/abstain) as the other, the first major methodological judgement call emerges around the question of how to treat the partial split between abstentions and other votes (yes or no). Some authors who work with scale measures consider abstentions as 'softer no'-s, and treat full and partial splits equally (Volgy, Frazier & Ingersoll, 2003), while others (Lijphart, 1963; Luif, 2003) assign partial splits half the value of full splits.

While not necessarily a critical question in terms of research design when analyzing a small number of votes, the question is conceptually meaningful, as abstentions may be rooted in several different motivations[6]—both domestic and international—, some of which might be both extrinsic to the subject-matter of the vote, and relatively stable over time. Furthermore, a decision on the 'weight' of abstentions may become a rich source of bias if votes on a high number of resolutions are aggregated, which in fact most quantitative studies endeavor to do.

The second judgement call to make pertains to the treatment of absences. Theoretically conceivable reasons for remaining absent from a vote can be as diverse as reasons for

5 See the second Subchapter of the present Chapter for a review of literature on the *human rights* domain.

6 Kissack (2007) mentions reasons including 'a government wanting to be seen as impartial over an issue or a diplomat not having received instructions from their capital on how to vote. ... [Abstentions] can [also] be strategic votes to prevent a quorum being reached and prevent a motion being passed' (p.9).

abstaining from it.[7] In a classic study of voting blocs in the UN, Russett (1966) looked at absences under a microscope, and uncovered a fascinating variety of reasons. In some cases, countries apparently missed roll-call votes by accident, and recorded their voted afterwards—Russett included these cases as any other 'proper' vote (p.329). In other cases—such as the UK staying away from votes on Southern Rhodesia—, countries would remain absent to demonstrate disagreement, or their opinion that the UNGA was overstepping its mandate altogether—Russett treated these votes as negative (p.329). Remaining absences were typically limited to a few countries; most of them running small delegations at the UN[8]—Russett chose to treat their absences as abstentions (p.329). While exploring the specific reasons for absences during the time-frame studied might go beyond the limits of any quantitative inquiry, Russett (1966) does make a strong case that some of the reasons—and only *some* of them: notably ones that result in 'not wanting to vote' on an issue—make it logical to treat absences in a similar way to abstentions.

However, in most cases—as in the example of absenteeism due to insufficient resources—, absences not only signal factors that are different than the ones behind abstentions, but ones that are also extrinsic to the subject matter of the vote at hand. To at least partly clean the inquiry from such extrinsic cases, the authors who do choose to include absences but lack the resources to study votes with absences one-by-one, typically employ a baseline ratio for omission from the dataset. Luif (2003) omits countries absent 33.3% of the time, and Kim & Russett (1997) 30%.

The majority of authors, however (e.g. Lijphart, 1963; Voeten, 2000; 2015; Birnberg, 2009; Hosli et al., 2010; van Kampen, 2012; Burmester & Jankowski, 2014) choose to treat absences as missing data, and omit them completely. Burmester & Jankowski (2014) observe that in the UNGA, 'an absence in one vote is followed by another absence in the subsequent vote in 68 per cent of all cases,' (a figure confirmed also by Voeten, 2015:p.5), which, in their opinion, renders a 'political' reason—i.e. a reason related to the subject matter of a resolution—far less likely than an extrinsic reason—e.g. domestic issues or economic instability (p.8). Voeten notes that absences are typically caused by 'government turnovers that lead states to temporarily have no UN delegation'—and observes that, '[b]y comparison, 23% of abstentions are followed by another abstention' (2015:p.5)—which signals that they are, by and large, different in nature than absences.

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[7] These reasons may be explored through qualitative methods of foreign policy analysis; for example, through focusing on the two-level game of domestic and foreign policy of the absentee country (see Putnam, 1988).

[8] Birnberg (2009) suggests that these are typically poor countries, which 'find it difficult to consistently occupy a seat in New York, which can lead to involuntary absenteeism' (p.101).

A third, and somewhat less vexing methodological judgement call pertains to the range of votes to be included in calculations of cohesion: should only adopted resolutions be taken into account, or should recorded votes on rejected resolutions, parts of resolutions, motions and decisions[9] be included as well? While these votes are also recorded, accessing them in machine-readable form is highly complicated—they need to be extracted from the Verbatim Records of UNGA meetings; every one of them—, therefore most authors do not calculate with them (Luif, 2003). Exceptions are Luif (2003; 2013), who includes all of the above, and Birnberg (2009), who includes amendments to resolutions and paragraphs voted on separately. Importantly, a comparison of two analyses of votes between 1975 and 1991: one that included rejected resolutions, parts of resolutions, motions and decisions and another that included only entire resolutions revealed only marginal differences between the results (Luif, 1995 as cited by Rasch, 2008:p.213; and Jin & Hosli, 2012:p.1282).

EU Cohesion in the UNGA

Ever since its inception, the EC, and later EU—being, in many respects, the most advanced regional integration project—has drawn the focus of numerous studies focusing on voting cohesion in the UN. Already in some early inquiries, the UNGA has been used as a testing ground for studying EC/EU foreign policy 'integration' (e.g. Hurwitz, 1976). In fact, arguably, in the EU's case, voting patterns in the UN provide the only relevant and adequate source of quantitative data, as there are no intra-EU voting records available on foreign policy issues (Rasch, 2008:p.206). An insightful account of the 'policy space' on foreign policy issues in the Council of the EU has been made by Mattila (2009) and Hosli, Mattila & Uriot (2011), which is briefly presented at the end of the third Subchapter of this Chapter.

The authors who have looked at the UNGA for the purpose of studying bloc cohesion have employed a great variety of methodologies, which, however, all share some fundamental conceptual weaknesses and strengths. Many authors consider the UNGA the most relevant global forum for such inquiries because it is the most inclusive assembly of states which meets regularly to comprehensively discuss virtually the full range of relevant global issues, and in a comparable manner over time (Voeten, 2000; Volgy, Frazier & Ingersoll, 2003; Kissack, 2007; Rasch, 2008; van Kampen, 2012; Bailey, Strezhnev & Voeten, 2015). Bailey, Strezhnev & Voeten (2015) found seventy-five studies between 1998 and 2012 which endeavored to infer national policy from voting patterns in the UN (p.3). Jin & Hosli (2012), who have studied EU representation at the UN using a principal-agent approach, have further noted that the UNGA was ideal for studying EU representation because both the EU and its member states were

[9] *Decisions*—of which a few are passed each year—, are similar to resolutions but carry smaller political weight (Luif, 2003:p.23). Decisions typically pertain to procedural issues such as 'elections, appointments, the time and place of meetings and the taking note of reports' (Birnberg, 2009:p.100).

present at its sessions, offering ideal conditions for the study of delegation (p.1274). An additional advantage of the UNGA is that it contains a 'built-in' standardization mechanism, as all member states are faced with the exact same foreign policy question, simultaneously (Birnberg, 2009:p.94–95).

Although clearly a unique source of data, UN voting records must be used with caution for inferential purposes regarding the bigger picture of global affairs. However, the nature of this caution—i.e. exactly what kind of systematic bias to expect—is far from obvious. In a classic study, Russett (1966) points out that due to the 'one nation-one vote principle' and the lack of binding authority and of an enforcement mechanism, the UNGA dynamic differs fundamentally from, for example, that of regional organizations (p.327). Petersen (2006), argues the contrary, i.e. that member states are likely to vote honestly precisely because resolutions are non-binding (cited in van Kampen, 2012:p.7).

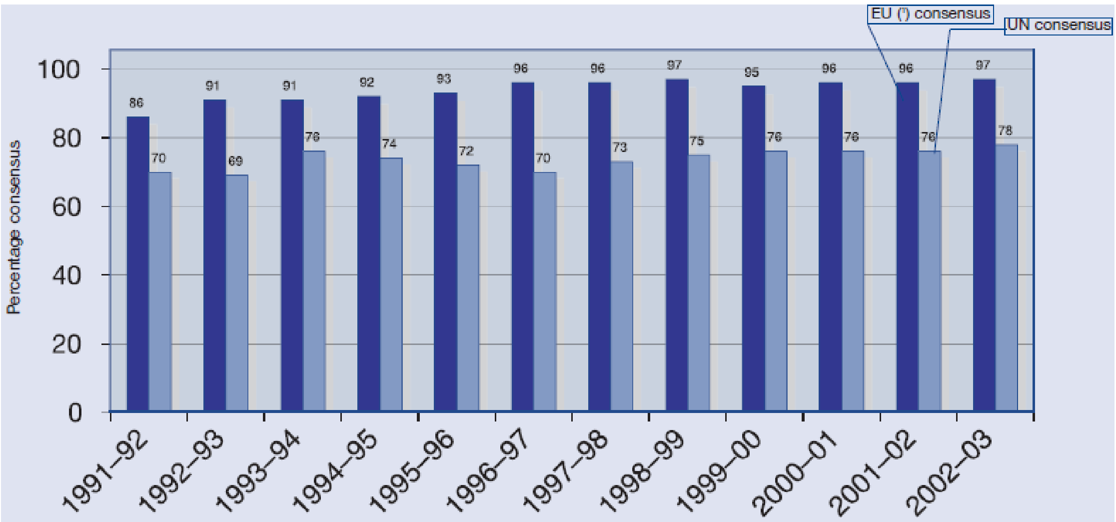
Side-stepping this point of controversy, some authors (and actors) express an assumption (or a self-fulfilling conviction) that cohesion in the Assembly is, for one reason or another, important in and of itself, and worth studying in its own right. According to the European Commission itself,

> Through its CFSP [Common Foreign and Security Policy], the EU speaks almost always with one voice at the UN General Assembly (UNGA). From globalisation and human rights, to development and disarmament, the EU aims for unanimity. And the results are clearly evidenced in EU cohesion, which has stood at around 95 % of all resolutions passed by the UNGA since the mid-1990s. (*n.d.*:p.3)

While the Commission's statement should obviously be treated as an instance of political communication—which, as is to be demonstrated below, blurs many important nuances that have not escaped the focus of scholarly literature—, it does signal a genuine ambition of EU member states to 'speak with one voice,' as well as the importance the EU attaches to (the impression of) unity in the UNGA. Birnberg (2009), in one of the most comprehensive studies of the recent decade on EU cohesion in the UN (between 1992 and 2004)—one that uses a 'multi-method approach' that combines several quantitative indicators with qualitative insights—, confirms that EU member states do make a genuine effort to coordinate their national policy preferences in the UNGA.

Figure 1 below describes the Commission's own visualization of voting cohesion (expressed as a simple percentage of alignment):

Figure 1.
United Nations General Assembly consensus on resolutions, 1991-2003



(¹) Refers to EU15

Source: European Commission (n.d.:p.3)

Coherence (or cohesion)—as versatile and, at times, contested as the term is in the literature—is not to be conflated with coordination, however. Rasch, in his extensive book on EU representation at the UN (2008), points out that the most important shortcoming to the Commission's communications on EU coherence—in the above, as well as in other documents—is that it consistently includes all resolutions, i.e. not just those adopted with a vote: an inflated measure rendering the Commission's figure pure public diplomacy, and unfit for quantitative analysis (p.222–223). Addressing another substantive point of the Commission's 'mission statement,' Rasch also notes that the CFSP is in fact anything but a vehicle for the EU to speak with one voice in the UN:

> 'In New York, the CFSP-regime is simply an instrument for inter-governmental dealings between the EU [Member States], aimed at pursuing the individual national positions. There is little room for a single European voice on the East River, i.e. for a truly common foreign policy.' (2008:p.301)

Rasch (2008) plots EU voting coherence as a percentage value (ratio of votes on which EU member states voted identically), and also uses an adapted version of Lijphart's Index of Voting cohesion (IVC),[10] which he applies to study voting conformity of individual countries with the EU majority. Contrary to Lijphart, however,—who, studying voting blocs *in general*, affords

[10] See following section.

half the value to partial splits compared to full splits (see above)—Rasch argues that when looking at the EU *in particular*, which has an elaborate mechanism of foreign policy coordination whose intention is to speak with one voice, even a partial split represents a full-blown failure of coordination, and should therefore be afforded equal weight to a full split (p.210).

'EU majority' or 'EU consensus' is used by various authors as a point of reference (i.e. for dissension from it). Luif measures 'distance' of (third/candidate) countries from the EU consensus (2003), or of member states from an EU majority (2018) as a dyadic indices. As Birnberg (2009) points out, the concept itself might be misleading, as there is no pre-determined 'EU majority;' the bloc of countries that comprise it changes from one vote to another. However, as 'fluid' as the concept may be—due to the elaborateness of the coordination process in CFSP, and the repetitive nature of UNGA voting—, it is highly unlikely that an EU member state that ends up voting against the majority might do so by accident (p.111). Therefore, the EU majority can be considered a meaningful and transparent benchmark and point of reference for cohesion or dissension among member states.

Measures of Cohesion

In a classic study which has served as a point of departure or reference for studies of UN voting since, Lijphart (1963) developed an 'Index of Voting Cohesion' (IVC) based on the Rice-Beyle technique—previously used primarily in studies of the U.S. Supreme Court and U.S. House of Representatives. The IVC is a dyadic measure of policy distance, which expresses cohesion as a ratio of agreement between pairs of voting agents on singular votes:

$$IVC = \frac{(f + \frac{1}{2}g)}{t} \times 100$$

where t is the total number of votes, f is the number of votes with full agreement (i.e. yes/yes or no/no) between the two agents, and g is the number of votes with partial agreement (i.e. yes/abstain or no/abstain). (p.909-910)

Hosli et al. (2010) compute three different indices to study EC/EU voting behavior in the UNGA 1952–2005. They omit to use Lijphart's IVC, whose use they—similarly to Lijphart (1963) himself—consider overly tedious for a large number of possible country pairs, such as in the UNGA. Two of the three indices as used by Hosli et al. are introduced here, while the third one (the 'Agreement Index') is explained in the following as used by Jin & Hosli (2013).

The first index computed by Hosli et al. (2010), the 'Cohesion Ratio' is based on van Kampen (2007). It treats cohesion as a standardized version of the 'average vote' on any given resolution:

$$C = \left| AVx - 0.5 \right| \times 2 \times 100$$

where *AVx* is the 'average vote' on resolution *x* (Hosli et al., 2010:p.18). Hosli et al. (2010) use two versions of this index: one assigns a value of 1 to 'yes' votes, 0.5 to abstentions and 0 to 'no' votes; while the other treats abstentions and 'no' votes equally, and assigns them a value of zero. Van Kampen's main argument for the first version is that while abstentions can be regarded as partially cohesive with either a 'yes' or a 'no' vote, there is no good reason to assume that to abstentions are, to any extent, cohesive *with each other*—since one abstaining county might be more inclined to vote 'yes,' while the other 'no,' and their reasons for not voting may be very different (2012:p.34).

The second index used by Hosli et al. (2010) is the 'Defection ratio' drawn from Iida (1988) and Volgy, Frazier & Ingersoll (2003). This index aggregates dissensions as a percentage of all votes cast on a number of resolutions. Iida (1988) used it to study the Group of 77, and Volgy, Frazier and Ingersoll (2003) the G-7. This measure is the inverse of the Cohesion Ratio:

$$\mathrm{DR} = [\mathrm{Dx/c}] * 100$$

where *Dx* is the number of minority votes and c is the total number of votes on resolution *x*[11] (Hosli et al., 2010:p.18). Unlike Hosli et al. (2010), Iida (1988) and Volgy, Frazier & Ingersoll (2003) coded abstentions as 'no'-s, working with the assumption that they 'have increasingly come to reflect a softer way of disagreeing with the majority direction in the Assembly' (Marín-Bosch, 1987 cited in Volgy, Frazier & Ingersoll, 2003:p.56).

***

In a recent study, Jin & Hosli (2013) used a version of the Agreement Index (AI)—originally devised by Hix, Noury & Roland (2005) to measure party cohesion in the European Parliament, and subsequently employed by Birnberg (2009) to measure EU cohesion in the UNGA between 1992 and 2004. Jin & Hosli (2013) used the AI to study EU voting cohesion

[11] Once again, Hosli et al. work with two versions of the index: one which treats as half-way between 'yes' and 'no' votes (0.5), and one which treats them as 0.

between 1993 and 2012. The AI, which affords equal weight to 'yes,' 'no,', and 'abstain' votes, is computed as follows:

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

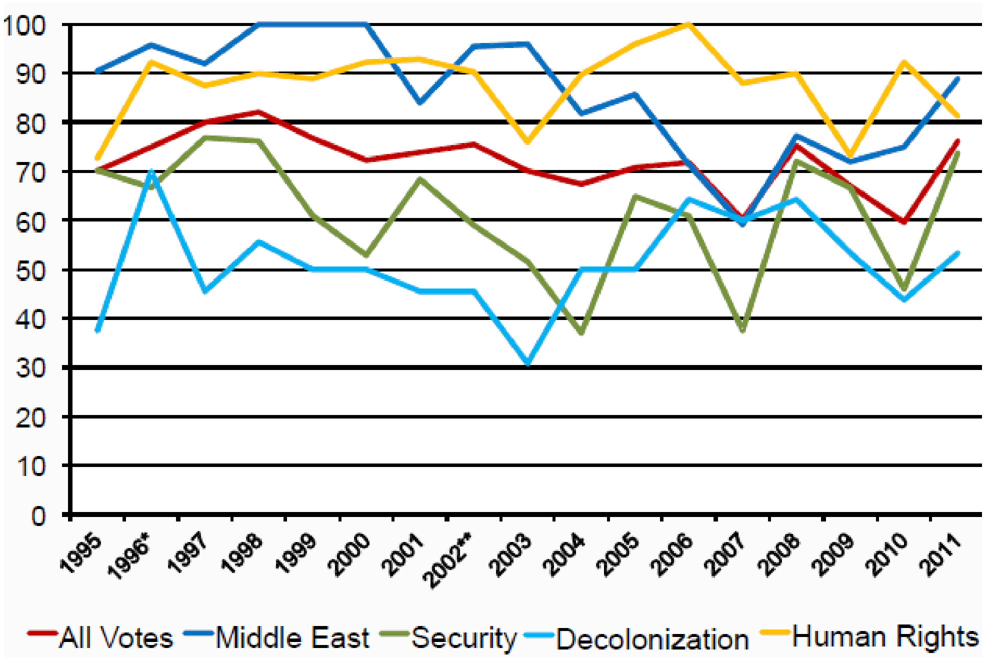
where Y_i denotes the number of countries (within a group *i*) voting 'yes,' N_i those voting 'no,' and A_i those abstaining (Hix, Noury & Roland, 2005:p.215). The vote option ('yes,' 'no,' or 'abstain') chosen by the highest number of countries is taken as the basis for cohesion, which is then divided by the total number of votes cast, yielding a decimal value for the AI between 0 and 1 for a measure of cohesion in the group studied. Jin & Hosli (2013) further multiply this value by 100, yielding a percentage value for cohesion.

Burmester & Jankowski (2014) argue that what the AI actually measures is divergence from a majority vote; and that in affording the same status to 'no' votes and abstentions, it masks difference in scale between a pair of countries voting 'yes' and 'no;' and 'yes'/'no' and 'abstain'—the latter of which, similarly to Lijphart (1963), they consider to be importantly smaller. In all, Burmester & Jankowski assert that the AI is best-fitted for measuring the contestation level of a vote, i.e. the magnitude of the majority vis-à-vis the minority (2014).

Cohesion Levels Post-1990

Studies focusing on the late-20th/early-21st century have found that, through the 1995 and 2004/2007 enlargements, voting cohesion of the EU as a block increased overall, while it also varied across issue areas (Luif, 2003; 2013; Rasch, 2008; Jin & Hosli, 2012; van Kampen, 2012). In fact, Birnberg (2009) has observed a 'dramatic increase' in cohesion levels following the end of the Cold War, and the establishment of the CFSP in the Maastricht Treaty (1992) (p.138 and p.141). Luif (2013:slide 5, see *Figure 2* below) displays the percentage of identical votes within all votes cast by the entire EU bloc (1995–2011), as well as broken down into four issue areas: 'Middle East,' 'Security,' 'Decolonization,' and 'Human Rights.' According to Rasch (2008), the overwhelming majority of all recorded UNGA votes fall into these four issue areas, with an average of merely 5.6% cast on other issues in the period studied by Rasch, i.e. between 1988 and 2005 (p.232). Rasch recorded a 18.8% ratio for resolutions on human rights issues, but noted that the ratio had been increasing since 2001, supposedly due to 'a more controversial atmosphere in international relations on this issue area' (2008:p.233).

Figure 2. Percentage of (recorded) votes with identical voting behavior



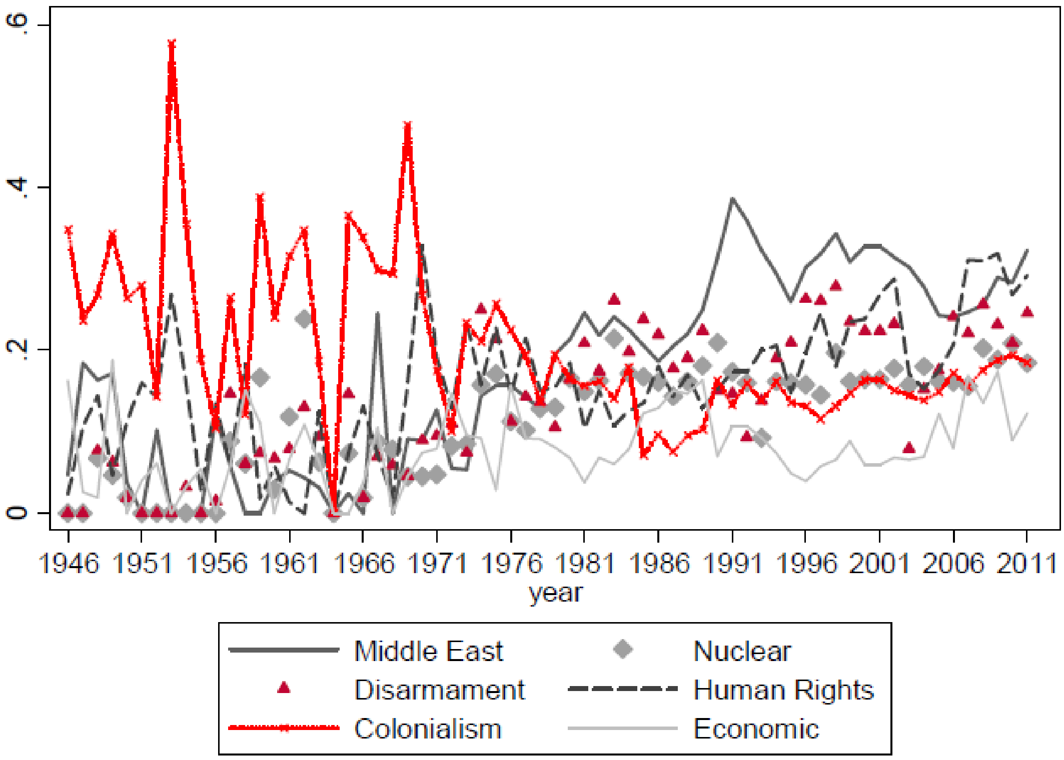
**Does not include Greece. **Until December 2002 (one resolution missing).*

Source: Luif (2013: slide 5)

At this point, it is important to make note of the shift in the UNGA agenda over the decades. Plotting issue salience as the incidence of contested (i.e. non-unanimous) resolutions, Voeten (2015) has revealed that 'colonialism' (or decolonization) has undergone a steep drop in salience, while Middle East and human rights issues experienced the opposite trend (see *Figure 3* below), becoming the most dominant issues on the UNGA agenda (p.5). Agenda change is an important phenomenon when studying UNGA voting over several decades—a point repeatedly made by Voeten (2015), and Bailey, Strezhnev & Voeten (2015) in their advocacy for spatial indicators over dyadic indices of cohesion.[12]

[12] See the previous section for an explanation.

Figure 3. Issue areas of contested UNGA votes, 1946–2011



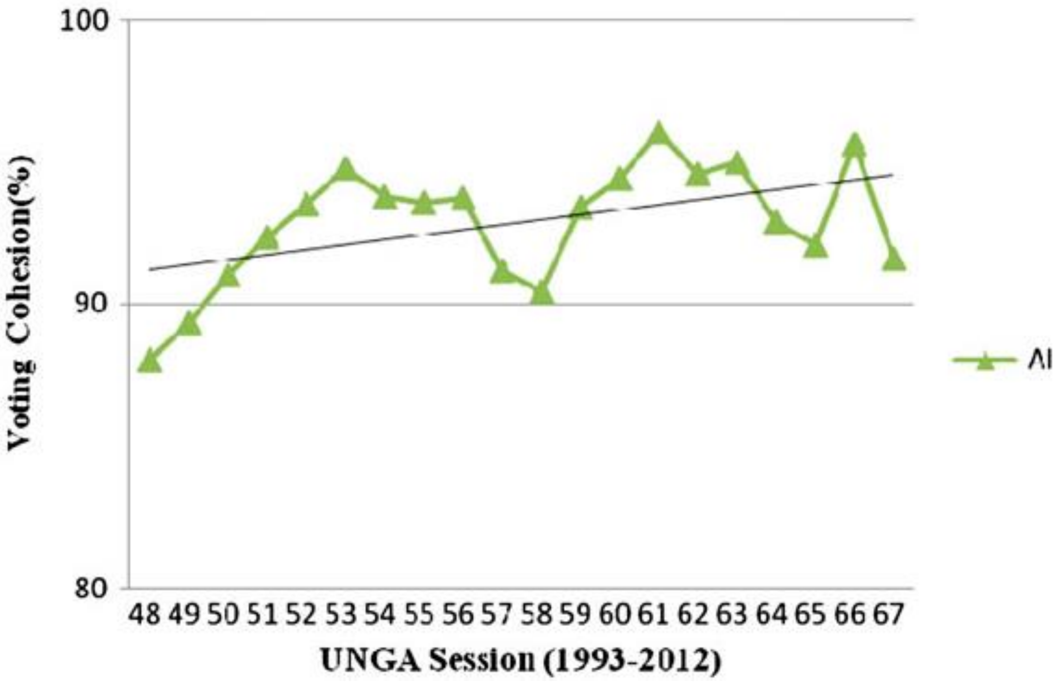
Source: Voeten (2015:p.5)

Notably, van Kampen (2012), using three different indicators to study EU cohesion across issue areas, observes 'no significant trend of differences in cohesion levels across the various issue categories' (less than 10% in most cases) (p.46), which is in contradiction with the above findings. Most importantly, van Kampen finds no significant different in cohesion levels on issues considered 'high politics' (e.g. security issues), and 'low politics' (e.g. human rights issues) (p.46).

Burmester & Jankowski (2014) have acknowledged the advantages and disadvantages of spatial models, and used a combination of W-NOMINATE—a scaling method employed for the estimation of ideal points, i.e. the ideological positions of states in a policy space. In their 2014 study, the authors used the UNGA as the space for ideal points, and an adapted version of Lijphart's IVC which they considered to be better-suited to analyzing groups than the original IVC—which was fitted to pairs of countries, primarily. The authors' aim, however, in contrast to studies focusing exclusively on EU cohesion, was to compare levels of cohesion across six regional organizations: the EU, African Union (AU), Arab League (AL), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM), and Mercado Común del Sur (Mercosur).

Studying the overall trend of EU cohesion, Jin & Hosli (2013) plotted percentage-AIs in their period studied (between 1993 and 2012), and run an ordinary least-squares (OLS) regression on the values over time (see *Figure 4* below). Similarly to Luif (2003), the authors found a continually increasing trend of cohesion in the 1990s and 2000s, marked by only two occasional dips in cohesion, the first of which (sessions 57-58) they explained by a division over the Iraq crisis (p.1283)—a reason for the lapse which is also substantiated by Jakobsson (2009:p.550).

Figure 4. EU voting cohesion in the UNGA (48th–67th session)

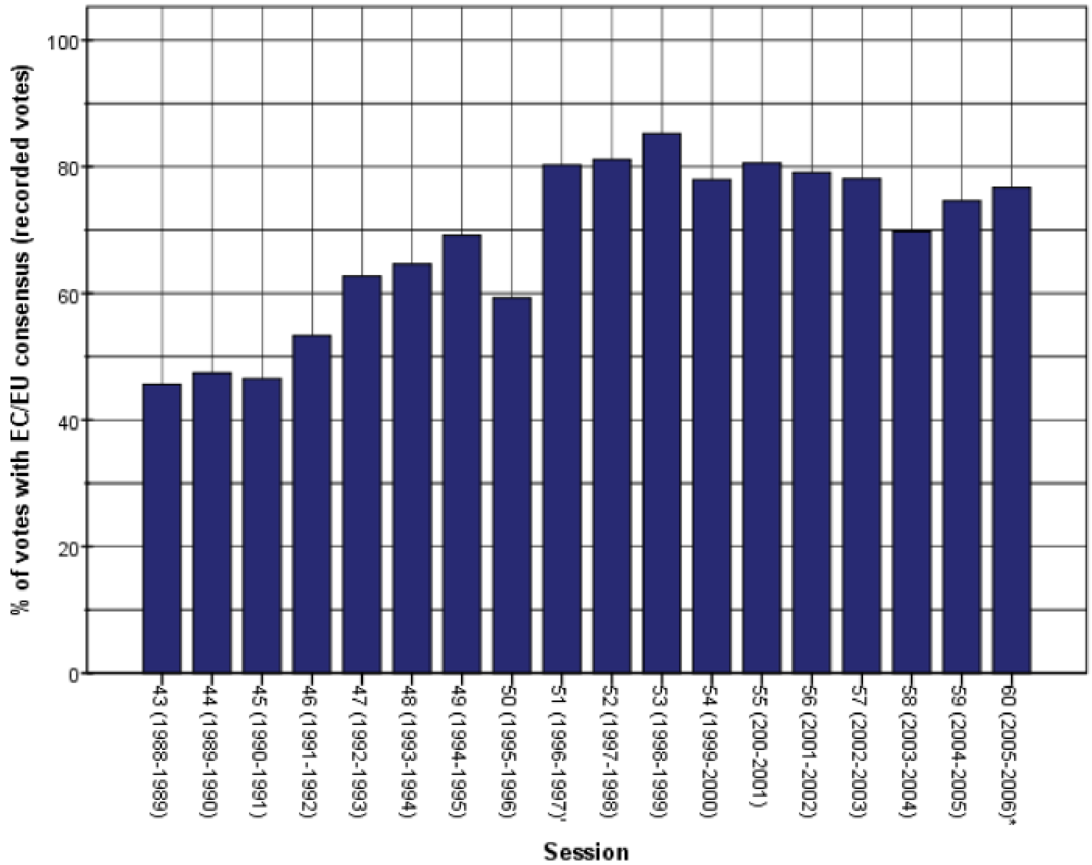


Note: the chart shows the values of the Agreement Index, and the line for a standard linear regression, which reveals a modestly positive trend.)

Source: Jin & Hosli (2013:p.1283)

Rasch (2008) observed a 'plateau of around 75 per cent' in the years preceding his study (see *Figure 5* below), which, in his opinion, could only be overcome 'through further institutional adjustments or alterations of national policies' (p.220). As noted further ahead in this section, the Treaty of Lisbon—quite a significant 'institutional adjustment' to the CFSP—has not, as yet, achieved a breakthrough; however, other studies (e.g. Luif, 2003; Jin & Hosli, 2013) also did not confirm the existence of such a 'plateau.' Luif (2013) later does find one, starting in 1998.

Figure 5.
Coherence of EC/EU voting in the UN General Assembly, 1988–2005



Data for session 60 (2005-2006) available until 21 December 2005.

** Session 51 (1996-1997) does not include Greece.*

Source: Rasch (2008:p.220), with formatting modifications by Molnár (2010:p.108)

After separating results of votes into 'consensus,' 'two-way splits' (yes/abstain or no/abstain), 'three-way splits' (yes/no/abstain), and 'opposed votes' (yes/no), Rasch (2008) found a steep increase in the number of consensus votes, and a marked drop in three-way splits—which he considers the second most contested variant after opposed votes—since 1990 (p.223-225). All in all, Rasch recorded only five opposed votes: three of which pertained to security, with the UK and France voting against the EU majority; and a fourth one (on decolonization) also being contested by the UK (p.226). The fifth opposed vote, which pertained to human cloning, pitted ten member states in favor against fourteen against (p.226).[13]

Birnberg (2009) has made the observation that while the AI—the same measure Jin & Hosli (2013) work with—is technically a continuous variable, and as such it is fit for OLS regression, the overwhelming majority of resolutions between 1992 and 2004 took 'hard 1s' as AI values—i.e. they were adopted with consensus (p.135). Consequently, since 'hard 1s' are in fact a

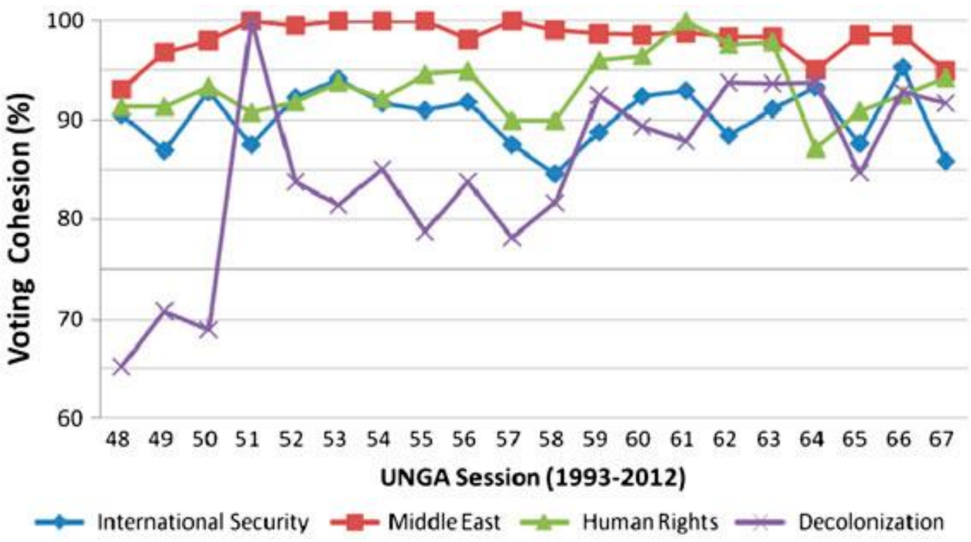
[13] Human cloning is also identified as one of the most fruitful topics for the inferential purposes of this study. See relevant sections of Chapter III (in Subchapters 4 and 5) for detailed analyses.

categorical value, Birnberg decides to convert the AI into a binary variable (unanimous v. split votes), and employs binary logistic regression instead of OLS.

Birnberg's multivariate models confirm a 'strong positive link … between existing and relevant CFSP positions and EU cohesion in the General Assembly, [and that] that EU cohesion levels inside the UNGA are … not a function of UNGA cohesion' (p.164). In other words, EU member states (EU15 at the time) appear to vote together—owing in no insignificant part to CFSP—regardless of the existence of a broader agreement in the UNGA.

Studying the values of the AI in distinct issue areas, Jin & Hosli (2013) once again reaffirm Luif (2003; 2013) in that the 'Middle East' is the issue with the highest degree of cohesion, followed closely—and occasionally overtaken—by 'Human Rights;' while 'Decolonization'[14] and 'Security' are issues associated with relatively lower levels of EU cohesion (see *Figure 6* below). Rasch (2008) observes similar trends, and also points out that decolonization resolutions—due to the fact that the decolonization process is almost completed—have constituted a relatively small portion of all resolutions in recent decades—12.4% between 1988 and 2005 (2008:p.234).

Figure 6. EU voting cohesion in the UNGA (48th–67th session) across issue areas



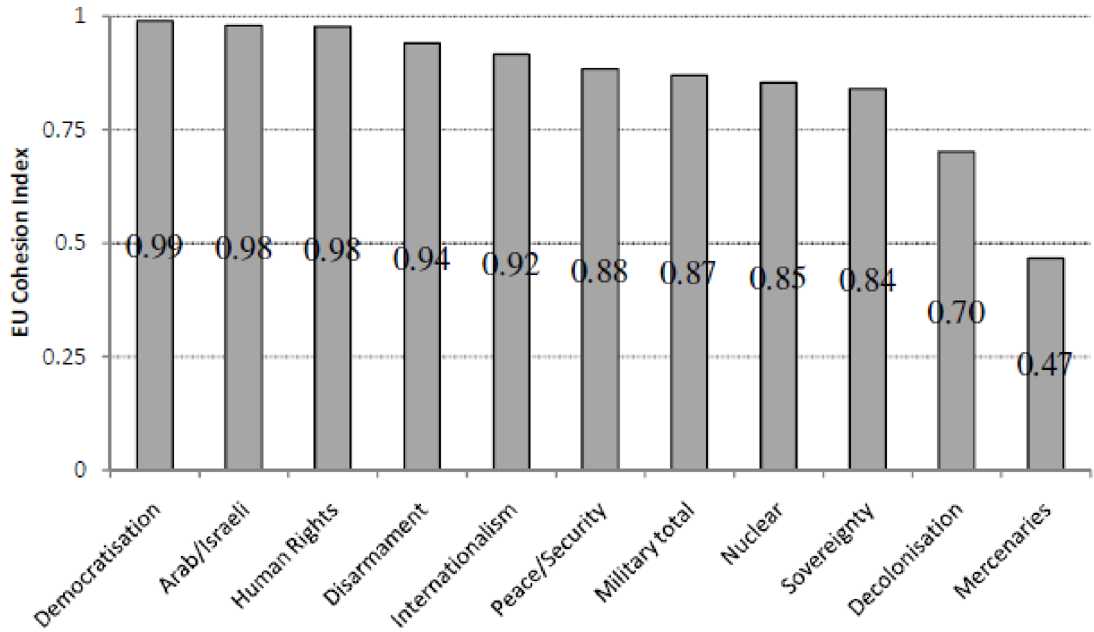
Note: The chart displays values of the Agreement Index.

Source: Jin & Hosli (2013:p.1285)

[14] 'Decolonization' is a legacy term from the 20th century, when some 80 colonies became independent with the UN acting as an important platform in the process. In present day, while 17 so-called Non-Self-Governing Territories (NSGTs) remain to be 'decolonized,' the term 'decolonization' is understood more broadly, to include relations between NSGTs and sovereign states. Since the ratio of EU member states with a colonial past has sunk through each round of enlargements, decolonization and self-determination can be expected to remain a highly-contested issue within the EU so long as their still remain NSGTs.

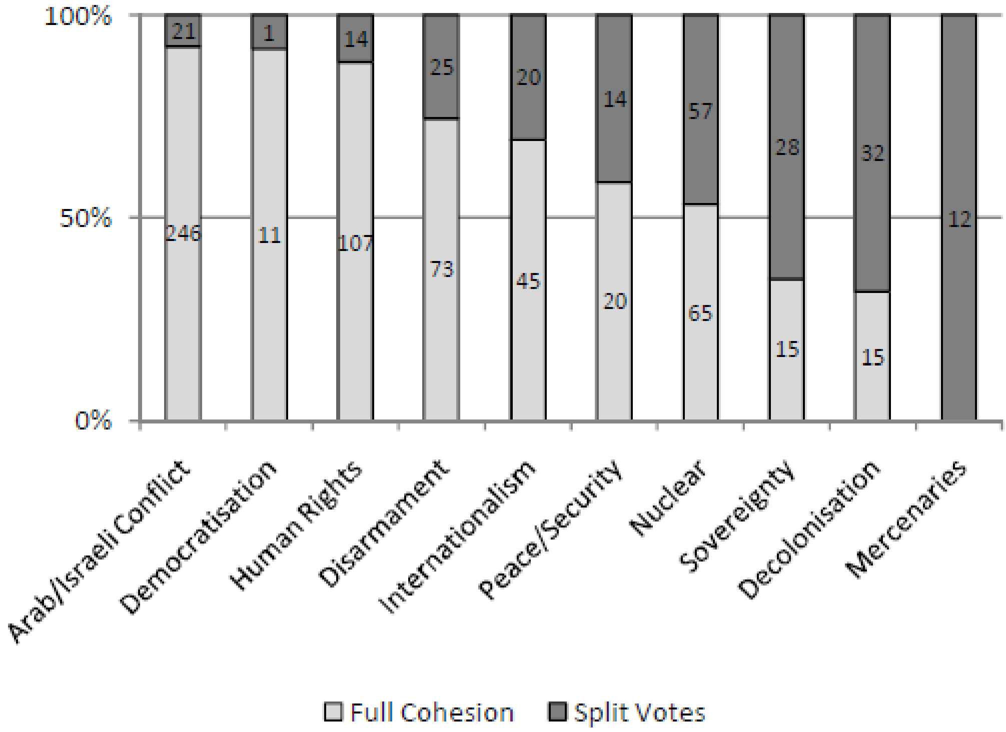
Birnberg (2009), who studies cohesion levels by breaking down votes into 11 separate issue areas (see *Figure 7* below) comes to similar conclusions. While Middle East ('Arab/Israeli') issues, as well as issues related to human rights (i.e. 'Democratisation' and 'Human Rights') are at the top end of the cohesion spectrum, 'Decolonization' and security issues ('Peace/Security,' 'Military total,' 'Nuclear,' and 'Mercenaries;' NB 'Disarmament' is an exception) are at the lower end. This variability in cohesion levels across issue area becomes even more apparent when Birnberg (2009)—for the purposes of a logistic regression—converts the EU cohesion variable (the AI) into a binary variable (unanimous votes v. split votes)—see *Figure 8* on p.26.

Figure 7. Average EU cohesion levels across issue areas



Source: Birnberg (2009:p.134)

Figure 8. Binary EU cohesion levels across issue areas



Source: Birnberg (2009:p.137)

Jin & Hosli (2013), on top of studying EU cohesion in and of itself, employ one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to compare mean cohesion values across regional groups. Assuming that the EU should exhibit the highest level of unity—being the most institutionalized integration framework, and the only one with a common foreign and security policy—the authors could not confirm their assumption based on these tests. Comparing the EU with the Arab League, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the African Union (AU), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Jin & Hosli find that the EU mean (92.8%, σ=16.1) was only significantly different from that of the CIS; and it was, in fact, lower than that of the Arab League (94.1, σ=16.1) and CARICOM (94.1, σ=14.8) (p.1287).

Jin & Hosli (2013) further use two-sample t-tests to ascertain whether the Treaty of Lisbon had a positive effect on EU voting cohesion in the UNGA. To this end, they compare mean voting cohesion values in UNGA sessions directly before and after the adoption of the Treaty of Lisbon (2007), and, in an extension, its entry into force (2009). None of these tests yield significant results. Molnár (2012) also examined voting cohesion pre- and post-Lisbon, and came to a similar conclusion—all three authors gave the Treaty of Lisbon *the benefit of the doubt*, however, implying that its institutions had not been fully implemented by the time of writing.

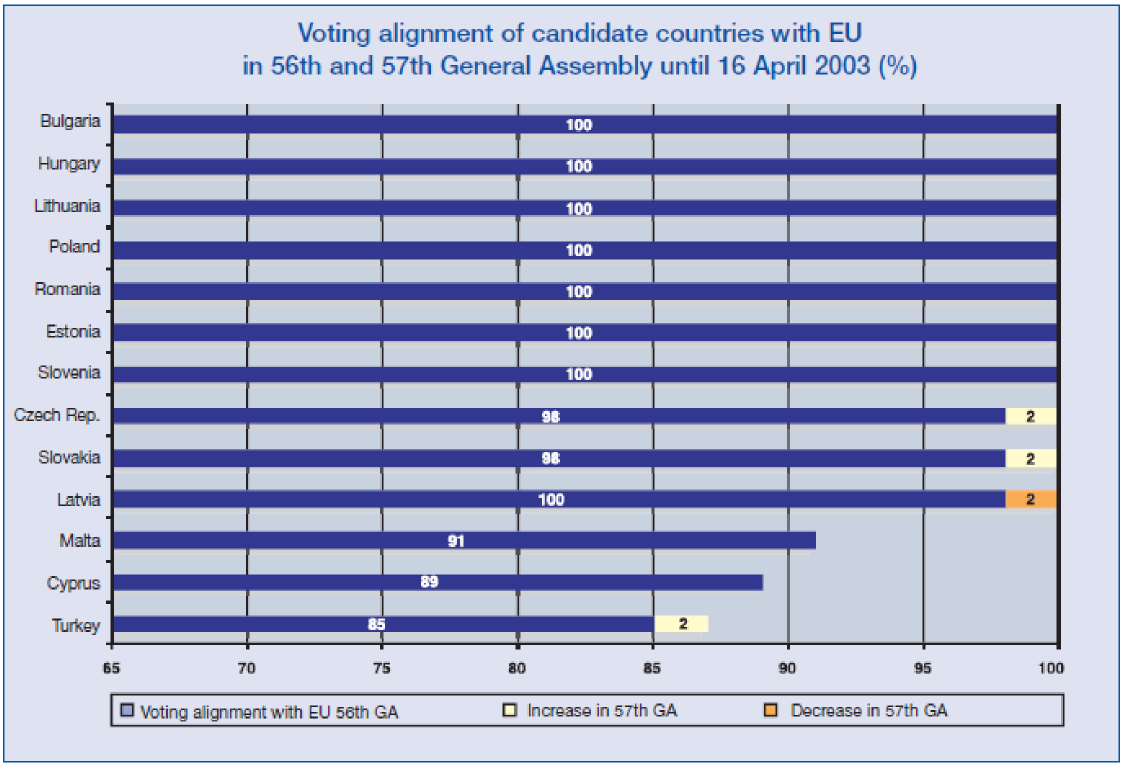
Jin & Hosli (2013) also hypothesized that with the EU enlargements of 1995 (former EFTA countries), and 2004 (Central European former Soviet bloc countries, as well as Malta and Cyprus) and 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania), cohesion would decrease due to an increased heterogeneity of interests. To test this hypothesis, the authors once again used two-sample t-tests to compare EU cohesion levels at UNGA sessions before and after all three rounds of accessions. None of these tests returned significant results. In fact, in a notable operation, van Kampen (2012) found that removing from cohesion calculations the ten member states that joined in 2004 slightly decreased EU cohesion rather than increasing it (p.54).

Once again, these findings would reaffirm Luif (2003), who found that the then-candidate former Soviet bloc countries, which had voted with the Soviet Union until 1989/1990, had changed their voting behavior with the end of the Cold War, and approximated the EU consensus already in the 1990s. Their findings also support Hosli et al. (2010), who, from a constructivist point of departure, confirmed the socialization effect of the EU on member state voting patterns; including a tendency to vote 'yes' more, at the expense of abstaining.

Other authors have also found no evidence for the 1995 EFTA (Rasch, 2008) or 2004/2007 Eastern enlargements (Rasch, 2008; Jakobsson, 2009) negatively impacting cohesion—in sharp contrast to the 1981/1986 Southern enlargements (Greece 1981, and Portugal and Spain 1986), which resulted in a markedly high number of contested votes in each subsequent UNGA session (Thijn, 1991:p.106-112 as cited by Rasch, 2008:226). Interestingly, Greece and Spain continued to produce more frequent vote defections than the EU average throughout the 1990s and early 2000s (Birnberg, 2009:p.173).

According to the European Commission (*n.d.*), candidate countries had aligned themselves with the EU mainstream to a remarkable extent before the 2004 round of enlargement (see *Figure 9* below). Johansson-Nogués (2004), who studied the thirteen then-candidate countries before accession, found that they had adjusted their votes on 'values laden' issues to the EU mainstream much more so than on other issues (cited in Hosli et al.,2010:p.15-16).

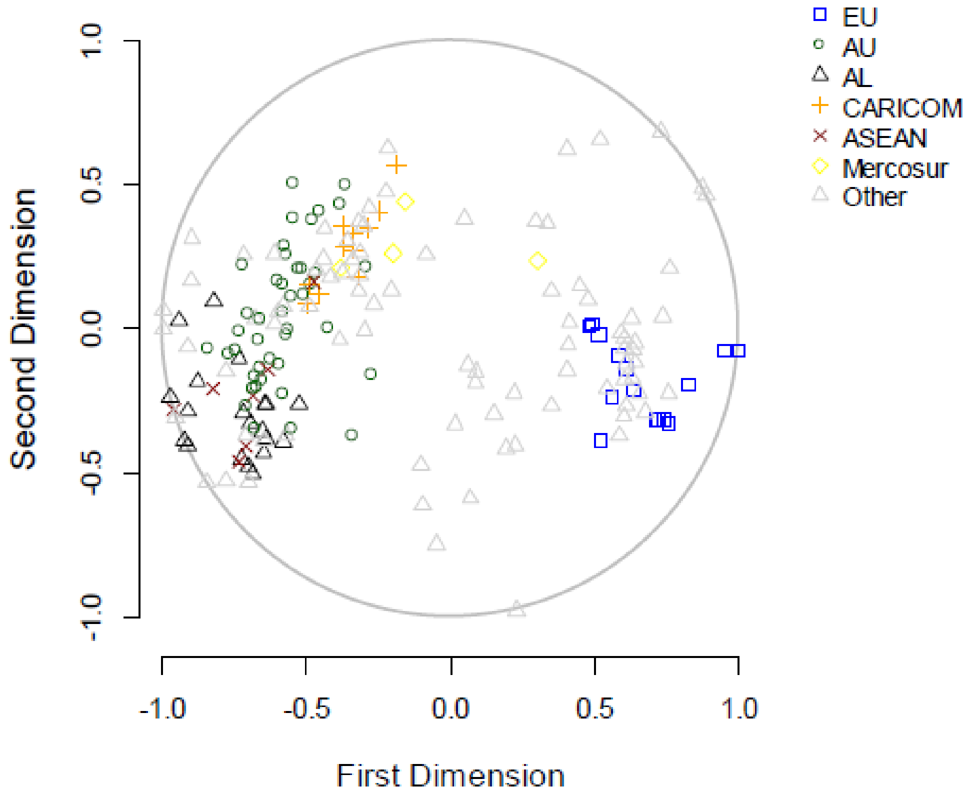
Figure 9. Voting alignment of candidate countries with EU in 56th and 56th General Assembly until 16 April 2003 (%)



Source: European Commission (n.d.:p.4)

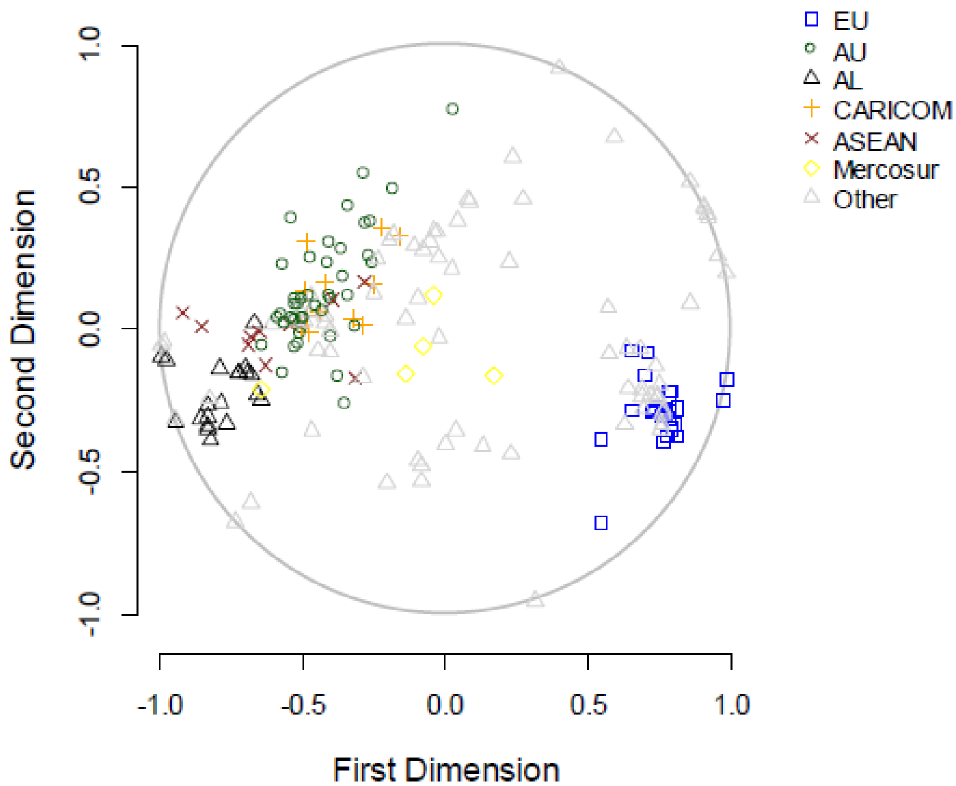
Comparing regional organizations, Burmester & Jankowski (2014) find that the overall level of EU cohesion is generally unimpressive when compared to other groups, none of which are at a comparable level of institutionalization of foreign policy coordination. However, through visualizing ideal points, the authors also demonstrate that the cohesion of other groupings (all of them being non-Western) is high because all of them are aligned with each other on a non-Western policy stance (see *Figure 10* and *Figure 11* below).

Figure 10. W-NOMINATE spatial map of UNGA, 1990–1999



Source: Burmester & Jankowski (2014:p.12)

Figure 11. W-NOMINATE spatial map of UNGA, 2000–2011



Source: Burmester & Jankowski (2014:p.13)

As visible in the ideal point charts for both decades, EU member states are clustered together with each other in the policy space, but away from the other regional organizations, which comprise a single distinct cluster. Burmester & Jankowski (2014), assert based on Voeten (2000) that the reason for this is the 'rest vs. West' (p.5) logic, which, in their finding, is the single most important underlying dimension of conflict in UNGA diplomacy. The EU is seen, in this policy space, as being 'caught in the middle between the Global South and the US.' (p.19)

These findings contrast with Kim & Russett's earlier study (1997), which employed factor analysis for three UNGA sessions immediately following the end of the Cold War (between 1991 and 1993), concluding that an emerging North-South cleavage had superseded the traditional East-West divide of the bipolar world order;[15] a factor which, in their study, accounts for 50.5% of total variance (p.34). Their analysis also identified two other, considerably less important dimensions of conflict, which they labeled 'political rights' and 'Middle East,' explaining 10.8% and 6.7% of variance, respectively (p.38).

Burmester & Jankowski (2014), based on the one-dimensionality they identified, assert that the UNGA is in fact not the ideal global testing ground for state policies, since everything is filtered through the lens of West v. non-West. Ultimately, they conclude that a comparison of the EU with other regional groups is also not particularly instructive, because the latter are united on one side of the 'rest v. West' line of conflict, not because of a meticulously coordinated foreign policy—consequently, they cannot be considered to approximate the relevance of the EU in terms of being a foreign policy actor. In other words, EU foreign policy coordination—and cohesion in the UNGA—is a phenomenon that is meaningful to study in and of itself, given the EU's high relevance in foreign affairs. This relevance, according to Burmester & Jankowski (2014) is confirmed by the fact that the EU is the only regional organization which consistently manages to maintain its unity during contested votes. As the authors suggest:

> 'speaking with one voice is not a value in itself. If there is harmony between [regional organizations'] member states (or even an immensely large majority of states) on an issue, unity is not a merit but a random occurrence. ... However, unity is a value if the level of conflict among the member states and in the international society rises. A regional organization that is able to speak and act cohesively in disputed issues actually shows actorness.' (p.19)

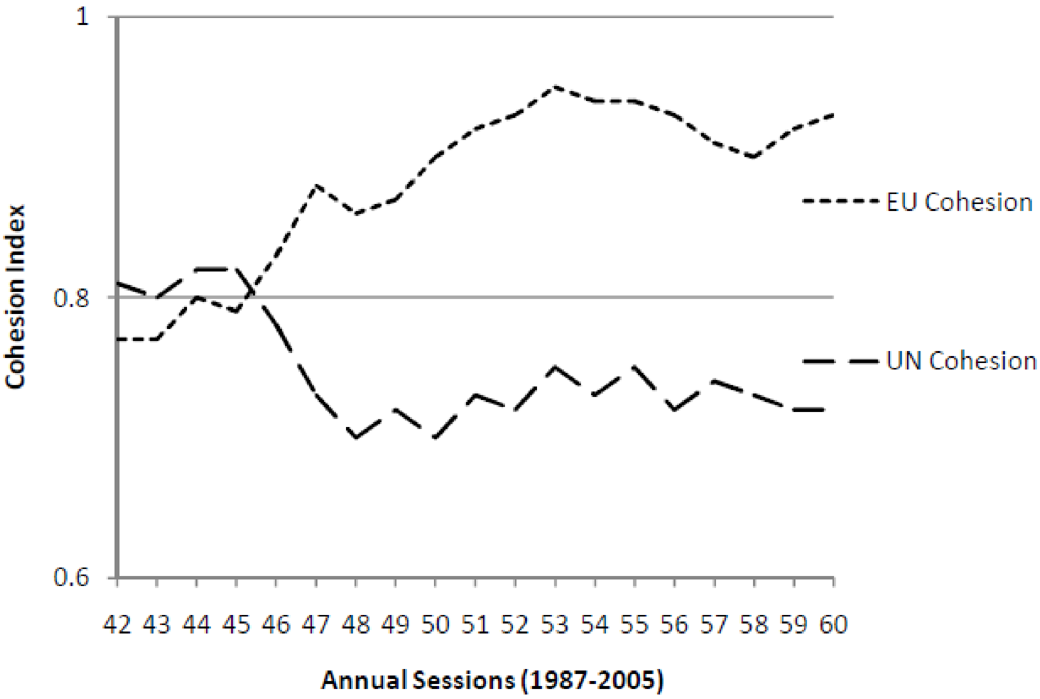
Burmeister & Jankowski's study (2014) also reinforces, and helps interpret, the findings of Rasch (2008), measuring coherence as a simple percentage of identical votes between 1988 and 2005, observed, on one hand, that the member states of the AL, ASEAN, CARICOM and

[15] In fact, a North-South cleavage is not easily discerned from West-East, conceptually. Countries of the 'Global North' are often referred to as 'Western countries,' while 'the rest' may be equated with the 'Global South' or 'the East'. I thank Paul Luif for making this point.

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), none of which have a foreign policy coordination mechanism comparable to the CFSP—showed markedly higher levels of cohesion than the EU (68.4%) (p.226–227). On the other hand, Rasch noted that the cohesion levels of the AU, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Council of Europe (CoE) and Group of Eight (G8) fell well below that of the EU percentage (p.229–230).

The EU's level of cohesion is also impressive when contrasted with the level (and trend) of overall UNGA cohesion. Birnberg (2009) notes a significant divergence between EU cohesion levels and overall UNGA cohesion following the Cold War, while they had varied hand-in-hand before (see *Figure 12* below).

Figure 12. Comparison between average EU and UNGA cohesion levels over time

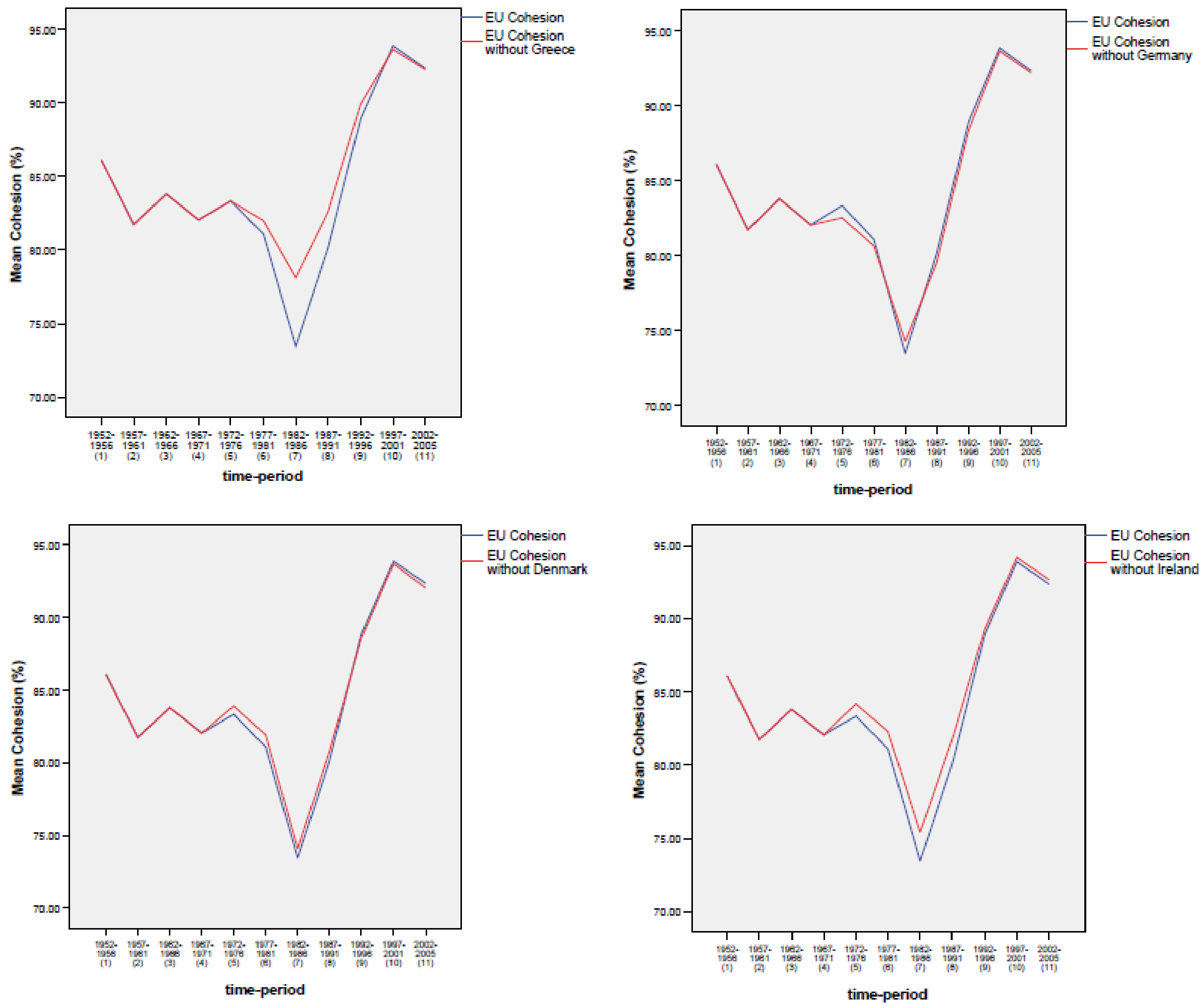


Source: Birnberg (2009:p.143)

In summary, it can be stated that, regardless of the exact methodology used to measure EU cohesion, studies have reported an initial drop, and subsequent steadily increasing trend in degrees of cohesion since the late 1980s and 1990s—during the increasing institutionalization of European Political Cooperation and, in particular, the emergence of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (Luif, 2003; Rasch, 2008; Birnberg, 2009; Hosli et al., 2010; Molnár, 2012; van Kampen, 2012; Jin & Hosli, 2013)—van Kampen (2012) also mentions the oil crises of the 1970s as a factor that 'led European countries to take up more common positions' from the 1980s (p.51).

Van Kampen (2012) demonstrated that a dip in cohesion in the early 1980s could be attributed primarily to the dissent of Greece, but also, to a more limited extent, Denmark, Ireland, and Germany (p.52)—see *Figure 13* below. Luif (2013) and Rasch (2008) also observed a plateau in the late 1990s; and occasional lows since then may be attributed to particularly contentious ad-hoc events, while they are also effected by historically dividing issues. Differences in cohesion prevail among EU member states as a function of the subject matter, with Middle East and human rights issues enjoying the highest degrees of unity.

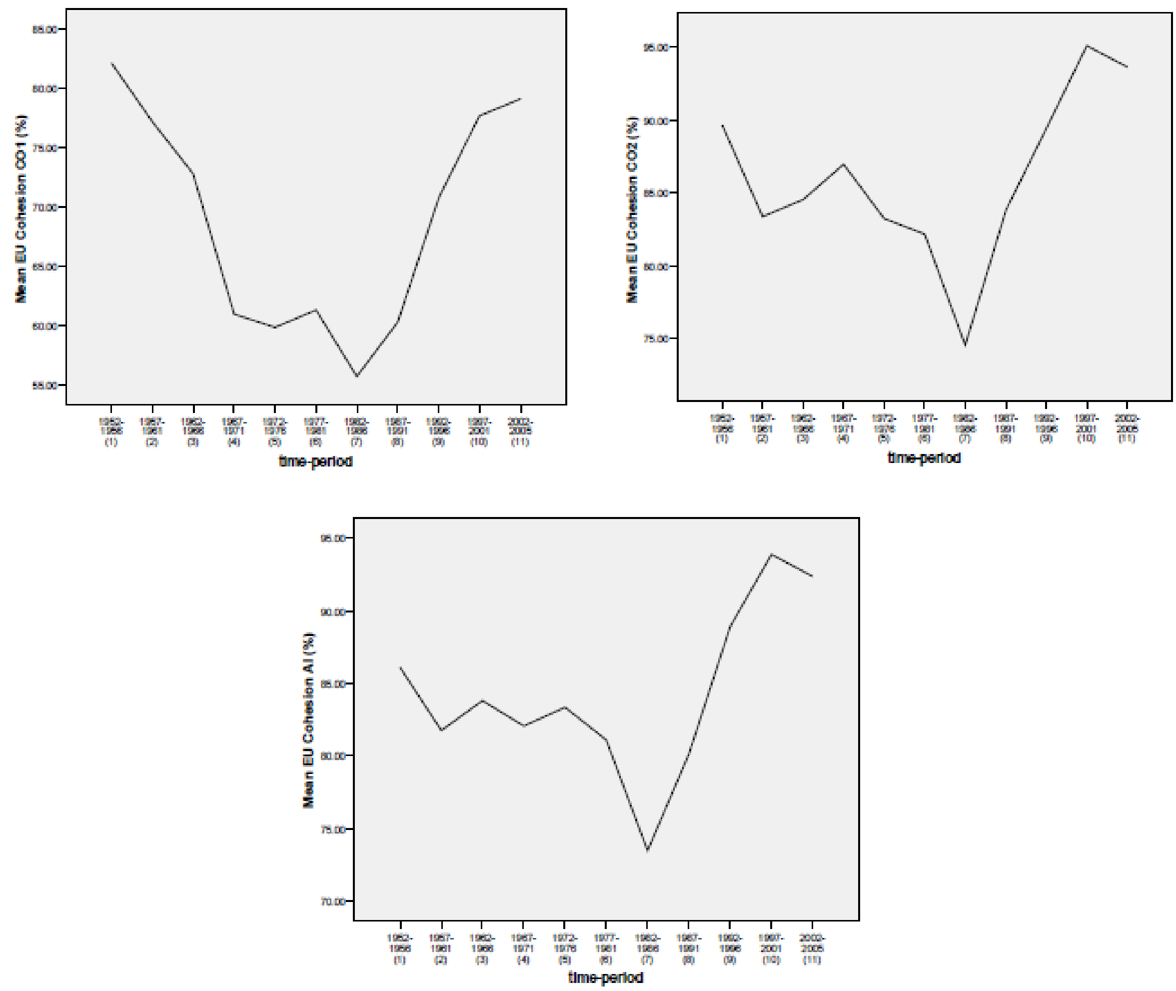
Figure 13. EU cohesion with and without Greece, Germany, Denmark and Ireland



Source: van Kampen, (2012:p.52)

The overall trend is also well-captured by van Kampen (2012), who used three different indices to measure cohesion levels (CO1, CO2 and AI, see above), all of which revealed a similar trend (see *Figure 14* below).

Figure 14. EU cohesion on all resolutions



Source: van Kampen (2012:p.43)

According to Young & Rees (2005), ‘in general it has been found that member states now vote more often together than they did in the past, [...] whether this reflects improved EU coordination and/or greater member state consensus on international issues is more difficult to assess’ (p.205–206, cited in Birnberg, 2009:p.51). This is a fundamental problem, which advises the researcher to be cautious: both simple descriptive statistics (which are not sensitive to changes in the agenda, i.e. extrinsic factors), and superficial qualitative methods (examining discourse or political declarations merely, which will typically attribute high cohesion to eminent coordination, i.e. intrinsic factors) may be unhelpfully slanted towards explanations based on intrinsic factors.

2. Europe and Human Rights at the UN

Global human rights issues are unique among the domains within EU external relations / foreign policy. Ubiquitous and elusive at the same time, human rights are present in the external dimension of EU policies across the board—including in trade, security, and development policy. The present Subchapter surveys the EU's 'actorness' on the UN human rights scene—EU member states' unity, impact, and perception as a bloc within the UN, i.e. the *external* aspect of EU foreign human rights policy.[16]

Human Rights in Foreign Affairs

To identify and delineate foreign human rights policy as a genuine policy field, one must first take a step back and inquire into the conceptual and substantive difference between EU 'external relations' and 'foreign policy'—ways in which they differ and overlap. Regarding the separation of 'foreign policy' from 'external relations' at the state-level, Birnberg (2009) provides a useful explanation. According to Allen (2002:p.46) and Morgan (1973) (both cited in Birnberg, 2009:p.26–27), 'high politics' or 'foreign policy' (i.e. political-military affairs) was traditionally easy to separate from 'low politics' or 'external relations' (i.e. economic and trade issues), but this separation has become increasingly blurry in more recent decades.

Moving away from the state-level to the supranational, this 'semantic' issue becomes even more vexing for students of the EU's foreign affairs, as traditionally 'high politics' issues, such as security and defense, or political affairs, had long been absent from the supranational aspect of the integration project. In fact, what might truly be referred to as '*EU* foreign policy' is a domain that is still largely centered around commercial issues, because this is the policy domain in which supranational institutions—primarily the Commission—have a decisive say. On the other hand, the policy referred to as *Common* Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is, in large part, made in the Council, largely based on qualified majority voting (QMV).[17] While QMV can be considered a supranational, or, perhaps more accurately, a *trans*national feature of EU decision-making, CFSP substance is, first and foremost, the product of multilateral negotiations by member states, and is much closer in nature to resolutions or joint positions adopted by any regional group of states. As such, it stands in stark contrast with foreign commercial policies, which fall under the purview of the Commission—a genuinely supranational actor.

[16] The *internal* aspect of EU human foreign rights policy (i.e. coordination among member states) falls outside the scope of analysis of this study.

[17] I am grateful to Paul Luif for suggesting this idea.

Against this already complex and puzzling semantic background, the Lisbon Treaty has conflated the EU foreign affairs terminology (if not the mandate itself) quite substantially, by establishing a European *External Action* Service (EEAS), headed by a High Representative for *Foreign Affairs and Security Policy* (italics for emphasis). The present thesis considers the EU's global human rights policy as 'foreign policy' or 'high politics' (rather than 'external relations' or 'low politics'), therefore the term 'foreign human rights policy' is used throughout.[18]

Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) is quite particular about the EU's global human rights 'mission,' as well as the central role assigned to the UN as a key forum for pursuing such a mission:

> 'The Union's action on the international scene shall be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement, and which it seeks to advance in the wider world: democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law.
>
> The Union shall seek to develop relations and build partnerships with third countries, and international, regional or global organisations which share the principles referred to in the first subparagraph. It shall promote multilateral solutions to common problems, in particular in the framework of the United Nations.'

As the previous Subchapter has demonstrated, human rights are the issue area—alongside Middle East issues—on which EU member states have shown remarkably high degrees of unity. Because of this exceptional level of unity, as well as the high salience of human rights on both the EU's and UN's agenda, this topic area has drawn the focus of a significant part of the scholarship on EU external relations / foreign policy. The following provides an overview of relevant scholarship, without attempting to discuss its full scope.

EU 'Actorness' and the EU at the UN

Since 1970, when the European Political Cooperation (EPC) was launched—largely setting in motion the coordination of member states' foreign policies—the nature of the EC/EU as a foreign policy actor has been the focus of ample scholarly attention. Some scholars have argued that what the articulation of foreign policy coordination as an outright ambition of the integration project has primarily brought about was a disconnect between the ambitions and institutional capabilities of the project, or a 'capability-expectation gap' (Hill, 1993). Through the 1990s, and the establishment of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy in the

[18] See Chapter II's account of the Rational Choice Institutionalist framework (under Subchapter 1. Theoretical Framework) for a substantiation of this semantic choice.

Maastricht Treaty (1992/1993), this gap appeared to have been narrowing, due, primarily, to the lowering of expectations—rather than an abrupt expansion of capabilities (Hill, 1997).

Ever since, conceptual accounts of the nature of the EU's international role have proliferated substantially. There is a broad consensus on the fact that the EU's 'presence' or 'actorness' is multidimensional—and variable along different dimensions—, but the operationalization and measurability of this actorness appears much less straightforward (Ginsberg, 1999:p.432). To take a highly relevant example, Balázs (2003) has classified EU actorness along three dimensions: (1) harmonizing member state interests, and representing them in the international community, (2) becoming a norm-setter and example for the Euro-Mediterranean microregion and its periphery, and (3) assuming a global role (p.809). For the purposes of this study, the EU's and its two studied subregions' 'actorness' at the UN are key concepts, which are discussed below.[19]

Laatikainen (2003) draws on Caporaso and Jupille's (1998) four criteria for the EU's international 'actorness,' and applies these criteria to ascertain the 'actorness' of the Nordic Group. The four criteria include (1) authority—legal, (2) cohesion—internally-consistent joint policy formation, (3) recognition—by other actors, and (4) autonomy—independence of interests from those of other actors (p.412). Laatikainen has argued that the accession of the two European Free Trade Area (EFTA) Nordic countries to the EU in 1995—which resulted in three of five Nordic countries becoming EU Members—'eclipsed' the prominent role the Nordic countries had played in the UN in previous decades, particularly in the dimensions of authority, recognition, and autonomy (2003). Since the Lisbon treaty, the 'Norden's eclipse' hypothesis would have lost some of its explanatory power, as evidenced by the high number of joint statements (Laatikainen, 2017).

Until the early 2000s, very few studies had been conducted on the topic of 'the EU at the UN,' i.e. the representation of the EU and its member states in UN fora. This apparent gap had been marked with repeated calls by renowned EU/UN scholars for a comprehensive research project (e.g. Laatikainen & Jørgensen, 2004) on this topic.

To address this gap, in 2016, the Jean Monnet Research Network on EU-UN Relations (EUN-NET) was launched, offering a three-year comprehensive research program on EU-UN issues. Based on continued research, a primary objective of the network is to 'deliver a data set on EU activities within the UN setting compiling data on oral interventions and voting records of EU member-states in the different fora under the UN aegis. (EUN-NET, 2017). EUN-NET includes

[19] Luckily, the object of this study provides ample measurability in the form of UN roll-call votes (see the first Subchapter of this Chapter).

many prominent EU-UN scholars among its consortium members whose scholarship has largely informed the present study—including Jan Wouters and Edith Drieskens of the University of Leuven (KU Leuven), Karen E. Smith of the London School of Economics and Political Science, Diana Panke of the Albert Ludwig University Freiburg, Madeleine O. Hosli of Leiden University, and Katie Verlin Laatikainen of Adelphi University.

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The point of departure for most studies conceptualizing the EU's actorness at the UN is the European Security Strategy (ESS), which expounded the concept of 'effective multilateralism' (European Union, 2003).[20] In the ESS, the EU outlined its vision of 'an international order based on effective multilateralism [my decapitalization]' in the following terms:

> 'In a world of global threats, global markets and global media, our security and prosperity increasingly depend on an effective multilateral system. The development of a stronger international society, well functioning international institutions and a rule-based international order is our objective.
>
> We are committed to upholding and developing International Law. The fundamental framework for international relations is the United Nations Charter. The United Nations Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Strengthening the United Nations, equipping it to fulfil its responsibilities and to act effectively, is a European priority.
>
> We want international organisations, regimes and treaties to be effective in confronting threats to international peace and security, and must therefore be ready to act when their rules are broken.' (2003:p.9)

While the commitment of the most advanced multilateral community to advance its achievements and way of life to the international level may appear common sense, Laatikainen & Jørgensen (2004) point out that, in doing so, the EU is habitually confronted with a highly conflicted political context; and its mere ambition to pursue the above goals in concert signals, 'probably better than anything else, the EU's aspiration to become a global player.' (p.1)

Another fundamental consideration that hinges on 'effective multilateralism' is that multilateralism—including *within* the EU—typically assumes the shape of conference diplomacy negotiations among *states*. Accordingly, the UN system, the most comprehensive multilateral system globally, is designed in a 'state-centric' fashion, with state actors doing the

[20] The ESS was replaced by the European Union Global Strategy in 2016. While the collocation 'effective multilateralism' was dropped, its essence remains among the priorities of the strategy: 'The EU believes in the force of law rather than the law of force. We support human rights, sustainable development, and access to global commons for everybody. A strong UN is the bedrock of the multilateral order, and the Sustainable Development Goals will drive reform in development policy.' See: http://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en/priorities-eu-global-strategy (accessed September 1, 2018).

negotiation, voting and policy-making. In fact, as Article 4 of the UN Charter (1945) expressly stipulates,

> '[m]embership in the United Nations is open to all other peace-loving states which accept the obligations contained in the present Charter and, in the judgment of the Organization, are able and willing to carry out these obligations.' (pt.1)

Departing from a similar premise, Laatikainen & Jørgensen (2004) note that 'it is unusual for a non-state to play [an important] role in the UN. Yet, the EU does precisely that and its presence and influence in the UN system has been steadily increasing.' (p.2) At the same time, the authors argue that EU member States fail to credibly to present an international identity on the basis of '*European* values [emphasis added by AM]' platform—in large part shared by the United States—, which the EU purports to embody and propagate (p. 2 and 7–9). The authors also note, however, that traditionally high voting 'coincidence' (which they measure as a simple ratio of identical votes) between the EU and U.S. dropped following 2000. In their finding, the American stance on Middle East and Cuba issues 'account[ed] for the dramatic fall in cohesion on human rights resolutions from 81.0% in 1995 to 34.3% in 2003' (Laatikainen & Jørgensen, 2004:p.10).

The fact remains, however, that even on human rights issues with a significant normative/substantive overlap, the EU and U.S. fail to coordinate stances in the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), the UNGA's subsidiary organ for dealing with global human rights issues (Wouters et al., 2014). At the HRC, the United States has been perceived as a strong player,[21] while the EU is perceived as inflexible and painstaking (Wouters et al., 2014)—the same way it is perceived in the mother forum of the HRC, the UNGA (Wouters & Chané, 2014).

Laatikainen & Jørgensen's (2004) most scarring critique is that, by claiming what they see as 'universal human rights' as 'European values', the EU risks becoming a factor in their delegitimization (p.11). What is more, the EU's rather open-ended support for 'multilateralism,' 'the UN,' or 'human rights' reveals that, rather than attempting to carve out a middle-power niche in defense of a distinctively European value-base, the EU is pursuing 'an ever expanding diplomatic agenda in the UN' (Laatikainen & Jørgensen, 2004:p.14); something that the Global South can scarcely be expected to be partner to.

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[21] In June 2018, the American UN Ambassador announced that the United States would be withdrawing from the HRC, arguing that the Council had failed to fulfill its mandate, being a 'cesspool of political bias' against Israel. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/19/us-quits-un-human-rights-council-cesspool-political-bias (accessed August 25, 2018).

To mention post-Lisbon accounts of the EU and multilateralism, Wessel completed an inquiry into the EU's new division of competences in concluding international agreements (2008), while Smith (2006; 2010) analyzed the cohesion and effectiveness of EU action in human rights at the UN. Gowan and Brantner's annual reviews of 'The EU and Human Rights at the UN' (2009; 2010; 2011) have focused on the most important highlights of each year's debates, as well as voting cohesion in the Human Rights Council.

Bressand (2011) has levelled the criticism that the EU's foreign policy priorities—as spelled out in the European Council Conclusions of September 16, 2010—are overly comprehensive to be considered anything other than a 'wish list,' (p.61). The author argues that, should the EU aim to exert proper influence, it should pursue more of a 'Machiavellian' agenda relying primarily on interests, rather than the 'Kantian' agenda of projecting its own internal experience to the global stage—particularly when dealing with other, traditionally 'Machiavellian' actors (2011).

Several authors have also pointed out that the EU is incapable of projecting its values, i.e. exerting influence on the global human rights agenda to any extent that would approximate its economic power, or contribution to the UN budget (Laatikainen & Jørgensen, 2004; Laatikainen & Smith, 2006)—the ultimate question of whether the EU remains merely a 'payer' or also becomes a 'player' (Wouters & Chané, 2014:p.22). Departing from a constructivist point made by Cooper regarding the self-reinvention of Japan and Germany after World War Two (cited in Laatikainen & Jørgensen, 2004:p.5), Laatikainen & Jørgensen (2004) assert that the EU's push for multilateralism reveals a (re)construction of European actorness—similarly to Duchêne's conceptualization of the EEC as 'civilian power' (1973), or Manners' more recent concept of the EU as a 'normative power Europe' (2002).

***

With a view to analyzing EU unity and action, one domain stands out from the policy fields studied in the literature: human rights policy, which has grown on the agenda of European integration since the early 1990s, and has shifted from its originally internal focus to a genuinely external (Hill & Smith, 2000:p.443; de Búrca, 2011:p.681). Foot, MacFarlane & Mastanduno (2003:p.8) have argued that, with an admirable record in internal concert within this realm, the EU is still considerably far away from 'effective multilateralism'—with its relative unity ('internal effectiveness') coupled with impaired 'external effectiveness', i.e., an incapability to influence the agenda (cited in Smith, 2010:p.225).

For the purposes of this study, this is remarkable in at least two aspects. Firstly, because ineffectiveness in the human rights realm has been linked to various obstacles such as 'accusations of double standards' (Hill, 2007:p.15) and neo-colonialism (Laatikainen & Smith, 2006:p.18), which act rhetorically against the EU's interest-representation. Secondly, as Puetter & Wiener (2007) have shown through the analysis of intra-EU division on responding to the Iraq crisis, contested norms do not provide a solid basis for concerted foreign policy actions per se. When the foreign policy actions in question are the norms themselves (i.e. when EU member states aim to externally represent human rights norms), this dilemma is especially vexing. A closely linked problem is the fact that it is difficult to compromise on fundamental norms because they are fundamental (Laatikainen, 2006:p.89).

One—procedural—impediment to the EU furthering its pull in the UN is that it is already rather overrepresented in terms of voting power. If the EU is to consider itself a monolithic entity, other UN member states might credibly argue, based on the state-centric essence of the UN, that one entity—no matter how important—should not dispose over 28 votes in the UNGA, or one third of the UNSC's membership (Laatikainen & Jørgensen, 2004:p.4). Laatikainen & Jørgensen (2004) note that Australia's recurrent complaints about EU-overrepresentation in the West European and Other Group (WEOG) are a telling sign of what to expect in the UNGA whenever the EU attempts a procedural appreciation of its status (p.4). One might easily argue that in a forum where 'the rest v. West' is the single most important cleavage, the EU is up against more challenging obstacles than the 'complaints' of like-minded Australia. This challenge is illustrated by the 'debacle' the EU faced as it pushed to be allowed to 'speak with an EU voice' in the UNGA, and unexpectedly hit a brick wall due to poor preparations and the opposition of a majority of UN member states (Emerson & Wouters, 2010).

Currently, ever since the adoption of UNGA Resolution A/RES/65/276 (2011) on the 'Participation of the European Union in the work of the United Nations,' the EU has enjoyed 'enhanced' observer status in the UNGA (EEAS, 2016). According to the resolution, the EU is 'allowed to be inscribed on the list of speakers among representatives of major groups, [...] invited to participate in the general debate [...] [in September]; [...] [and] [a]llowed to exercise the right of reply regarding positions of the European Union' (p.2). Since the adoption of the resolution, the permanent President of the European Council has replaced the Rotating Presidency (i.e. a member state representative) as the EU speaker in the UNGA general debate—the first week of the UNGA Session each September, featuring speeches by national leaders—in accordance with the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty (EEAS, 2016). In the remainder of the UNGA session, the EU is represented by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and the EEAS. It is to be noted that during the study period, the Rotating Presidency was still of primary relevance in terms of EU representation.[22]

[22] The Nordic and Visegrád presidency terms of the EU Council are summarized in *Table 6* in Chapter II (p.90).

‘Enhanced’ as the EU’s status may be, it is not nearly as ‘enhanced’ as EU member states had originally intended it to be. An earlier draft version of the resolution, presented a year earlier by EU member states, proposed that ‘the representatives of the European Union [...] be invited to speak[,] [...] be permitted to circulate documents, [...] make proposals and submit amendments, [...] raise points of order, [...] and to exercise the right of reply’ (Emerson & Wouters, 2010). Shortly after the introduction of the text, a counter-motion to adjourn the debate was put forward, propelled mainly by the African Group and Caribbean Community (CARICOM), which ended up passing with a slim margin of 76/71/26 (yes/no/abstain) (Molnár, 2012:p.325-326). The eventually adopted version falls many steps shorter than the original draft, providing little more than the opportunity to speak as *EU*, rather than merely as a group of UN member states.

Another practical and substantive issue hampering EU action in global human rights fora is the EU’s own human rights record, particularly its perception as double standard—e.g., notably, no EU member state is a member of the UN Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers (Wouters, 2013). Reportedly, when confronted with the issue, EU diplomats lack the proper talking points to even explain the reason for this. (2013:p.105) Another source of criticism is ‘external-external consistency [deemphasized by AM]’, i.e. the practice of cherry picking human rights issues to be addressed based on their political workability rather than substantive gravity or importance. (Wouters et al. 2014:p.98).

Other difficulties are rooted in the EU’s negotiation strategy. Galariotis, Gianniou & Iakovidis (2017) have studied EU negotiation patterns in human rights issues through an inductive approach relying on the EU’s action at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the UNGA Third Committee (GA3) as case studies. Their inductive approach stands in contrast with most other studies on this topic—including most of the examples consulted for the present dissertation. Based on these case studies, the authors elaborate a conceptual framework consisting of five stable factors of the EU’s negotiation strategy (coordination in Brussels, transnational burden-sharing, alliance-building, and outreach), as well as four context-specific parameters (EU status at the UN, EU negotiator competence, negotiating forum, and subject-matter of negotiation) which determine the success of the EU’s performance in multilateral affairs. Further research should be undertaken to comprehensively assess the impact of this framework on EU effectiveness and actorness at the UN.

Wouters & Chané (2014) have pointed out that the ineffectiveness of the EU in the UN can in large part be ascribed to the time-consuming nature of its internal coordination practice (p.21). The authors have found that, in general, state partners perceive the EU as a ‘slow and inflexible “bloc” [...] with painstakingly elaborated and hardly amendable positions’ (p.21). This is due to the intergovernmental nature of the CFSP, and the fact that the 'EU stance' is often the lowest common denominator of 28 different national stances, in which seemingly minor terminological or semantic decisions may have been arrived at through painstaking internal negotiations, leaving little leeway for the EU negotiator to compromise. In this internal bargaining, it is often difficult to separate the substance of a joint statement or resolution from 'the regional bigger picture' of what it means in terms of EU politics.

In fact, EU member states 'have fought over the use of nameplates, the phrasing of declarations of competence and the introductory clauses of statements.' (Wouters & Chané, 2014:p.21). A recurring irritation has regarded the delivery of statements (by the EU negotiator) 'on behalf of the EU' or 'on behalf of the EU and its Member States.' Theoretically, the Lisbon Treaty was supposed to have made this distinction clear: (1) in areas of exclusive EU competence, statements are supposed to be issued 'on behalf of the European Union'; and (2) in mixed-competency policies 'on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.' (EU Member State Diplomat, 2012 cited in Molnár, 2012:p.340). In practice, however, according to a 2011 report, the UK had already blocked over 70 EU statements in the UN based on their disagreement on the concept of 'mixed competencies'—insisting that statements be delivered 'on behalf of the European Union and its Member States' rather than simply 'of the EU.' (Borger).[23] While reportedly a source of considerable frustration among EU diplomats, this annoyance will likely be eliminated in the near future if the UK ends up leaving the EU.

[23] The delineation of these two categories is referred to in the literature as the 'boundary problem' (Smith, 1994).

3. Nordic and Visegrád in International Affairs

The present Subchapter provides a brief description of the literature on Nordic and V4 foreign policies within the EU and global multilateral context.[24] In advance, it might be noted that, as Lakatos (2013) has pointed out, human rights has become an increasingly prominent topic in foreign affairs over the last decades, and a country's human rights policy has become an integral part of the national 'brand' (p.49).

Nordic Multilateralism in Foreign Policy

Much of the literature on Nordic foreign policies (such as Larsen, 2005; Ólafsson, 1998) has been equivalent to the literature on small states' foreign policies. It is not the purpose of this section to provide an overview of this body of literature, as it will be discussed in detail later on in the dissertation.[25]

While there are numerous studies analyzing the role of the Nordic countries on EU foreign policy making, a significant portion of these studies tends to focus on the security realm (for example, Bailes, Herolf and Sundelius, 2006; Mouritzen, 1995). Other, more dated studies have analyzed the role of the Nordic countries on European and international human rights norms (Rosas, 1986; Saario, 1975; Schraum, 1971; Sundberg, 1997), however, this body of literature does not adequately address human rights policies as a domain within EU external affairs. A possible reason for this may be that human rights policy has only grown significantly on the agenda of European integration since the early 1990s, and has shifted from its originally internal focus to a genuinely external (Hill & Smith, 2000:p.443; Búrca, 2011:p.601).

Multilateralism has deep roots in the Nordic area. The Treaty of Co-operation between Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden (the Helsinki Treaty, 1962) established a Nordic labor market, passport-free zone, and various instances of cultural and social cooperation. Besides its primarily intra-regional focus, however, the original Treaty also established a format of multilateral foreign policy cooperation, insisting that parties 'should, whenever possible and appropriate, consult one another regarding questions of mutual interest which are dealt with by international organizations and at international conferences' (Article 30 cited in Laatikainen, 2003:p.414).

The Nordic penchant for multilateralism did not initially translate into an appetite for regional supranational institutions, however. All five countries would stay away from the EC in its early

[24] Details of the cooperation frameworks, with particular emphasis on their external dimension, are given in Chapter II, Subchapter 2—Institutional Framework.

[25] See Chapter II, Subchapter 2—Institutional Framework.

decades, and opt for the largely intergovernmental European Free Trade Area (EFTA) instead. Denmark was first to join the EC in 1973—only to secure a handful of prominent opt-outs regarding security and defense policy, citizenship, and police and judicial cooperation two decades later in the Edinburgh Agreement (1992), after Danish voters rejected the Maastricht Treaty (Ingebritsen, 1998:p.5). According to some authors, such as Jerneck (1993) and Ingebritsen (1998), in the 1960s and 1970s, Sweden refrained from joining the EC because of the supranational character of European Political Cooperation, which it saw as an infringement on its national autonomy. Others have suggested that the reasons were related to negative expectations regarding the competitiveness of the domestic economy.[26]

While the Nordic states; all of them small, open, and prosperous economies, have been anchored to the European project economically, this remained in contrast with their level of political cooperation—except that of Denmark—with integrated Western Europe until the end of the Cold War.[27] Particularly in political-military affairs, the Nordics, especially Finland and Sweden, were pressed to balance between the West and the Soviet Union during most of the Cold War (Ingebritsen, 1998). From 1985, however, European integration 'became' domestic policy in the Nordic countries, with all five of them adopting increasingly European agendas from that point onwards (Ingebritsen, 1998:p.185). Subsequently, Sweden and Finland reoriented their Cold-War policy stances, and eventually joined the EU in 1995; Norway rejected EC/EU membership in two referenda (1972 and 1994), and Iceland applied for membership in 2009, and was granted candidate status in 2010, but has since withdrawn its application.

In many ways, as already noted in the review of Laatikainen (2003) in the previous section, the Nordic countries have been among the most ardent proponents of multilateralism—both at home, and on the international stage. As one of the earliest and most pro-active groups of UN member states, they have coordinated their UN policies since the early days of Nordic Cooperation, as well as supported the UN globally, earning the Nordic 'brand' a global reputation when it comes to the choice of multilateralism in the broadest range of cases possible. Throughout the decades, it can be argued that the Nordics have become known as 'the strongest cheerleaders of the UN system' (Laatikainen, 2003:p.415).

While the 'natural' groupings in the UN are the regional groups—such as WEOG—, these groups mainly serve the election of limited UN bodies; while the EC/EU and the Nordic Group have long pursued successful cooperation among each other (Luif, 1995:p.273). In fact, the

[26] I acknowledge Paul Luif for making this point.

[27] The change in attitude can also be argued to be rooted in industrial/economic reasons—to do with recession. I once again acknowledge Paul Luif for this point.

Nordic countries have been recognized as some of the most active donors and facilitators of the UN's development since the early days of the organization.

The first two Secretaries-General of the UN came from the Nordic countries—Trygve Lie (1946–1952) from Norway; and Dag Hammarskjöld (1953–1961) from Sweden, who established the institution of the Secretary-General's 'good offices.' From the 1970s onward Nordic citizens have filled approximately 10% of all senior management positions, including Special Representatives and Assistant or Under-Secretaries General (Hansen, 1991 and Urquhart, 1991 cited in Laatikainen, 2003:p.410). The Nordics have also been pro-active in financial contributions to UN humanitarian programs: for example, their aggregate contribution to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) amounts to 40% (Laatikainen, 2003:p.410).

Students of the Nordic countries have generally observed a high degree of value cohesion among the group. With regard to the Nordic value base vis-à-vis the UN, Laatikainen (2003) lists the following components: 'a strong multilateralist ethic, a small state commitment to and appreciation for the concept of collective security, and the externalization of the norms of Social Democratic governance.' (p.414)

V4 Foreign Affairs

The literature on V4 foreign policies falls, for the most part, in the historical-descriptive domain, and is virtually inseparable from the literature on the history of the V4 itself.[28] This may be attributed to two main factors.

The first such factor can be linked to the historical-descriptive nature of studies. Often, these studies are written by authors who might be referred to as 'close observers' of Visegrád. Sometimes, this 'closeness' is palpable only in a geographical sense (i.e. that the authors are residents of the subregion), but in other cases the 'expert observers' of the V4 are indistinguishable from the generation of experts who shaped the cooperation in the 1990s and early 2000s—they are not external students of the V4 interested in their foreign policy only. This dissertation, void of any historiographic aspirations, and limited in its scope and methodology, does not draw on the scholarship of these authors—although they do undoubtedly appear in abundance among the sources used by the authors consulted for this study—therefore, they have indirectly informed the analysis in this study.

[28] See Dangerfield (2014) for one list of such studies, including on 'security-building,' 'EU accession' and 'personal recollections' (p.72–73, footnote 1). Other accounts in the historical-descriptive tradition consulted for this dissertation have included Fitzmaurice (1998); Kaźmierkiewicz (2005) and Kiss (1996).

The second factor that may explain the indistinguishable nature of V4 history and V4 foreign policy (in the literature) is that the V4 (V3 at the time), was brought about by a genuinely foreign affairs-type aspiration. The primary goal laid out by the founding fathers of the Visegrád Group was to expedite the integration of its members into the Euro-Atlantic policy and economic space (see Visegrad Declaration, 1991).

Short analyses and press reports on V4 foreign affairs are abundant in the Visegrád-country media. The V4 is a widely-present 'brand' in its member states, featuring as the topic of social- and political-themed conferences and round-table discussions, as well as on a multitude of events supported by the Visegrad Fund (VF), or by the incumbent V4 presidency. Frequent 'joint declarations' of V4 officials on foreign policy topics are routinely published (since 2006) in the 'From the Visegrad Group' section of the V4 website,[29] as well as in the news sections of the respective foreign ministries. V4 presidency programs, as well as the 'annual reports' on the year-long presidential terms are also shared on the Visegrád Group website each year—starting from the 1999/2000 Czech presidency.

'Think Visegrad' is a VF-funded think tank network comprised of eight 'core member' institutions from the V4, as well as numerous 'cooperating members' including universities and NGOs, with which many of the involved research fellows are affiliated. Most of the analyses produced by this network are internal to the VF or V4 governments and not made public. However, the researchers involved in the network are regular speakers at foreign affairs-themed events across the V4 and abroad, therefore, a large part of these expert narratives is broadly accessible for interested audiences.

Scholarly literature takes a limited account of EU-level or global implications and outputs of V4 foreign policies. This might easily be explained by the fact that the V4 is a significantly younger, significantly less integrated, less institutionalized and less well-funded framework for cooperation than Nordic Co-operation.[30]

Perhaps the most thorough, and, through the 2000s, sustained effort at studying V4 EU affairs and the V4's role in EU foreign affairs has been that of Dangerfield. In a series of articles (2008, 2009, 2014), he has described the recalibration of V4 efforts from accession ambitions before joining the EU in 2004 to a different agenda post-2004. More specifically, Dangerfield (2014) delineates three different phases in V4 cooperation, each vis-à-vis the EU: 'cooperation' (1990–

[29] See http://www.visegradgroup.eu/from-the-visegrad-group (accessed July 18, 2018).

[30] For an overview of the major institutional differences between the two subregional groups, please refer to Chapter II, section 2. Institutional Framework.

1993), 'hibernation' (1993–1998), pre-accession 'revival' (1998–2004) and the post-accession phase (2004–).[31]

A piece of literature that warrants referencing when studying V4 foreign policies comprises works by Mattila (2009) and Hosli, Mattila & Uriot (2011). These studies have used a spatial model to analyze roll-call voting in the Council of the European Union between 2004 and 2006—after the accession of the Central European member states. They have found that the previously existing North-South cleavage in the EU 'policy space' has been complemented by an additional cleavage: between old and new member states, making the EU policy space 'two-dimensional.'

Hosli, Mattila & Uriot (2011) provide a number of key implications (if limited due to the temporal scope of the authors' inquiry) for this study about the substance of the EU policy of new member states (including the V4):

1. new members are observed to have a relatively low likelihood of dissenting from the Council majority—although the authors assume that this propensity would disappear beyond the timeframe of their study (p.1266);
2. left or right political alignment only affects the propensity for dissent among old member states—with left-wing governments more likely to oppose the Council majority (p.1267);
3. the 'size' of states affects the dissenting propensity of new member states only—with larger states more likely to oppose the Council majority than small ones (p.1267);
4. 'net receivers' from the old member states are less likely to go against the Council majority—while new net receivers are more likely (p.1267);
5. new member states with pro-EU public opinions tend to oppose the Council majority more often than countries with Euro-skeptic constituencies—the effect is the opposite among old member states (p.1267).

[31] For more on the V4 as a foreign policy institution, as well as its changes throughout the above phases, see the analysis in Chapter II, Subchapter 2. Institutional Framework.

4. Key Implications and Research Gap

This section concludes the review of the relevant scholarly literature on EU voting in the UN; the EU and human rights at the UN; and the EU and foreign affairs of the Nordic and Visegrád groups. The key implications for the research trajectory of the dissertation are summarized in the following.

It has been noted that, while there is a multitude of studies (that employ a large variety of approaches) studying voting blocs in the UN, the academic community is far from being united on how to treat voting data, or what conclusions to draw from any given type of quantitative inquiry. On one hand, there is a group of authors, already since the early days of research on the topic, who have employed so-called dyadic indicators to measure policy distance in terms of differences on singular votes. These authors would aggregate these differences and express them as a measure of voting cohesion, or distance between countries, or blocs of countries. Several of these authors have focused on European countries. On the other hand, there have been some studies focusing on voting behavior in the UN more broadly, which have employed inferential statistics to model country or bloc policies in the UN.

Very broadly, it could be observed that students of voting behavior—whether in the descriptive or inferential-statistical school—have seldom been interested in voting cohesion or voting alignments in the UN in and of themselves. Rather, the UN, and particularly the UNGA, has been evoked to represent 'global affairs'—assuming that the high incidence of voting together in the UNGA (over an extended period of time) could be interpreted as a strong and stable similarity between policy preferences more broadly. Although UN voting records are clearly a unique and comprehensive source of data, it has been demonstrated that these data must be used with caution for inferential purposes regarding the bigger picture of global affairs.

Reiterating the point that methodologies, and approaches to making sense of conclusions have varied a great deal across studies, some methodological judgement calls may be observed that any student of voting behavior in the UN would be pressed to make. The first such methodological judgement call emerges around the question of how to treat the partial split between abstentions and other votes (yes or no); the second around the treatment or weighting of absences; the third around the range of votes (not) to be included in calculations of cohesion.

Four dyadic indices of voting alignment have been surveyed for the purposes of the dissertation. The first index is the 'Index of Voting Cohesion' (IVC) originally used for UN voting in a classic study by Lijphart (1963), which has been used or served as a point of departure for studies of UN voting since. The IVC is a measure of policy distance, which expresses cohesion as a ratio of agreement between pairs of voting agents on singular votes.

The second index is the Cohesion Ratio (CO), computed by Hosli et al. (2010) based on van Kampen (2007). It expresses cohesion as a standardized version of the 'average vote' on any given resolution. The third index is the Defection Ratio applied by Hosli et al. (2010), drawn from Iida (1988) and Volgy, Frazier & Ingersoll (2003)—which is the inverse of the Cohesion Ratio. The fourth index is the Agreement Index (AI)—originally devised by Hix, Noury & Roland (2005) to measure party cohesion in the European Parliament, and subsequently employed by Birnberg (2009) to measure EU cohesion in the UNGA between 1992 and 2004; and later adapted and adopted by Jin & Hosli (2013) for the same purpose. Using the AI, authors divide the vote option chosen by the highest number of countries on an issue by the total number of votes cast on the issue, and, according to Burmester & Jankowski (2014), what these authors end up expressing is the degree of divergence from a majority vote.

Studies of cohesion in the UN have tended to divide resolutions/votes based on the issue area that they represent (such as security, decolonization, Middle East, or human rights). Several studies surveyed for this dissertation have observed human rights to be among the issue areas on which the EU group is the most cohesive (but not particularly effective). As a counter-example, van Kampen has found no significant different in cohesion levels on issues considered 'high politics' such as security issues, and 'low politics' such as human rights issues (p.46).

Authors have also compared country groups to each other based on how they vote in the UN. Jin & Hosli (2013), on top of studying EU cohesion in and of itself, have employed one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to compare mean cohesion values across regional groups. The expectation that the EU should exhibit the highest level of unity—it being the most institutionalized integration framework, and the only one with a common foreign and security policy—was not confirmed by these tests. The authors (Jin & Hosli, 2013) further used two-sample t-tests to ascertain whether the Treaty of Lisbon had a positive effect on EU voting cohesion in the UNGA. To this end, they compared mean voting cohesion values in UNGA sessions directly before and after the adoption of the Treaty of Lisbon (2007), and, in an extension, its entry into force (2009). In keeping with the earlier findings of Molnár (2012), none of these tests yielded significant results.

Jin & Hosli (2013) also hypothesized that with the EFTA enlargement (1995) and Eastern enlargement (2004/2007) of the EU, group cohesion in the UN would decrease. To test this hypothesis, they used two-sample t-tests to compare EU cohesion levels at UNGA sessions before and after all three rounds of accessions. None of these tests returned significant results. These findings reaffirmed Luif (2003), who had found that the then-candidate former Soviet bloc countries, which had voted with the Soviet Union until 1989/1990, had changed their voting behavior with the end of the Cold War, and approximated the EU consensus already in the 1990s.

Other authors have also found no evidence for the 1995 EFTA (Rasch, 2008) or 2004/2007 Eastern enlargements (Rasch, 2008; Jakobsson, 2009) negatively impacting cohesion—in sharp contrast to the 1981/1986 Southern enlargements (Greece 1981, and Portugal and Spain 1986), which would result in a markedly high number of contested votes in each subsequent UNGA session. Johansson-Nogués (2004), who studied the thirteen then-candidate Eastern member states before accession, found that these countries had adjusted their votes on 'values laden' issues to the EU mainstream much more so than on other issues. Studying voting in the EU Council between 2004 and 2006, Hosli, Mattila & Uriot (2011) found that new members had a relatively low likelihood of dissenting from the Council majority (p.1266). At the same time, Mattila (2009) and Hosli, Mattila & Uriot (2011) have observed that the previously existing North-South cleavage in the EU 'policy space' has been complemented following the Eastern enlargement by an additional cleavage: between old and new member states, making the EU policy space 'two-dimensional:' North-South and East-West.

As a counter-argument to Jin & Hosli's negative findings on EU cohesion vis-à-vis other regional groups (2013), Burmester & Jankowski (2014) have demonstrated through ideal point estimation that the cohesion of other groupings (all of them being non-Western) is high because they are typically aligned with each other on a non-Western policy stance. Ultimately, the authors concluded that a comparison of the EU with other regional groups is also not particularly instructive, because the latter are united on one side of the 'rest v. West' line of conflict, not because of a meticulously coordinated foreign policy—consequently, they cannot be considered to approximate the relevance of the EU in terms of being a genuine foreign policy actor. Notably, departing from their observation that, in the UNGA, everything is filtered through the lens of West v. non-West, Burmester & Jankowski (2014) have called into question whether the UNGA was in fact suitable as a global testing ground for state policies in the first place.

For semantic purposes which have had implications for the subject matter of both scholarship and policy, the literature review has noted that 'high politics' or 'foreign policy' (i.e. political-military affairs) used to be traditionally easy to separate from 'low politics' or 'external relations' (i.e. economic and trade issues), but this separation has become increasingly blurry in more recent decades Allen (2002:p.46) and Morgan (1973) (both cited in Birnberg, 2009:p.26–27). In fact, at the EU-level, what might be referred to as genuine '*EU* foreign policy' is a domain that is still largely centered around commercial issues, because this is the policy domain in which supranational institutions—primarily the Commission—have a decisive say. It has been noted that the Lisbon Treaty further conflated the EU foreign affairs terminology (if not the mandate itself) quite substantially. Following on from the literature review, and for semantic consistency, the present dissertation considers the EU's global human rights policy as 'foreign policy' or 'high politics' (rather than 'external relations' or 'low politics'), regardless of the exact wording used to refer to it.

To investigate the EU's relevance as a foreign policy actor—or 'actorness,' Hill's classic assertion of the 'capability-expectation gap,' or the disconnect between the ambitions and institutional capabilities of the EU, has been evoked (1993). It has been observed that there is broad scholarly consensus on the fact that the EU's 'presence' or 'actorness' is multidimensional—and variable along different dimensions.

Several authors have pointed out that the EU is incapable of projecting its values, i.e. exerting influence on the global human rights agenda to any extent that would approximate its economic power, or contribution to the UN budget (Laatikainen & Jørgensen, 2004; Laatikainen & Smith, 2006). From the multilateral policy fields studied in the literature with a view to EU unity and action, one domain stands out: human rights policy, which has grown on the agenda of European integration since the early 1990s, and has shifted from its originally internal focus to a genuinely external (Hill & Smith, 2000:p.443; de Búrca, 2011:p.681). Foot, MacFarlane & Mastanduno (2003:p.8) have argued that, with an admirable record in internal concert within this realm, the EU is still considerably far away from 'effective multilateralism'—with its relative unity ('internal effectiveness') coupled with impaired 'external effectiveness', i.e. an incapability to influence the agenda (cited in Smith, 2010:p.225).

In the European Security Strategy (2003), the EU's 'self-proclamation' as a foreign policy actor, EU member states outlined their vision of 'an international order based on effective multilateralism.' However, it has been noted that the UN system, the most comprehensive multilateral system globally, is designed in a 'state-centric' fashion, with state actors doing the negotiation, voting and policy-making. Laatikainen & Jørgensen (2004) have also noted that 'it is unusual for a non-state to play [an important] role in the UN. Yet, the EU does precisely that and its presence and influence in the UN system has been steadily increasing' (p.2).

At the same time, the authors have argued that EU member states have failed to credibly present an international identity on the basis of '*European* values [emphasis added by AM]' platform—in large part shared by the United States (Laatikainen & Jørgensen, 2004:p.2 and 7–9). Rather than attempting to carve out a middle-power niche in defense of a distinctively European value-base, the EU has been observed to be pursuing 'an ever expanding diplomatic agenda in the UN' (Laatikainen & Jørgensen, 2004:p.14), which has put the EU ad odds with the Global South.

Laatikainen & Jørgensen (2004) have identified the over-representation of the EU in terms of voting power as a major procedural impediment to the EU furthering its influence in the UN. In addition to this, a substantive issue hampering EU action in global human rights fora is the EU's own human rights record, particularly its perception as double standard (Wouters, 2013). Wouters & Chané (2014) have pointed out that the ineffectiveness of the EU in the UN can also be ascribed to the time-consuming nature of its internal coordination practice (p.21). Other difficulties identified are rooted in the EU's negotiation strategy.

Upon the review of the literature on Nordic foreign policies, it has been noted that much of it (such as Larsen, 2005; Ólafsson, 1998) has been equivalent to the literature on small states' foreign policies. Throughout the decades, the Nordics have become known as ardent multilateralists, or 'the strongest cheerleaders of the UN system' (Laatikainen, 2003:p.415). The Nordic penchant for multilateralism would not initially translate into an appetite for regional supranational institutions, however: all five countries stayed away from the EC in its early decades, and opted for the largely intergovernmental EFTA instead. Denmark was first to join the EC in 1973—only to secure a handful of prominent opt-outs two decades later (Ingebritsen, 1998:p.5). Regarding the international role of the Nordic countries vis-à-vis that of the EU, Laatikainen (2003) has argued that the accession of the two EFTA Nordic countries to the EU in 1995 'eclipsed' the prominent role the Nordic countries had played in the UN in previous decades, although recent joint statements may be signaling a decrease in this eclipse (Laatikainen, 2017).

As regards the literature on the V4, it has been observed that scholarship on V4 foreign policies is virtually inseparable from the literature on the history of the V4 itself. This has been attributed to two main factors: (1) the historical-descriptive nature of studies, and (2) that the V4 (V3 at the time of the 1991 Visegrad Declaration), was brought about by a genuinely foreign affairs-type aspiration. In addition to this, scholarly literature has taken a limited account of EU-level or global implications and outputs of V4 foreign policies, which may be explained by the fact that the V4 is a significantly younger, significantly less integrated, less institutionalized and less well-funded framework for cooperation than is the Nordic Group.

As a conclusion, it can be noted that an abundance of scholarly studies have analyzed group voting in the UN, with the EU group drawing much of the focus. Studies have also analyzed and conceptualized the nature of the EU as an international actor in the human rights domain. The voting behavior, as well as policy preferences and 'actorness' of EU subregional groups remain understudied. This dissertation aims to fill part of this gap by studying the voting pattern and agenda of the Nordic and Visegrád groups in the human rights field, where Europe most often speaks with one voice, but is described as failing to exert global influence.

CHAPTER II:
STUDY FRAMEWORK

The second Chapter of the dissertation outlines the theoretical, institutional and research frameworks of the dissertation.

The first Subchapter addresses and synthesizes implications of three distinct, but, for the purposes of the dissertation, closely interrelated theoretical fields within the scholarly literature: Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), Rational Choice Institutionalism (RCI), and small states literature. Following these accounts, a theoretical inquiry is conducted into the concept of 'smallness' in International Relations, with a view to establishing the validity of small states literature for the states that form the objects of the study. Subsequently, smallness is placed in the regional context of the study—i.e. the European Union.

Drawing on both primary and secondary sources, the second Subchapter provides a brief overview of the Nordic and Visegrád groups from an institutional perspective.

Informed by the research gap identified in Chapter *I*, and by the theoretical and institutional accounts of Chapter *II*, the third Subchapter provides an introduction to the research framework of the dissertation, in which the data analysis (described in Chapter *III*) is undertaken. This Subchapter includes a description of the puzzle that serves as the motivation for the inquiry, as well as stating the research questions and elaborating the hypotheses of the study.

1. Theoretical Framework

The present Subchapter outlines the theoretical context of the dissertation, which forms the conceptual background for its research framework and hypotheses. The first section of the Subchapter briefly introduces the *poliheuristic* toolkit of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), focusing on its relevance to the dissertation, and making reference to the Rational Actor Model (RAM) of FPA. The second section evokes Rational Choice Institutionalism (RCI) as a theory of integration, and its relevance to the present study. It also explains the approach of the dissertation to rational choice as a heuristic, rather than as a rigorous or exclusive conceptual framework. The third section draws selectively on the literature on *small states,* as well as employs a few practical examples to demonstrate the elusiveness of the concept of *size* in International Relations (IR). Finally, the last section offers some 'size'-related conclusions regarding the seven countries that form the object of the dissertation, informing the hypotheses which are presented later in this Chapter. The primary aims of the Subchapter are (1) to embed the dissertation in its broad theoretical school of thought, and (2) to inform its hypotheses, which are presented later.

Foreign Policy Analysis

While foreign policy analysis is arguably as old as statecraft itself, Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), as an academic discipline, can largely be considered a product of behavioralism[32] in political science. Greatly popularized through the Cold War, and, in large part, by Allison's classic study (1969) on the Cuban missile crisis, FPA scholars have set out to approach foreign policy in a structured, and, as far as possible, objective fashion, as opposed to more historical-narrative or philosophical approaches, which would largely operate with narratives, stories or ideologies. In contrast to these more traditional approaches, FPA-type schools have endeavored to produce scientific models to understand, and, in some cases, predict foreign policy actions. For the purposes of the present dissertation, insights from FPA, as well as RCI (in the subsequent section) and small states literature (in the section following RCI) are employed to inform the hypotheses of the study.

***

The novelty of Allison's approach was derived from the fact that, through collecting existing interpretations of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, he identified and categorized the assumptions and analytical tools employed by different foreign policy analysts, 'producing largely implicit conceptual models that have significant consequences for the content of [analysts'] thought'

[32] See https://www.britannica.com/topic/political-science#ref848558 for a definition of behavioralism (accessed February 15, 2019).

(p.689). Allison's three classic conceptual models are: the all-time time most popular 'Rational Policy Model' (*Model I*, referred to in this dissertation as Rational Actor Model—RAM), the 'Organizational Process Model' (*Model II*) and the 'Bureaucratic Politics Model' (*Model III*).

RAM, in its classic Allisonian conception, focuses on national governments, or states—'conceived as a rational, unitary decision-maker' as the actors of foreign policy (Allison, 1969:p.694). To point to the limits and biases contained in both the 'unitary' and the 'rational' assumptions are perhaps the biggest novelty of Allison's article. His Models II and III primarily challenge the 'unitary' assumption, however, in that they either consider foreign policy the 'output' of an interplay of different sub-national actors, such as different government offices or departments (Model II), or as the 'outcome' of the politicking of individual actors, i.e. human beings (Model III).

Arguably, one of the great achievements of Allison's scholarship was to challenge, and prompt a move away from, the 'unitary' view of states as foreign policy actors. That is to say that, according to Allison, state foreign policies are much better understood as 'outputs' or 'outcomes' of intra-state processes (strategically impacted by inter-state interactions) than as singular 'decisions' made by 'China,' 'the United States,' 'Poland' or 'Hungary'—almost as if they were individuals. While such shortcuts—literary devices at their best, and signs of major misguidedness at their worst—prevail in journalistic accounts of foreign policy,[33] they have, since Allison, become largely more difficult to defend in an academic context.

To structure and analyze along models, and to thereby strive for higher levels of parsimony and objectivity, is a complex endeavor which may not be possible in all cases, due to limits of available information, or other constraints. At a minimum, however, a rigorous definition of terms (e.g. What is meant by a national 'actor'—is it the president's office, foreign ministry, electorate? What is meant by 'foreign policy'—is it decision, output or outcome; or, in terms of content: communications, trade volume, military cooperation, etc?) is necessary, so as to not oscillate between different levels of meaning for the same terminology, or, at the end of the day, across different models of FPA, without giving proper notice.

[33] See, for example, 'China is angry, but what can it do about North Korea?', at https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/sep/04/china-what-can-beijing-do-about-north-korea-donald-trump-kim-jong-un (accessed February 15, 2019).

In conjunction with the actors and foreign policy substance of FPA models, it is useful to consider a closely-related dimension of FPA scholarship: that of 'levels of analysis'. Breuning (2007) distinguishes three different levels—the *individual level*, *state level*, and *system level* (see also *Table 1* below):

> The individual level of analysis focuses on leaders and decision makers in an effort to explain foreign policy. (p.11)
>
> The state level of analysis focuses on factors internal to the state as those that compel states to engage in specific foreign policy behaviors. (p.12)
>
> [T]he system level of analysis focuses on comparisons (and interactions) between states. This level of analysis asks questions about the relative power of states. (p.13)

Table 1. Levels of analysis and the study of foreign policy

Level of Analysis	Foreign Policy Focus
Individual	Options/Decisions
State	Behaviors
System	Outcomes

Source: Breuning (2007:p.12)

As in the case of FPA models, to limit oneself to one of the three levels of analysis might not be feasible for the purposes of a single study (including the present study); however, it is important to note, and spell out, that addressing different levels of analysis may be done with largely different 'tools' or heuristics. At the individual level, the 'toolkit' of psychology including means to understanding individual perceptions, and cognitive processes together with their biases, might be most appropriate. At the state level, however, case-study-inspired political science approaches, especially ones that focus on institutions, may be appropriate choices, while psychological analysis (except perhaps social-psychological insights, to a limited extent) may not yield meaningful conclusions. At the system level, again different tools would be warranted: ones that focus on strategic interactions between states, and the institutions that govern inter-state relations. A key consideration for a rigorous study in FPA, regardless of its object or methodological affinity, is that it should not conflate tools appropriate for different levels of analysis, or make definitions, units, or processes travel liberally across these levels.

***

Like most of the mainstream established literature, the present study uses RAM as it theoretical point of departure, but also takes into account the known challenges and limits to that model pertaining to the 'unitary' assumption (as explained above). In addition to this, while the *individual level* is not part of the inquiry, it is born in mind throughout that negotiators and decision-makers are, at the end of the day, when traced back to the smallest unit, human beings, therefore the role of psychological factors, such as biases[34] are considered to be ubiquitous, and to be pointed out when seen as playing a role. That said, it is to be noted that the levels of analysis of the study are *state* and *system*, which preclude the use of cognitive or even social-psychological models for the most part.

Notably, most FPA endeavors in the IR or comparative politics vein (as opposed to the psychological or sociological), walk a fine line between the *state* and *system* levels of analysis. These studies will be focused on the output/outcome of a state's internal processes as acts of foreign policy, as well as the strategic interactions of these national (or supranational) foreign policies in the international system.

At the intersection of the state and system level of analysis sits the metaphor of the *two-level game* (Breuning, 2007:p.13). Putnam (1988), in his article that established the metaphor in IR and FPA, used the concept to grasp the meaningful, and, in some cases, counter-intuitive ways in which the domestic political sphere influences foreign affairs, and vice versa. Putnam's account can be regarded as an alternative path to challenging the 'unitary' assumption of RAM, which he refers to as the '"state-centric" genre' (p.432): not through superseding RAM by a Model II or Model III type approach, but by synthesizing it into a more inclusive model that is capable of accounting for both domestic processes (whether organizational, bureaucratic-political or even electoral) while also taking into account the singular outcome/output that is foreign policy. The two-level game metaphor is capable of surveying the foreign affairs domain as home to explanatory variables for the domestic, as well as the other way around.

The two levels of Putnam's metaphor for analyzing negotiations that lead to an international agreement (with implications for domestic constituencies) are as follows:

1. 'bargaining between the negotiators, leading to a tentative agreement; call that Level I.'
2. 'separate discussions within each group of constituents about whether to ratify the agreement; call that Level II.'

(p.436)

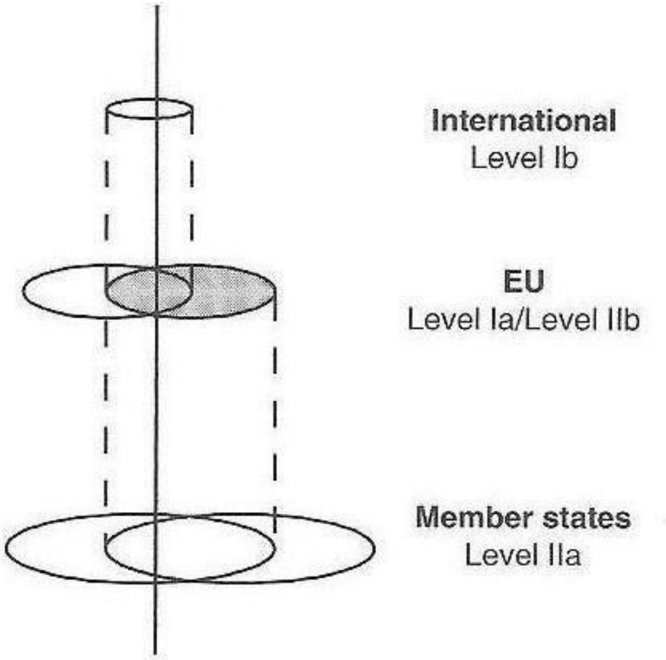
One important cornerstone of Putnam's metaphor is his use of the concept of the 'win-set,' which he defines as the set of possible outcomes at Level I that would be ratified at Level II (p.437)—that is, versions of the international agreement that would be ratified domestically. Putnam's pro-intuitive observation is that, with all other factors equal, the bigger the win-set, the more likely the ratification of the agreement domestically (p.437). His perhaps most important counter-intuitive finding, however, pertains to *perceptions* of the win-set: a smaller

[34] These include, but are not limited to, cognitive anchors, attributional bias, analogical reasoning, cognitive dissonance, band-wagoning and underdog effect (Marton 2013). See also Janis (1980) on groupthink or Maoz (1990) on group-induced shifts.

perceived win-set yields a stronger bargaining power to the international negotiator—he or she could assert 'I could never get it accepted at home' not only regarding truly unsellable agreements (i.e. that fall outside the win-set), but to unwanted/less favorable ones, as well (p.440).

Young (2003) has applied Putnam's two-level game metaphor to the EU's external economic relations. In this institutional set-up, two two-level games may be considered to be at play, which, taken together, can be understood as a three-level game (see *Figure 15* below).

Figure 15. Three-level game

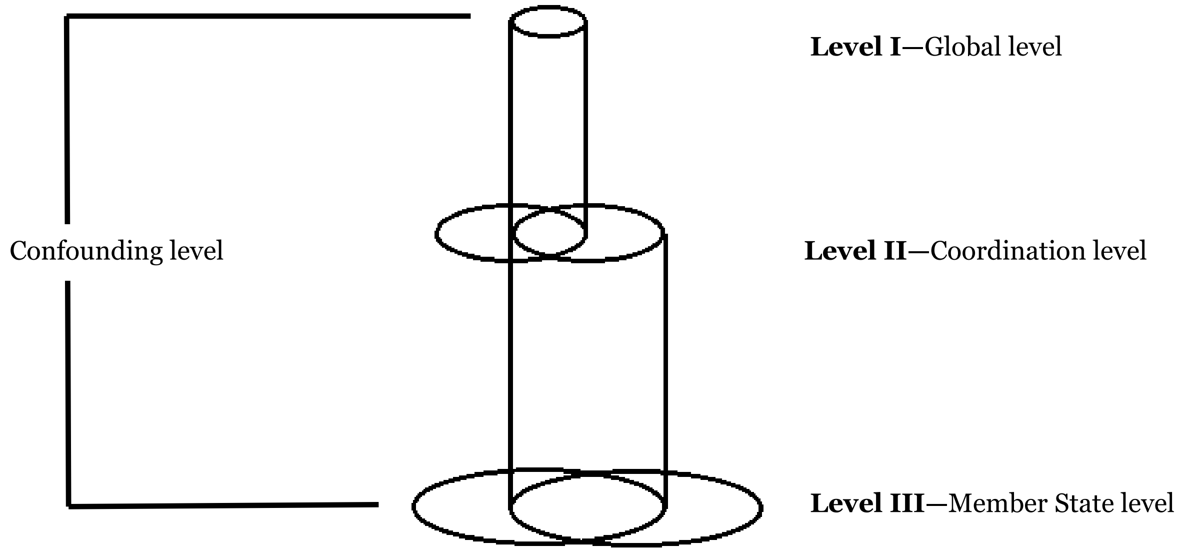


Source: Young (2003:p.56)

Extending Putnam's argument, Young notes that, *ceteris paribus*, negotiations involving an EU-level will imply smaller win-sets than two-level negotiations, i.e. domestic–international (2003:p.56). Abstracting from EU external relations, the same argument might be made for international negotiations with an intervening—supranational—level of coordination, during which a joint stance is concluded, and/or a joint negotiator or agent is appointed for the international level.

The metaphor may be applied in the present study as having three levels: *Level I—Global level* (or UN-level); *Level II—Coordination level* (regional or subregional—i.e. Nordic or V4), and *Level III—Member State level*. An additional, confounding level (i.e. 'Member State at the UN'-level) is created by the state-centric nature of the UN, and the fact that states ultimately end up voting (oftentimes also speaking) individually, even on issues where there is an EU consensus (see *Figure 16* below). The metaphor may be employed to identify the scenes of strategic interaction, as well as actors, and, in its empirical merit, locations of data for the study (as described later in the present Chapter).

Figure 16. Three-level game metaphor applied to the present inquiry



Source: A.M. (based on Young, 2003)

Rational Choice Institutionalism

A more recent heir to the classics of the rational-choice school, Rational Choice Institutionalism (RCI) is—alongside historical and sociological institutionalism—regarded as one of the 'new institutionalisms' in political science (Hall & Taylor 1996). RCI builds on, and at the same time departs from, the assumptions of *classic* (*homo economicus*-type) rational-choice approaches, which would propagate individual utility-maximization as the driving force of social interactions. Originating in U.S. Congressional politics, RCI relies on the observation that, while legislators' preferences, as well as pieces of legislation tend to be complex in nature, alliances do not change abruptly from one vote to another. Rather, there is a stable, *institutional* logic to these alliances, which overwrites fragmented individual utility calculations (Hall & Taylor 1996, Pollack 1996).[35]

New institutionalisms have been applied to European integration to explain the disconnect between collective action outputs at the integration-level, and individual member state preferences. In an effort to overcome the classic intergovernmentalist–neofunctionalist divide in the field of European integration studies, RCI as a theory of integration blends the institutionalist heuristic that *institutions take on a life of their own* with the rational-choice appetite for utility maximization calculations. As such, it gives consideration to both agenda-

[35] See also endnote 30 in same for seminal 1970s-1980s' RCI scholarship.

setting by international institutions and principal-agent delegation by member states (see Kassim & Menon 2011), thanks to which it has become the 'dominant approach to the study of the Commission and other executive actors,' for whom delegation is particularly relevant (Pollack, 2006:p.39).

The present dissertation is not a theory-driven effort—it is an empirics-driven effort that seeks to understand and explain the policy of its objects. Rather than aiming primarily to generate hypotheses from a theory (such as RCI) to test the applicability of that theory in a certain policy arena, the aim of this section is to embed the dissertation in a theoretical context, thereby lending conceptual consistency and eloquence to its analytical insights. Therefore, while RCI is deemed as particularly relevant to the inquiry at hand, it is employed *heuristically*, and as part and parcel of a broader rationalist FPA agenda, 'follow[ing] a positive heuristic [...] point[ing] toward the study of strategic interaction within institutional constraints and away from other questions such as socialization, deliberation and identity change' (Pollack, 2006:p.50).

Pollack has pointed to two main criticisms of RCI, targeted also at other new institutionalisms. The first such criticism derives from multi-level governance theorists, and asserts that institutionalisms are biased towards formal institutions at the expense of informal policy networks (1996:p.453). For the purposes of the present study, this might be a relevant point, as the importance of informal channels of diplomacy, both at the subregional and regional levels, as well as at the UN, might supersede that of formal institutions (such as the UN General Assembly) in some cases. However, rather than defeating the cause, this criticism is useful in exposing the boundaries of the research, which indeed limits itself to the observable (and, for the purposes of the quantitative part of the research, the 'machine-readable') of institutions.

The second criticism mentioned by Pollack is the assertion that the new institutionalisms focus on EU-level institutions as channels of 'exogenous' forces of integration, as opposed to touching the deep 'endogenous' factors of the integration project (1996:p.453–454). This, is undoubtedly a fundamental ontological problem, which, as Pollack himself notes, is 'shared by intergovernmentalism, policy network analysis, and multi-level governance models, as well' (1996:p.454).

Ultimately, an investigation into the origins of preferences falls outside the scope of the rational choice approach, including from the scope of this study. In Bueno de Mesquita's words,

> The rationality condition sets out the theorist's view of how people are likely to select actions given their motivations or preferences; it says nothing about the content of those preferences (Zagare 1990; Jackman 1993). Constructivist models are more suitable for trying to ascertain how preferences form. Rational choice models are better suited as models of action. (n.d.)

If this study succeeds at making a case for the EU subregional groupings as simple agents or vehicles of the integration process—rather than as its deep causes—it will already have given them more credit than is customary. Its aim is to produce a 'model of action,' as opposed to becoming a theory of preference-formation.

Small States in International Relations

The concept of *small states* has been subject to myriad different approaches and many vivid debates in IR and political science. While a comprehensive review of the relevant small states literature largely exceeds the limits of the present dissertation, it is helpful to give a brief overview of what is meant by *small*—and especially its relevance to the European and multilateral stage where the present inquiry positions itself.

Size is a relative measure—including in international affairs. No state is *big* or *small* in and of itself; such categories are conceivable in relation to (1) a significant other—or others—; or (2) a certain benchmark—or benchmarks—set by the informed observer. While some examples of scholarly work do make an effort to define this *other* or *benchmark*—often in terms of impressively well-measurable variables, such as population, geographic area, or GDP (for example, Thorhallsson, 2000)—, the elusiveness of the *smallness* concept remains striking.

Situated at the other end of the scholarly spectrum are studies which do not aim to draw up a classification based on any rigid (external) criterion. Such studies might be referred to as *constructivist*. See, for example, Hey's definition of smallness: 'if a state's people and institutions generally perceive themselves to be small, or if other states' peoples and institutions perceive that state as small, it shall be so considered' (2003:p.3). For the constructivists, smallness—a social construct—is in the eye of the beholder; but the identity of the beholder remains an open question.

Observers, journalist, politicians and others operating in the political domain but outside the knowledge-generation logic of social and political science might be considered special, arguably non-academic, but at the same time highly salient versions of such 'beholders.' As a possible problem to the theoretical field, Christmas-Møller (1983) has pointed to

> considerable tension between the low scientific status of the word [small state] and the much higher [explanatory] status it has acquired in everyday language. [...] On the one hand, there are many statements by scholars denying the concept any analytical meaning and, on the other hand, the word is used every day by statesmen, editors and the public not only to describe the political world but to explain behavior. (p.35)

That said, even within the scholarly domain, a significant body of (more dated) writing does not see the definition problem as part of its mission. Particularly for the authors of edited volumes (such as Alapuro et al. 1985; Hanf & Soetendorp 1998; Lejins & Ozolina 1997; or Reiter & Gärtner 2001), in which the authors of various chapters focus narrowly on single-state phenomena—either as case studies or in comparative perspective—defining what small states are is not among their aspirations. Instead, topics from the internal or external lives of these states are intended as revelatory factors of the fundamentals of small state workings. Popular topics in these volumes include security policy, subregional or European integration, gender issues, economic policy or social policy.

Notably, much of the classic small states literature was written by scholars from the Nordic countries, from a Nordic perspective—often in the fashion of the scholarship preceding the 'behavioralist turn' in political science. To write on Nordic, Baltic or Benelux countries, or, sporadically, on one or another state from Central or South-Eastern Europe—particularly in comparative perspective—may have been considered by academic audiences as writing *ipso facto* on small states. This scholarship has existed, and indeed produced many insights on the mechanics of small state policies, without getting bogged down in problems of definition.

It will be demonstrated below that defining *small* and, in doing so, pointing to a line, significant other, counterfactual or other device of reference compared to which smallness can be established, can often and easily become subject to accusations of arbitrariness. At the same time, avoiding the necessity of providing a definition will mean working with a different, and perhaps more formidable danger: that of completely exempting from scrutiny any acts of inclusion in or exclusion from the small state category.[36]

To draw 'small-state conclusions' from a study—case-study, comparative or otherwise—is to inevitably work with the underlying assumption that those conclusions will be, at least in part, reflections on the smallness of the objects of the study. In these studies, smallness is a factor, or an independent variable (often confounded) for any of the phenomena or outcomes / dependent variables studied. The 'small states'-approach therefore suggests, even without spelling out any related assumptions, that it has an aptitude to reveal insight about the phenomena studied which will travel well to (some) other small states, but not to the non-small. It is for this reason that definitions, or, in lieu of them, a careful and thorough selection of cases is of paramount importance.

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[36] For example, Hanf & Soetendorp include in their 'small states' volume (1998) a piece by Morata, which studies the relationship between integration and modernization, focusing on the case of Spain. Such case choices—especially without due explanation—might appear as being driven by the logic of academic networks rather than scientific considerations.

Caveating the means of verification for *size*, it might be observed in general that, when a scholar, policy-maker or observer asserts that a state is *small*, they inevitably work with a very specific overall assumption. This assumption is that—in relation to the subject-matter at hand—the state in question belongs to a certain category (NB: together with other states), which is somehow inferior or deficient—in a dimension somehow captured by the concept of *size*—to the scale or category of entities one typically associates with the given subject matter.

International Relations, the academic discipline, has traditionally placed its focus on the study of Great Powers. Starting from the birth of the international system—whether one considers it to be the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, antiquity, or ancient times—, and arguably maintaining this approach during the proliferation of IR as an academic discipline starting in the mid-twentieth century, most academic interest has traditionally circulated around the Great. The Great, at any given point in IR history, could launch (or prevent) wars, forge (or dissolve) alliances, set up (or upset) balances of power, define economic trends, and so forth. Evidently, the *size* of states traditionally drawing the attention of IR, was *big*.

In this regard, smallness stands in stark contrast with the traditional object of the discipline—the state of being big, and all that goes with it. One does not need to associate oneself too closely with the constructivist school of thought, however, to acknowledge that *size* in IR—unlike its perhaps closest 'relatives' in mathematics, physics or day-to-day life (length, weight, mass, girth, etc.)—is a social construct, employed either consciously or involuntarily to states in the international system. While *small states* may be indeed be smaller than their significant others (big states, The Great, etc.) along some measurable scale or scales—such as territory, population, gross domestic product, or another—, none of these measurable dimensions of smallness define a state as having any particular *size*, let alone as downright *small*.

Size in IR, in fact, appears much more of a qualitative measure (measured at the nominal, or at best ordinal level) disguised as quantitative (interval- or even ratio-level—'You could fit 202 Irelands in Russia,'[37] etc.). Arguably, quite often, size in IR is purported to have something to do with *importance*, *power* or *influence*—approximated, at best, by any of the above indicators, or similar measures. The following section reviews examples of indicators to illustrate this point.

Proxies for Size

Annual population data are available from the online database of the World Bank (2016). The population dataset—last updated on October 30, 2016 at the time of writing—contains total

[37] From http://www.dailyedge.ie/how-small-is-ireland-1626264-Aug2014/ (accessed January 25, 2019).

population data of 222 countries and territories, as well as several country groups lumped together for political considerations (e.g. *European Union*), or data collection purposes (e.g. *Lower middle income*). Total population data are recorded in the data set for every year starting with 1960.

One of the benchmarks determined to set the *big* apart from the *small* on any given indicator is the mean (see, for example, Panke, 2010, who takes the average number of votes in the EU Council as a cutoff value—as described in detail later in the section). In such studies, *big states* might be interpreted as bigger than average, and *small states* as smaller than average. Unless there are states with values corresponding to the average (*average states*?), such a taxonomy allows for two categories only. In this case, the size variable (including as derived from the population variable) will be binary—and may be regarded as ordinal in its level of measurement.

Continuing the example of the population variable, one might examine the arithmetic mean of all states' populations, i.e. the *global mean*. Looking at this global mean, it is striking—if not surprising—that its value increased more 2.5-fold in the period between 1960 and 2016—going from 14.4 million to 36 million. This also means that some of the big states of the world of the 1960s must have become small on the population criterion alone, while their position relative to the World Order (i.e. *importance*, *power*, *influence* or the like) may not have changed as fundamentally.

With regard to Europe, and working with something of an anachronism, it can be observed that the only current EU member state to lose *big state* status in terms of population in these 57 years was Romania—arguably without changing much in its aptitude relative to the state of world affairs. At the same time, all but one of the objects of this study—the V4 and Nordic EU members—were *small states* throughout this period, based on the population mean benchmark (see *Table 2* below): Poland, which, by the mean benchmark, was clearly among the *big* in 1960, barely makes the cut in 2016. On a related note: the three small states of the Visegrad group—the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia—, taken together, could, with a stretch of the concept, be considered *big* in 1960 based on population alone (their collective figure being close to 23.7 million—almost double the 1960 mean; but, by 2016, their 25.8 million total population does not even approximate the mean of the present day. Similarly, the Nordic countries (including non-EU partners Iceland and Norway) collectively went from almost 20-million *big* in 1960 to 27-million *small* in 2016—with all of them gaining in their respective population figures at a rather convincing rate.

Table 2.
V4 and Nordic countries by population and global population mean, 1960 and 2016

Country	Population (1960)	Population (2016)
Poland	29 637 450	37 948 016
Hungary	9 983 967	9 817 958
Czech Republic*	9 602 006	10 561 633
*Iceland***	*175 574*	*334 252*
*Norway***	*3 581 239*	*5 232 929*
Sweden	7 484 656	9 903 122
Denmark	4 579 603	5 731 118
Finland	4 429 634	5 495 096
Slovak Republic*	4 068 095	5 428 704
Global mean	**14,462,624**	**36,037,445**

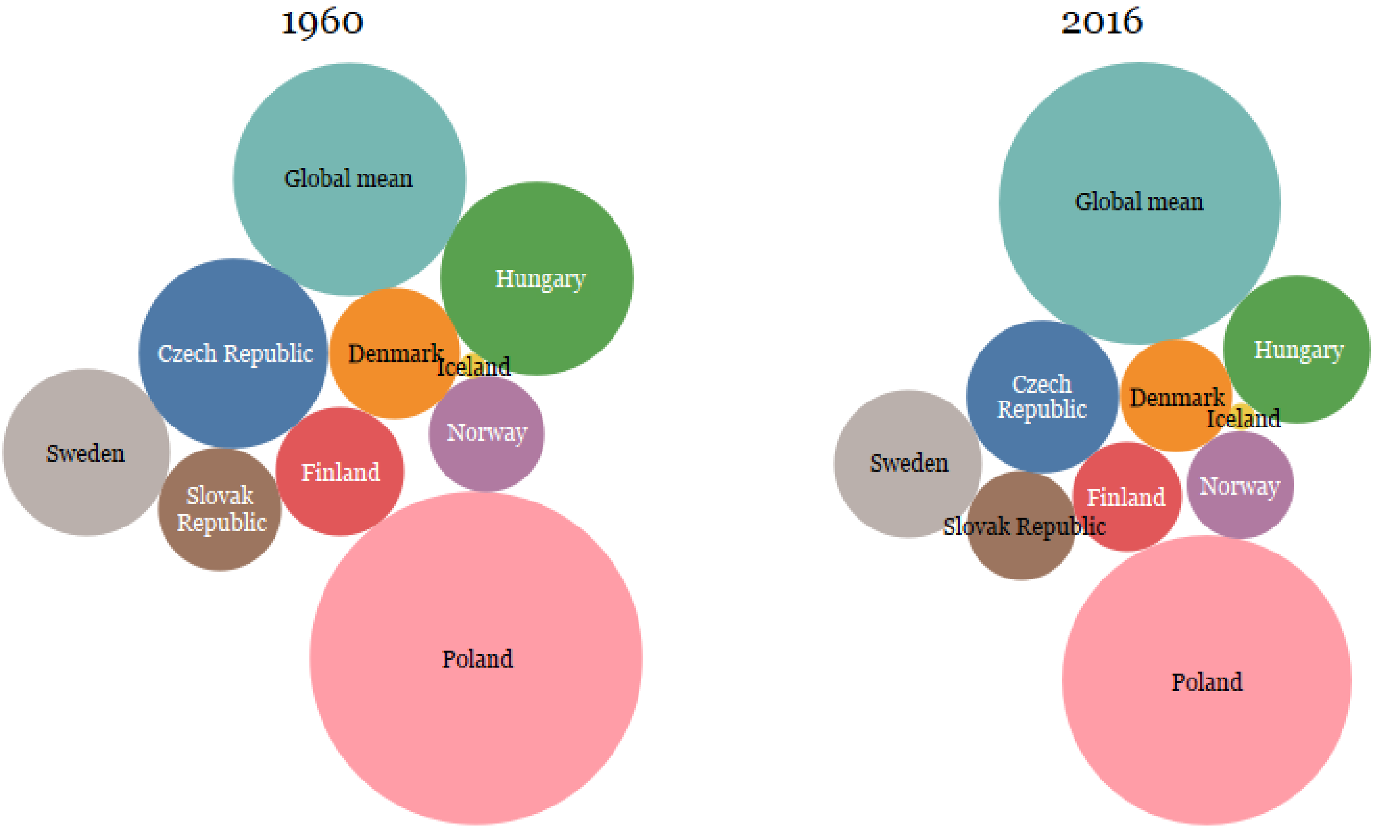
** The Czech Republic and Slovak Republic were part of federal Czechoslovakia 1918–1993 (including in 1960), yet, in a thankfully consistent way with the purposes of this study, the World Bank data consider the current country formations as units of analysis.*

*** Norway and Iceland (non-EU members) are not part of the object of inquiry of the dissertation, and are included here for demonstrative purposes only.*

Source of data: World Bank (2016); table compiled by A.M.

By plotting these figures as bubble charts, *Figure 17* below visualizes how the V4 and Nordics became *smaller* from 1960 to 2016, based on their relative *size* compared to the global population mean.

Figure 17. Visualization of V4 and Nordic populations alongside global mean, 1960 and 2016



Note: Notably, the countries have 'shrunk' in relative size if compared to the global population mean.
Source of data: World Bank (2016); figure compiled by A.M.

While the overall range and mean of the population variable do give some limited insight into its distribution, another important descriptive statistic to be taken note of is the standard deviation of country populations from the global mean (STDEV.P[38]).

$$\text{STDEV.P(population)}_{1960} = 57{,}653{,}752$$

$$\text{STDEV.P(population)}_{2016} = 136{,}484{,}805$$

The values above inform the observer that, for comparative purposes, the utility of the mean statistic decreased considerably from 1960 to 2016, as the deviation (i.e. the average squared distance of each country population from the global mean) more than doubled in this period. In other words, in 2016, the average squared distance of a country's population figure is over

[38] Calculated by A.M. with the respective function in Microsoft Excel.

twice as large as the corresponding value for 1960. Consequently, the present-day global mean can be considered much less of an informative cutoff point between *big states* and *small* than it could have been considered in 1960.

Ultimately, while population data do provide an objective measure of a certain variant of *size*, the decline of Europe and its subregions in terms of relative population volume leaves the observer with little to conclude in terms of the status of European states as *powers*. Arguably, a more qualitative approach in-context, such as studying Nordic neutrality or the functioning of the institutions of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) or Warsaw Pact in 1960, or the study of the EU or its subregions closer to 2016 (as the present study does), promises to paint a rather more colored picture of *size*.

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To take another example of measurable size, gross domestic product (GDP)—contested as the indicator may be as a marker of economic development or prosperity—is regularly used as shorthand for the advancement or *power* of the economy. Panke grasps GDP as a 'proxy for available financial means;' and, focusing on the relationship between economy and foreign policy, she notes that

> [t]he higher the value of goods and services produced within a particular country in a given year, the greater the tax income and the greater the state budget that it can use to staff ministries and negotiation delegations and to provide them with administrative support and expertise. (2012b:p.316)

While the suggested link is credible (i.e. richer countries have more resources at their disposal to endow their foreign policy machinery with), it is, by no means self-evident, as the connection between the state budget and foreign policy (i.e. budget lines associated with the foreign ministry and other diplomatic entities) is at best a fuzzy one, which greatly differs across countries.

Consequently, highly-developed countries of relatively small territory and population, and relatively small economy but high GDP per capita (such as the Nordic countries), might 'punch above their weight' by spending an overall high proportion of their GDP on their foreign affairs. It is not the goal of this section to posit that economically big states are not better-positioned than economically small states to pursue an effective foreign policy. Rather, the aspiration is to point out that the relationship between budget and foreign policy is akin to *economies-of-scale* in that it becomes marginally cheaper to run an effective diplomatic service—to invest in human resources, use expensive technology, adapt and set up new structures, etc.—if a state is already big and heavily invested in statecraft. At the same time, an economically small state may choose to invest heavily in foreign affairs *despite* its relative expensiveness. When and to what extent this happens effectively, so as to produce counterintuitive results, or when small states effectively leverage resources to ‘punch above their weight’ is one of the probable major reasons why IR studies would choose to focus on small states in the first place.

Panke identifies three different comparative obstacles that financial constraints impose on economically small states:

1. smaller ministries with fewer experts to make policy;
2. smaller delegations with fewer diplomats to represent the policy; and
3. the smaller deterrent power of any threats of unilateral action.

(2012b:p.316)

With regard to GDP as an indicator of wealth, it is meaningful to note that economic data comprising the index are reliably and regularly collected and scrutinized—and done so for all the countries in the world. Therefore, they provide a comparable measure—of gross domestic product[39]—nothing more, nothing less. As the purpose of this section is to position its objects on fairly well-measurable scales of *size*, it will make use of the GDP index as a useful heuristic, noting but not addressing to any degree the methodological contestation of the indicator itself, whose exploration arguably exceeds the limits of the dissertation.[40]

GDP data are readily available from the World Bank (2017) in a standardized, reliable and machine-readable format. *Table 3* below summarizes the GDP figures of the countries studied for this dissertation, on purchasing power parity (PPP). PPPs can be used as ‘currency converters to generate volume measures with which to compare levels of *economic performance, total consumption, investment, overall productivity* and selected private household expenditures [italics added by A.M. for emphasis]’[41]. *Performance* and *productivity* appear to be concepts somewhat closer to the qualitative aspect of *size* than the sheer number of inhabitants a country counts on its territory—i.e. the population variable presented previously.

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[39] According to the expenditures approach, GDP=C+I+G+Ex-Im, i.e. consumption (C), investment (I), government expenditure (G) and net exports (Ex-Im).

[40] Notably, one might choose an indicator that includes the income of the residents of a country generated in other countries (Gross National Product—GNP), or to include it only if spent in the country of residence, together with the income generated by resident foreigners that is spent in-country (Gross National Income—GNI). However, arguing the case for any of the above considerations goes well beyond the scope of the present dissertation, whose goal at this point, as stated in the main text, is to take GDP as a heuristic that is comparable across the globe, so as to demonstrate the inadequacy of any single indicator to determine a cutoff point between ‘big’ and ‘small.’ It is noted that a similar exercise as the one presented in the text, could be expanded using GNP, GNI, or other macroeconomic indicators.

[41] http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Purchasing_power_parities_(PPPs)_-_calculation_and_uses (accessed March 1, 2018).

Table 3. V4 and Nordic countries by GDP (PPP), 2016

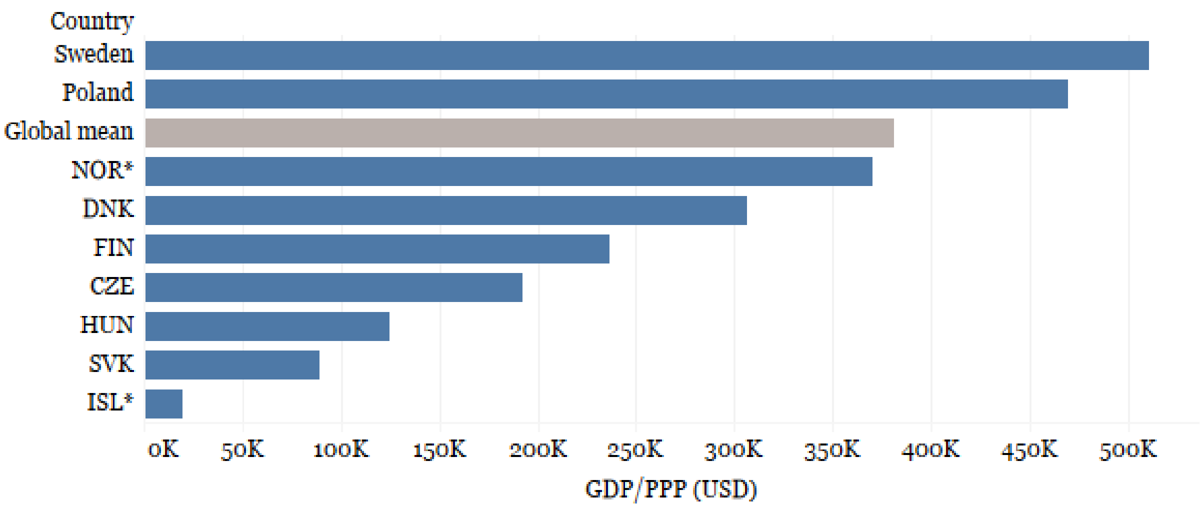
Rank	Country	GDP (PPP) 2016 (USD)
22	Sweden	511 000
23	Poland	469 509
29	*Norway**	370 557
34	Denmark	306 143
43	Finland	236 785
48	Czech Republic	192 925
56	Hungary	124 343
63	Slovak Republic	89 552
105	*Iceland**	20 047

** Norway and Iceland (non-EU members) are not part of the object of inquiry of the dissertation, and are included here for demonstrative purposes only.*

Source of data: World Bank, 2017; table compiled by A.M.

The mean of GDP (PPP) worldwide, based on the World Bank dataset—is USD 381 336, which might—as in the case of population—be employed as a cutoff point between *big* and *small*. Other, perhaps arbitrary cutoff points might also be considered, especially as the distribution of GDP (PPP) per country is very uneven worldwide—so much so that it is difficult to plot all individual values in an easy-to-access format. In a limited effort, *Figure 18* below shows the GDP of the V4 and Nordic countries compared to the global mean value.

Figure 18.
V4 and Nordic countries by GDP on PPP (2016), compared to the global mean value



**Norway and Iceland (non-EU) included for reference only.*

Source of data: World Bank (2017), visualized by A.M.

In regard to the distribution of the GDP (PPP) variable worldwide, its standard deviation can be observed:

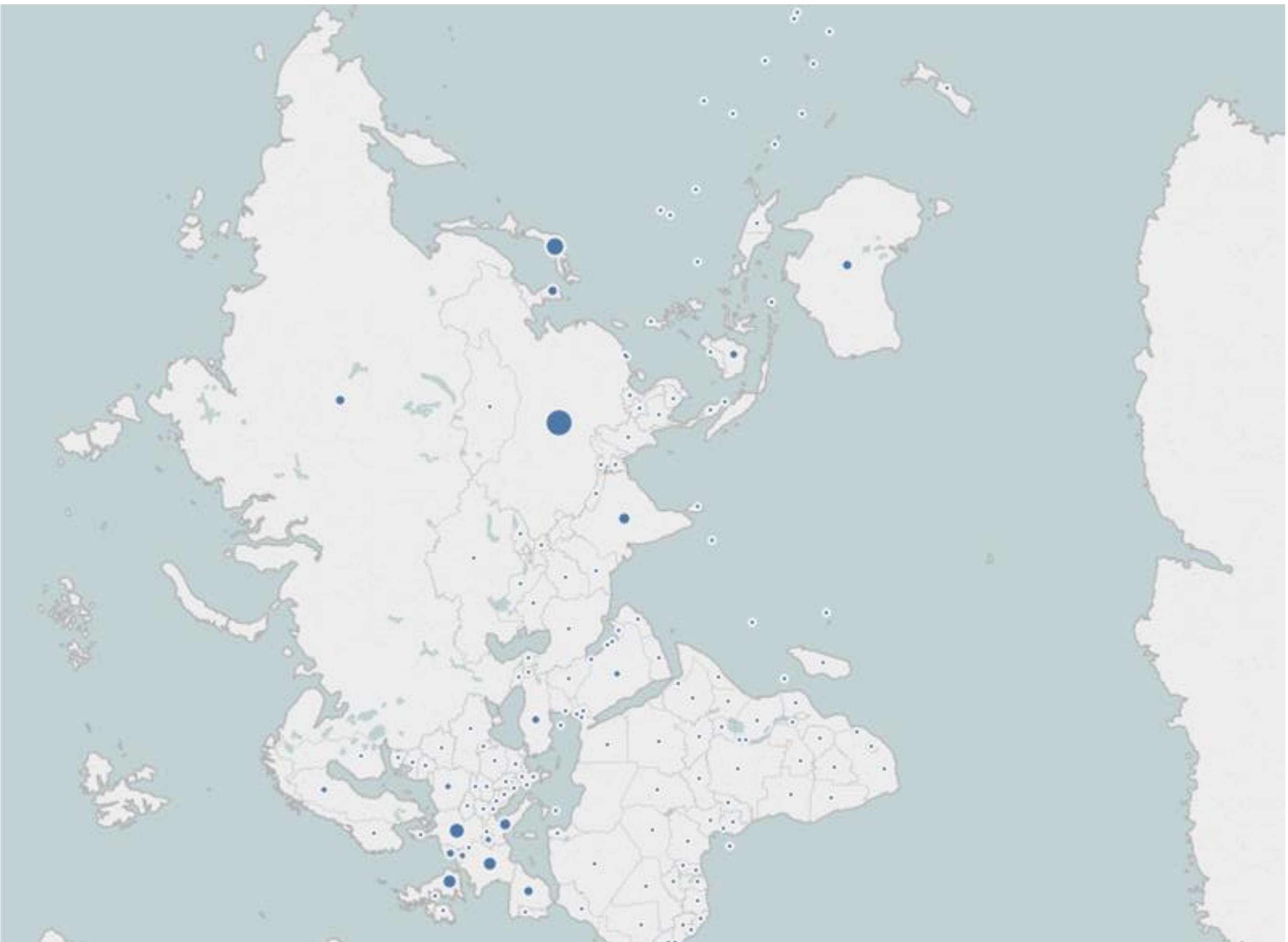
$$\text{STDEV.P(GDP-PPP)}_{2017} = 1{,}632{,}540$$

As in the case of the population variable, GDP (PPP) values are spread out in a very uneven fashion. As just one point of comparison, the STDEV.P value is over three times the GDP (PPP) value of the object country of the present dissertation that has the highest value: Sweden (511 000).

Once again, it is arguably difficult, and at times downright confusing to place any of the countries into boxes such as *big* or *small*—a dilemma which is not solved (at least not in any way that is useful for this study), but merely masked by any exercise to break down the categories into sub-categories (such as medium-sized, upper-medium, big, very big, enormous, etc.) Such further sub-classification arguably does more harm than good, by making the typology appear more sophisticated, while working with the same unevenly distributed values and related resources.

While some countries at the top of the distribution—such as the United States (18,569,100), China (11 199 145) or Japan (4 939 383)—could safely be referred to as *big*, and others, at the bottom—for example the island states of Tuvalu (34), Nauru (102) or Kiribati (166)—as *small*; any boundary drawn between those two categories may be heavily disputed. The map in *Figure 19* below, which illustrates GDP (PPP) values as dots of proportionate size, gives an overall visual image of this uneven distribution. With the help of this image (and with a slight stretch of the idiom), one might adopt a 'satellite-view' of the economies of the world, and find it difficult to identify the dots corresponding to the two countries of this inquiry that might be considered *big* as compared to the global GDP (PPP) mean—i.e. Sweden and Poland—, not to mention those that are truly *small*.

Figure 19. Relative GDP (PPP) globally, 2017



Source of data: World Bank (2017); graphic compiled by A.M.

To sum up, as has been demonstrated by the different approaches to the population and GDP (PPP) variables, the concept of smallness is highly contestable in at least two respects. First, it is difficult to find an indicator which captures the abstract notions purportedly measurable in terms of *size* (such as human resources or economic power) to any satisfactory degree. Second, even if an adequate surrogate or 'proxy' is found for measurement, drawing up the boundaries of categories (even as few as two—*big* and *small*), i.e. conceiving a categorical *size* variable is, at best, open to constant debate and accusations of arbitrariness or motivational bias, and, at worst, deeply damaging to the typology itself.

A conclusion one might draw from the above exercise—building on the original premise that *size* is a relative concept—is that *size* is also context-specific. That is to say that while some states may be found to be *small* (i.e. compared to a mean or other dividing line) in one particular domain, they may be found on the other side of the line in a different domain. As an extension of this logic, it might be asserted that no state may be categorized as *small* or *big* in general, even if it conforms to the requirement associated with either categories for *most*, or even *all* of the political or economic indicators generally considered relevant in IR—as would likely Tuvalu or the United States.

Ultimately, this section proposes three questions to be associated with an inquiry of *small states* in a scholarly context, noting that a matching set of questions could be posited for *big states*:

1. How are they *small*? (What is the benchmark one used to decide this, and why?)
2. *How* small are they? (As the benchmark itself might be arbitrary—or at least debatable—so might the fact that it is a dichotomous concept. Does it have to be? If not, how can we approach relative smallness closer, without losing too much parsimony?)
3. *Where* are they small? (In what policy domain, geographic context or other circumstance does one regard them as small? How well does their smallness travel across domains? How well-substantiated is a claim that they are, at least for the purposes of a specific study, small?)

Small States in Europe

The state of being small—complicated as it may be to grasp—offers, according to small states scholars, a number of valuable implications for the practice of international relations, including how small states interact with each other and with other states. While the study of small states is by no means new to IR, a comprehensive review of classic literature goes well beyond the limits and aims of the present dissertation.[42]

[42] Prominent classic accounts include Höll, ed. (1983), Goetschel (1998), Hanf & Soetendorp (1998), Hey (2003), Lejins & Ozolina (1997), Reiter & Gärtner (2001), and Thorhallsson (2001), among others.

It is to be noted that Europe has been one of the traditional foci of small states literature, as a place where smallness has often been translated into power.

> 'Small states are not necessarily weak states.'
> (Panke, 2012b:p.317)

The present dissertation—which limits itself geographically, as well as in terms of aspiring to be more contemporary than historical—draws extensively on Panke, who has authored several recent studies on the role of small states in the European Union (2012a, 2012b, 2012c, and 2010).[43] According to her findings,

> small states are most active in negotiations if they have non-interrupted administrative work environments, motivated staff, balanced systems for the development of national positions, and have experienced a learning curve through long membership durations and through holding the office of the [EU] Presidency (Panke, 2010:p.799).

While Panke's conclusions seem easily applicable to non-small states as well, they do speak to the fact that smallness coincides with a (relative) lack of foreign-affairs-related resources (i.e. inferiority or deficiency)[44] in some domain, therefore the marginal utility of such resources is higher for small states than for the non-small. Panke (2012a) refers to 'structural disadvantages' faced by small states in the EU, including (1) a comparably limited 'administrative and personnel capacity'—e.g. 4 500 employees in the Dutch economic ministry v. 416 in the Hungarian—, (2) a comparable 'lack [of] political and economic power to shape EU law'—due to a low number of votes and GDP, and (3) a comparably small 'policy expertise'—related to 'diminutive population size and on average fewer financial resources' (p.331).

In another study (2010), Panke, who studies EU member-state negotiation patterns in the EU, chooses as her benchmark for smallness the average number of votes in the Council of the EU, which places 19 of the then-27 member states[45] into the 'small' category, including Denmark, Finland, Sweden, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia, i.e. all the countries that make up the objects of the present study but Poland (p.801). She notes that to increase their leverage, small EU members habitually employ 'small state strategies,' such as appealing to neutrality, 'honest brokerage,' or lobbying the EU presidency (p.803–805).

In a third study (2012a), Panke studies two EU law cases (the *vodka* and *pesticides* cases), to demonstrate how EU member states can 'punch above their weights [...] if they make arguments that fit the nature of the issue and resonate well with prior beliefs of the addressees of the arguments' (2012a:p.329). As a synthesis of some of the 'classics' of small state literature,

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[43] Diana Panke is professor and multilevel governance chair at Albert Ludwigs University of Freiburg.

[44] See *Small States in International Relations* section of the present Subchapter above.

[45] Croatia had not yet joined the EU at the time of the publication of the article (2010).

Panke's study draws up three possible trajectories that small states may pursue in order to maximize their foreign policy leverage. Such trajectories include:

1. 'concentrate[ing] their limited resources on those items that are most important to them (Laffan 2006; Thorhallsson 2006),'
2. 'engag[ing] in capacity-building strategies, such as being in contact with stakeholders and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to obtain additional information or routines to create and increase an institutional memory of EU policies and prior negotiations (Jänicke and Weidner 1997),' and
3. 'us[ing] a broad range of different shaping strategies (Arter 2000; Bjoerkdahl 2008; Maes and Verdun 2005; Magnette and Nicolaidis 2005).'

(cited in Panke 2012a:p.332)

To borrow a term from economics, trajectory (*1*) might be labelled as *specialization*[46] in that it focuses existing capacities. In human rights diplomacy, Lakatos (2013:p.47) also stresses the importance of a narrow, well-defined agenda and priorities for small states to be able to function effectively on the UN human rights scene. At the same time, trajectories (*2*) and (*3*) are more to be seen as clusters of possible (practical) strategies that are at small states' disposal should they wish to increase their foreign policy leverage. *Capacity building strategies* (*2*) encompass ways of augmenting existing structures, either through securing better access to information or attaining a better information-processing capacity. *Table 4* below presents an overview of such strategies and their possible aims.

Table 4. Overview of small states' capacity building-strategies

Strategy	Aim
Contacting institutional actors (secretariats, chairs)	Increase expertise on subject matter and knowledge about positions of others
Receiving NGOs, industry lobbyists	Increase expertise on subject matter
Learning from past experiences and creating an institutional memory	Increase expertise on how negotiations work in a particular setting; strengthen networks

Source: Panke (2012b:p.318)

'Learning from past experiences and creating an institutional memory' might be particularly relevant for historical studies of the Nordic countries. According to Panke, 'the longer a small state is a member of a particular international organization or regime, the more easily it can counterbalance size-related disadvantages' (2012b:p.318). For example, when studying Denmark and Sweden (but also non-EU Norway or Iceland) of the 1950s or 1960s, it might be deemed relevant that Denmark, a founding member of the UN, signed the UN Charter in 1945 (as did Norway), and while Sweden (as well as Iceland) joined a year later, Finland only joined in 1955. When studying the V4 in historical perspective, significance might be attributed to the

[46] I thankfully acknowledge Paul Luif for suggesting this terminology during a consultation in March 2018.

fact that Czechoslovakia and Poland were also founding members of the UN, but Hungary only joined in 1955.

However, for contemporary accounts, including for the purposes of this study, which focuses on the period 1994–2014, what appears more immediately relevant is that while the Nordic countries (including Finland) have enjoyed long decades of continuity in their UN membership starting from their accession, the V4 only attained autonomy in their foreign policy (including vis-à-vis the UN) following the collapse of the Soviet bloc. The Czech Republic and Slovakia (although technically founding UN members as the former Czechoslovakia), might be considered the latest-comers, as both countries were only admitted to the organization as independent members in 1993.[47]

In contrast to and as an alternative to capacity building, *shaping strategies* (*3*) are ones that rely on 'rationalist' or 'constructivist' negotiation techniques (Panke, 2012b.:p.319). *Rationalist* refers to rational argument-based techniques of persuasion, which fall roughly within the domain of the rational actor model (RAM) of FPA. *Constructivist* strategies, in contrast, draw on well-known attributional and motivational biases of foreign-policy decision-making.[48] *Table 5* below presents a possible taxonomy of *shaping strategies*, as well as their possible aims.

[47] For a review of literature on relevant Nordic and V4 foreign policies, please refer to Chapter I.

[48] For an account of RAM and its relevance to the objective of the study, please refer to the first section of the present Subchapter.

Table 5. Overview of small states' shaping strategies

Strategy	Aim
(Re-)framing	Influencing negotiation processes; changing the range and type of persuasive or bargaining-based strategies that can be effective
Causal arguing/technical arguing	Influencing negotiation outcomes via persuasion of other actors on the basis of scientific expertise
Moral arguing/shaming	Influencing negotiation outcomes via persuasion of other actors on the basis of moral arguments
Legal arguing	Influencing negotiation outcomes via persuasion of a third party on the basis of legal expertise
Coalition-building	Increasing the collective leverage (regarding bargaining power or regarding discursive power)
Bargaining	Influencing negotiation outcomes via demands/threats/concessions/offers
Value-claiming	Influencing negotiation outcomes via first-mover advantages in distributive bargaining situations

Source: Panke (2012b:p.320)

In reference to *causal arguing/technical arguing*, Panke notes that, according to the literature on negotiation, *specialization*[49] in a policy domain might lend added credibility and bargaining power to a country internationally (2012b:p.320). In regard to *moral arguing*, she observes that small states are often seen as more impartial in defending 'incorporated norms and values' than are their big counterparts (Panke, 2012b:p.321). The human rights domain might be seen as an example situated at the crossroads of these two strategies, insofar as small states with solid domestic human rights records as well as high levels of social welfare (such as the Nordic countries), might be comparatively well-positioned to pursue an active foreign human rights policy—so long as it falls in line with the common denominator of major UN treaties—or humanitarian/development agenda.

Arguably, what manifests as *subregional cooperation* (such as the Nordic group and V4) on the surface, can be understood as a combination of different small state strategies in its depths. The hypotheses of this study—largely informed by small states literature—are formulated with

[49] Please note the point made on specialization on p.74 in regard to trajectory (1) of small state action as suggested by the literature mentioned by Panke. At first, it may seem that there is loose and easily conflated terminology at play (in that specialization is mentioned as one of the three main trajectories of Panke's typology, as well as a major reason for two sub-categories of another trajectory, i.e. shaping strategies). However, a likely reason for this is that small state strategies mutually reinforce each other (which is one of the reasons they may be studied as a distinct topic of IR in the first place)—with many of them acting as both explanations and outcomes for each other's existence, but ultimately pointing in the same direction: increasing small states' leverage. I thankfully acknowledge Paul Luif for hinting at this conceptual linkage.

this in mind. The below is a short and speculative exercise as to ways in which *capacity building* and *shaping strategies* might play a role as factors of subregional cooperation.

On one hand, *capacity building* strategies might be at play when small states opting for subregional cooperation *learn* from each other and create common institutional practices (and *memory*). It might also enable them to establish and maintain contacts with *institutional actors, NGOs or other major entities*—who may not be interested in meeting and conversing with the representative of a small state approaching them on their own, but may in fact be interested in liaison with a group of ambassadors of a subregional grouping or an ambassador who claims to represent the group in its entirety—their country being the chair thereof.[50]

On the other hand, *shaping* might be detected in the very act of forming a regional group, which is synonymous with *coalition-building*. All forms of arguing (*causal*, *moral*, or *legal*) might be more effective if based on a common institutional knowledge base and memory, and *bargaining* power is arguably increased if several states are speaking with one voice—even if on an ad-hoc or 'semi-institutionalized' basis. *Value-claiming* might become either more or less conflicted as small states form subregional groups: it might supersede the narrower set of values claimed by a single state ('national values' such as 'Danish values' or 'Slovak values'), but it might also give way to advocating for a broader and perhaps more recognized set of (thinner) values ('Scandinavian values' or 'Central European values').

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In an earlier study, Panke (2010) mapped the 19 European states she classified as small based on an aggregate of their observed level of activity on six different small state strategies: '[b]ilateral partnerships to big countries,' '[i]nstitutionalized co-ordination,' (such as in the Nordic Council or V4) '[c]ontacts with the [EU] Commission,' '[p]rioritization of issues,' '[EU p]residency as opportunity structure,' and '[h]onest brokerage' (p.805). This typology is slightly different from the one described above (i.e. *capacity-building* and *shaping* strategies), but it captures very similar concepts. She then plotted the aggregate activity of each state as 'frequencies' of strategies (see *Figure 20* below). Based on their aggregate activity level among the six strategies, she classified the states into three categories: 'activity leaders' (including the Nordic countries), 'middle-field players' (including the three small-state Visegrad countries), and 'relatively inactive states' (Panke 2010:p.806). Notably, the Nordic countries were placed among the 'activity leaders,' while the three small V4 states are placed in the middle field.

[50] There is ample anecdotal evidence that confirms this, which is referenced in the following Subchapter. The ambition in the present Subchapter is to suggest conceivable explanations and inform the hypotheses of the study, rather than to explore the internal workings of the two subregional groups in depth.

Unsurprisingly, Panke's categorization coincides with the general perception of the Nordic countries as 'activist' countries in the global arena. At the same time, since Panke's focus is on EU structures, these findings do not in and of themselves undercut any assertion of the Nordics as integration-skeptics, but reveal that—regardless of their attitude toward the integration project—the Nordics do rely amply on EU-level structures to further their international leverage.

Figure 20. Frequency of strategies (sum of strategies' means by country)

Source: Panke (2010:p.806)—chart recreated by A.M., with Nordic and V4 countries marked in red

Conclusions from Theory

This Subchapter has mapped out and developed the theoretical framework in which the dissertation is positioned. Theoretical implications from Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), multi-level game theory, Rational Choice Institutionalism (RCI) and small states literature have been analyzed and synthesized, with a view to informing the institutional analysis outlined in the second Subchapter of Chapter II, and the hypotheses of the dissertation laid out in the third.

First, the work of FPA scholars has been evoked. FPA scholarship has been observed to approach foreign policy in a structured, and, as far as possible, objective fashion—as opposed to more historical-narrative or philosophical approaches, which would largely operate with narratives, stories or ideologies. Allison's (1969) three classic models for FPA have been referenced: the 'Rational Policy Model' (*Model I*, referred to in this dissertation as Rational Actor Model—RAM); the 'Organizational Process Model' (*Model II*); and the 'Bureaucratic Politics Model' (*Model III*). Breuning's (2007) three-fold approach to the levels of analysis of FPA has also been evoked: (1) the *individual level*, (2) *state level*, and (3) *system level*. It has been noted that the analysis of the study is placed at the *state* and *system* levels, which mostly precludes the use of cognitive or social-psychological models for the purposes of the dissertation.

At the intersection of the state and system level of analysis sits the metaphor of the *two-level game* (Breuning, 2007:p.13), originally developed by Putnam (1988) for FPA. The two levels of Putnam's metaphor for analyzing negotiations that lead to an international agreement (with implications for domestic constituencies) are (a) 'bargaining between the negotiators, leading to a tentative agreement' (Level I), and (b) 'separate discussions within each group of constituents about whether to ratify the agreement' (Level II) (1988:p.436). The two-level game metaphor is applied and adapted to the present study as having three levels: *Level I—Global level* (or UN-level); *Level II—Coordination level* (regional or subregional—i.e. Nordic or V4), and *Level III—Member State level*. An additional, confounding level (i.e. 'Member State at the UN'-level) is created by the state-centric nature of the UN, and the fact that states ultimately end up voting (and oftentimes also speaking) individually, even on issues where there is an EU consensus.

Moving on from multi-level games, the inquiry has evoked RCI as the theory of integration that is most relevant to the present study. Capturing the essence of RCI, it has been noted that it would be employed *heuristically*: as part of a broader rationalist FPA agenda, 'follow[ing] a positive heuristic [...] point[ing] toward the study of strategic interaction within institutional constraints and away from other questions such as socialization, deliberation and identity change' (Pollack, 2006:p.50).

Following the synthesis of FPA, multi-level games and RCI, a thought inquiry was conducted into the idea that one of the characteristics shared by the objects of the dissertation was the state of being *small*. It has been demonstrated that defining *small* and, in doing so, pointing to a line, significant other, counterfactual or other device of reference compared to which smallness can be established, can all too easily become subject to accusations of arbitrariness or lack of academic rigor. It has been argued that, regardless of the RCI framework of the study, smallness in general is best perceived as a social construct, which is employed either consciously or involuntarily to characterize states in the international system.

Upon reviewing population data as a possible proxy for size, it has been noted that Poland—which, using the global population mean as the benchmark, was clearly among the *big* in 1960—barely made the cut in 2016. The three small states of the V4—the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia—, taken together, could have, with a stretch of the concept, be considered as *big* together in 1960 based on population alone, but, by 2016, their 25.8 million total population would not even approximate the global population mean. Similarly, the Nordic countries (including non-EU partners Iceland and Norway) collectively went from almost 20-million *big* in 1960 to 27-million *small* in 2016—even though all of them gained in their respective population figures at a rather convincing rate.

Another size-proxy that this inquiry has looked at is GDP on purchasing power parity (PPP)—working under the assumption that richer countries have more resources at their disposal to endow their foreign policy machinery. It has been argued that the relationship between budget and foreign policy is akin to *economies-of-scale*—in that it becomes marginally cheaper to run an effective diplomatic service as the size of the economy increases.

Based on the mean of GDP (PPP) worldwide as a cutoff point between *big* and *small*, Sweden and Poland of the objects of the study would fall into the big category—all other countries would be rendered small. At the same time, in a similar way, but to an even higher extent than in the case of the population variable, GDP (PPP) values have been observed to be spread out in a very uneven fashion, with the STDEV.P value being over three times the GDP (PPP) value of the object country of the present dissertation that has the highest value: Sweden (USD 511 000). Therefore, other cutoff points might also be considered as a benchmark, although these would arguably attract an increasing amount of accusations of arbitrariness, and to engage in an exercise of addressing these would go well beyond the limits of this dissertation.

Focusing on small states in the EU context, Panke (2010) studied negotiation patterns that were characteristic of these small states. Panke chose as her benchmark for smallness the average number of votes in the Council of the EU, based on which all the countries that make up the objects of the present study but Poland (p.801) would be considered small.

Summing up, with the difficulty associated with the *smallness* label in mind, numerous vectors have been observed to point in the direction that six out of the seven countries that form the objects of this study (all but Poland—i.e. the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Slovakia and Sweden) could broadly be considered *small* in a general European or international policy context.[51] At the same time, since the focus of this study is on the human rights domain, it is debatable to what degree *broadly* or *in a general policy context* are useful approximations, or how far proxies taken from economics or geography could be considered instructive for the purposes of determining size. A conclusion drawn from this exercise—building on the original premise that *size* is a relative concept—is that *size* is also context-specific. Ultimately, the inquiry has returned the following three conceptual questions on which purportedly small states will should be interrogated: (1) How are they *small*? (2) *How* small are they? and (3) *Where* are they small?

In terms of small state activity along the negotiating patterns, Panke has placed the Nordic countries among the 'activity leaders,' while she placed the three small V4 states in the middle field (2010). Panke's more recent study (2012a) has drawn up three possible trajectories that small states may pursue in order to maximize their foreign policy leverage. Such trajectories may be labeled as: (1) specialization, (2) capacity-building strategies, and (3) shaping strategies.

Bearing in mind the ramifications of the smallness concept, caution will be exercised as this dissertation sets out to measure the actions of its objects against the insights drawn from small states literature, and the degree to which what is known about *small state strategies* informs its hypotheses. The fact that *human rights* are conducive to both *causal arguing* and *moral arguing* strategies (both being versions of Panke's shaping strategies trajectory) will also serve to focus the inquiry.

[51] Note: based on GDP (PPP), using the global mean as a cut-off point, Sweden would also pass as 'big.'

Finally, Panke's synopsis of her 2012 studies on the topic serves as an instructive road map, much of which can be argued to be relevant for the UN institutional context.

> Small states tend to be most likely to punch above their weight if the negotiations take place in an institutionalised arena with majority-based decision-making rules in which each state has one vote or in contexts in which decisions are made unanimously, if they are selective in negotiations and concentrate their capacities on the most important issues, engage in capacity-building activities to maximise their ideational resources, if they make use of institutional opportunity structures such as chairing meetings and engaging in agenda-setting, and if they individually or collectively apply persuasion strategies from early on. (2012c:p.387)

In the following sections of the dissertation, the Nordic and V4 countries will be analyzed in front of the theoretical backdrop of small states scholarship.

2. Institutional Framework

The present Subchapter outlines the foreign-policy-institutional reality in which the objects of the study (the Nordic and V4 EU member states) operate. It is to be noted that the aim of the Subchapter is not to provide a comprehensive account of any of these institutional frameworks, but rather to sketch elements of the institutions as relevant to the research objective; and the aim is not to analyze the institutions in and of themselves. As described in the previous Subchapter, a Rational Choice Institutionalism (RCI) heuristic is applied throughout.

Nordic Cooperation

Nordic cooperation, as we know it today, evolved gradually from the 1950s, parallel to the unfolding Cold War. In the logic of the bipolar world order, the relationship of the Nordic group towards European integration remained ambivalent—its members were torn between joining the Euro-Atlantic integration frameworks (NATO, EC/EU), and maintaining political and military neutrality. Denmark (including Greenland and the Faroe Islands) and Norway became founding members of NATO, while Sweden and Finland chose not to join. Denmark joined the European Communities (EC) in 1973, while Norway turned down EC/EU membership in referenda on two occasions (in 1972 and 1994).

Parallel to this ambivalence towards external partners—which would prevail even after the Cold War had drawn down, the Nordic countries have sought to pursue increasing coordination among themselves, and have continued to exert efforts to become more unified and coherent as a bloc. The concept of 'Nordic cooperation' may be broken down into two main trajectories of formal coordination—interparliamentary and intergovernmental.

Interparliamentary cooperation in the Nordics is driven by the Nordic Council, which was established in 1952, and comprises 87 parliamentarian members selected by the parliaments of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, the Faroe Islands, and Greenland. The Council performs its work divided into five committees, which are responsible for different policy domains, all of which have an intra-group focus (e.g. Committee for Welfare in the Nordic Region, Committee for Knowledge and Culture in the Nordic Region)—as well as a Control Committee, responsible for agreements and regulations.[52]

The other formal institution of the group is the Nordic Council of Ministers, which embodies the intergovernmental dimension of coordination. Founded in 1971, it is responsible for policy cooperation and coordination in various domains, with authority delegated to the various ministers by their respective prime ministers. The Council of Ministers, like the Council of the

[52] See http://www.norden.org/en/nordic-council/organisation-and-structure/committees (accessed July 18, 2018).

European Union, takes up various formations, convening ministers with different portfolios (e.g. Nordic Council of Ministers for Labor, Nordic Council of Ministers for Gender Equality, Nordic Council of Ministers for Legislative Affairs).[53]

While the Council of Ministers formations are, as the Council committees, inwardly-focused, some of them touch on policy and legislative domains (e.g. gender) that can be credited for forging common ground that can in turn manifest in external affairs. It falls outside the scope of this study and its RCI framework to speculate about the socialization effects or 'stickiness' of institutions. However, it is to state the obvious to assert that the existence of such an elaborate cooperation and coordination mechanism, operating over decades across the (intra-group) policy spectrum would be expected to build common ground and *bona fides*.

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When it comes to the UN, the Nordics have traditionally shown a particularly high level of activity and support. Some of the first and most generous donors to the UN system, the Nordic countries have often leveraged multilateral institutions to put forward policy stances. Interviews conducted for this study have revealed that. in New York, at the General Assembly Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues)—GA3, which deals with human rights issues also, the Nordics are particularly active on the topic of refugees (on which they typically propose a resolution every year—Interview #3, 2013), and gender issues (Interviews #2 and #3, 2013). The Nordic countries have also acted as strong proponents of the human rights-based approach to development, which superseded the traditional approach that had been based on political conditionality (Interview #7, 2015). These insights are taken forward as the hypotheses of the study are formed.[54]

Visegrád Cooperation

The Visegrád Group (V4, but V3 at the time) was called into existence already after the bipolar world order had disintegrated. This post-bipolar V4 has aligned itself with a clear policy trajectory. In the Visegrád Declaration, signed by the presidents of Czechoslovakia and Poland and the prime minister of Hungary, the V3 countries sought cooperation to facilitate their transition from the Soviet political-economic system to European integration (Visegrád Declaration, 1991).

After the initial period of coordination up until 1993—which included the dissolution of Czechoslovakia and the V3 becoming the V4, the Visegrád Group entered into a period of

[53] See http://www.norden.org/en/nordic-council-of-ministers/council-of-ministers (accessed July 18, 2018).

[54] See Subchapter 3 for the detailed presentation of hypotheses.

dormancy or 'hibernation,' and was temporarily superseded by free trade negotiations in the framework of the Central European Free Trade Area—CEFTA (Dangerfield, 2014:p.76–77).

This 'hibernation' period characteristic of the Mečiar era ended when in 1998 the V4 began redefining its scope as a group, leading to the joint prime ministerial declaration 'Contents of Visegrad Cooperation,' adopted in Bratislava in 1999.[55] The declaration outlined the substantive dimensions of cooperation as seen at the end of the 1990s. This would include several intra-group policy domains such as interior affairs, education, science or culture; and also created mechanisms and frequencies of meetings of experts and senior officials. Most of these mechanisms would be left open and flexible, however, and would not resemble the more institutionalized Nordic formats.

The declaration also clearly addressed the external dimension of policies, by listing 'EU accession talks' and 'strategic questions of Central Europe' as two of the 'main topics' for prime ministerial meetings—the highest level of intergovernmental cooperation spelled out in the document (1999). On the expert level, the declaration prioritized 'exchange of information on long-term strategies and concepts of foreign, security and defence policy,' with a clear aspiration of becoming members of NATO. The declaration also 'fores[aw]' modalities of meetings other than intergovernmental, 'such as the meetings of the heads of state, the regular communication between the parliaments, the intensive contacts between "intermediary bodies" of civil society, etc.' (closing clause).

While the group itself uses the term 'regional body' in its own communication, it will continue to be referred to in this study as 'subregional,' for purposes of scholarly consistency. This semantic aspect aside, however, it is telling that the V4 lists and links two other 'regional bodies' on its website which it considers priority partner groups for cooperation: Benelux and the 'Nordic Council of Ministers'—alongside geographic priorities that are the six countries in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) of the EU, and the Western Balkan countries.[56] Nordic cooperation appears not only as a partner, but as a possible 'model' for the V4 throughout the scholarly and public discourse, and it is also part of the motivation for studying these two country groups for the purposes of this dissertation. It would be the undertaking of a separate study, in the comparative politics or comparative regionalism domain, to analyze the commonalities and contrast between the two groups from an institutionalist perspective.

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[55] See http://www.visegradgroup.eu/cooperation/contents-of-visegrad-110412 (accessed July 19, 2018).

[56] See http://www.visegradgroup.eu/about/cooperation (accessed July 19, 2018)—confirmed by Interview #5 (2014).

Caveating any discussions about 'cultural' commonalities or differences within the two groups, which may be labelled as 'constructivist,' it may be noted as a fact that the three Scandinavian languages (Danish, Swedish and Norwegian) which serve as the working languages of the Nordic group, enjoy a very high level of mutual intelligibility.[57] This level of intelligibility may easily have paved the way for more 'constructivist' ventures—such as regarding them as 'one language' and promoting them very actively for purposes of intra-group interchange. The V4 enjoy no comparable level of linguistic intelligibility (virtually: none), except from Czech and Slovak which are mutually intelligible. This has meant, first, that there is no 'lingua franca' for the V4—all of the group negotiations are being undertaken in English, which is a foreign language for all involved, and reportedly not spoken to a satisfactory level across public office (Interview #5, 2014). Second, the linguistic-cultural divide has meant that, despite all the historical and political-economic commonalities that the V4 may be perceived to share, the room for constructivist exercises aimed at subregional 'identity' using language as a point of departure—anywhere beyond bilingualism, which is widespread in the V4 countries—is very limited.

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The institutional reality of the V4, stands in contrast with the various formal institutions of Nordic cooperation. Its single formal institution is the Visegrad Fund (VF)—a grant management body for intra-V4 projects, with an EUR 8 million annual budget provided primarily by the V4 governments, as well as by other donors. Founded in 2000, as part of the 'relaunch' of V4, the VF is guided by the Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, comprising the four V4 foreign ministers, who meet annually and are supported by a Council of Ambassadors between meetings. The VF Secretariat is based in Bratislava.[58]

Dangerfield captures the essence of the institutional nature of Visegrád Group cooperation as having 'no supranational governance and no ambitions to travel in that direction,'—it is 'a flexible platform for cooperation and coordination' and 'an important default mechanism for exchanging experiences and preferences'—featuring annual meetings of presidents, biannual meetings of prime ministers, as well as more frequent meetings of ministers and parliamentarians (2014:p.74). The annual V4 rotating presidency (running from July to June)

[57] Note that Swedish, although an official language of Finland, is spoken as a second language by most of the population; Danish serves as a language of education in Iceland, and is also typically not a first language there.

[58] See https://www.visegradfund.org/about-us/the-fund/ (accessed July 19, 2018).

coordinates the meetings of the group throughout the presidency year, with V4 coordination focal points being set up in the foreign ministry of the country holding the presidency.[59]

Dangerfield also outlines the change of mandate of the V4 following the EU accession of its members. He conceptualizes the V4

> as a specific vehicle for cooperation and coordination around EU affairs with well-defined limitations and not as some kind of Central European 'lobby' or regional 'bloc' within the EU (2014:p.71).

He points, in particular, to the 2004 prime ministerial declaration following the meeting of V4 prime ministers in Prague (2014:p.78)—the Kroměříž Declaration, which stated

> with full satisfaction that the key objectives set in the 1991 Visegrad Declaration have been achieved and declare their determination to continue developing the cooperation of the Visegrad Group countries as Member States of the European Union and NATO (2004).

Against this backdrop, the declaration and its appended 'guidelines' identified the following elements of cooperation as key priorities of the future: intra-V4 cooperation, cooperation with the EU, support to EU enlargement and partnership with Eastern and Southern EU neighbors, and cooperation with NATO and other international organizations. The declaration also revisited the coordination mechanism including, as is most relevant to this study, '[c]onsultation and co-operation of Permanent Representations to the EU and NATO in Brussels, as well as in all relevant fora (OSCE, UN, CoE, OECD, WTO, etc.)'[60]

It has since become routine that the V4 countries coordinate ahead of EU and UN meetings. In 2010, Kořan noted that '(m)utual communication in Brussels is becoming so dense that it is gradually becoming difficult for the national headquarters to follow its development' (2010:p. 118, cited in Dangerfield, 2014:p.75).

At an event hosted at the Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade (IFAT) in Budapest during Hungary's V4 presidency in 2014, a senior Hungarian diplomat at the Hungarian permanent mission in Brussels explained that the V4 'brand' was also conducive to leveraging contacts. The diplomat asserted that if he approached a senior contact with a lunch invitation as a Hungarian official, he would likely not get a timely meeting (if any), but if he did so as V4 president, in coordination with Visegrád countries, contacts would be far more receptive.

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[59] Presidency programs are accessible through http://www.visegradgroup.eu/documents/presidency-programs (accessed July 18, 2018).

[60] See http://www.visegradgroup.eu/cooperation/guidelines-on-the-future-110412 (accessed July 19, 2018).

A distinct strand of thought and scholarly attention focuses on the foreign aid policies of the V4. In fact, the Visegrad Fund itself can be construed as a development agency, with its foreign dimension focusing on the Eastern Partnership countries. Szentivanyi & Tetenyi (2008) have argued that Communist past and the unique transition experience of the V4 have shaped the international development aid policies of these countries in a unique way, resulting in 'distinctly Central and Eastern European' policies (p.574). Much like the 'high politics' of the V4, international development is another field where scholarship and practice are closely interwoven—with (former) civil society activists, scholars, parliamentarians oscillating between these domestic fields and regional aid programs, particularly in Eastern Europe.

Slovakia's seems as particularly contrasted trajectory—going from the 'Mečiarism' of the 1990s to EU membership and active international development efforts including transition promotion in the 2000s. According to a renowned scholar and V4/EU expert (Interview #4, 2014), in these two decades, Slovakia went 'from democratic laggard to a promoter of democracy.' Supposedly, the experience of the anti-Mečiar opposition, which spread its wings in particular from 1996, had been 'exported' post-Mečiar to support democratic transition in Georgia and Ukraine. According to the same expert, founded on a coordination and knowledge transfer among Slovak NGOs, this 'Bratislava process' had served as an important foundation for the strong think-tank base in Bratislava, including the annual Bratislava Global Security Forum (GLOBSEC). While new generations of thinkers have, throughout 2010s, joined the 'process,' the fact remains that Bratislava boasts a comparably very strong think-tank and foreign-policy expert base in the subregion.

Many of the Slovak priorities for international development have also been and continue to be 'uploaded' to the Visegrad Fund (Interview #4, 2014). In regard to the other V4 countries: Polish efforts have been prominent across the board of international development, mainly through the Eastern Partnership framework;[61] while Hungary, particularly under the second Orbán government (2010–2014) has been lacking ambitions to 'export' democracy, and the Czech priorities in this domain have also been fizzling out since the death of former president Václav Havel in 2011 (Interview #5, 2014).

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In Geneva, the UN's 'human rights headquarters'—and the city that serves as the seat of the UN Human Rights Council, there is also routine coordination among V4 diplomats—albeit more recent than that of the Nordic countries, and mostly becoming relevant *after* timeframe covered by this dissertation. As explained by a senior V4 diplomat accredited to the UN in

[61] See below in this section.

Geneva interviewed for the present study (Interview #6, 2014), V4 permanent representatives in Geneva have been meeting for monthly lunches since 2013. The deputy permanent representatives also meet on a regular basis, and the V4+ format also operates in Geneva, including, most prominently, as V4+Ukraine. Many of these meetings—as well as other, ad-hoc informal meetings—, have been driven by the personality and professional preferences of the ambassador of the country holding the V4 presidency. Ultimately, however, the V4 presidency carries very little weight in Geneva—as opposed to Brussels—, and reportedly some representatives have 'tend[ed] to forget that this is the UN.' In Geneva, even at the EU level, hours go by with coordination of policies which 'end up leading nowhere.' In addition, 'V4 topics are not important in Geneva,' (Interview #6, 2014),[62] which places a major external limitation on the relevance of the group at the UN human rights headquarters.

According to the same diplomat, until 2014, there had been one V4 intervention in the Human Rights Council, on an ad-hoc basis. In the 19th session of the Human Rights Council (March 2012)—when the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland were members (see *Table 6* below), these three countries provided a joint vote explanation, which was joined by Romania.[63] According to a diplomat of a V4 country sitting in the GA3 in New York, there had been no joint V4 interventions in the committee (as of December 2013, the time of the interview; Interview #2, 2013). The data analysis conducted in this study has also not identified any.[64]

In this vein, it may be meaningful to map out in which periods any of the multilateral V4 diplomats (at permanent representations to the EU or UN) would have had more than their national 'hat' on. Alongside the V4 presidency, whose relevance is illustrated by the anecdotal example from the V4 diplomat in Brussels, two other rotating functions might be taken into consideration, which complement the institutional framework at the three levels of the 'game' considered for this dissertation: the rotating presidency of the Council of the EU, and elected

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[62] See above parts for the subject matter of Visegrád cooperation.

[63] This most probably refers to one of the three HRC Resolutions: L.3 (Human Rights in the Occupied Syrian Golan); L.35 (Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories); and L.36 (Follow-up to the Report on the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Gaza), all of which the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Romania abstained on.
(See https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session19/resolutions/votingprocess/L3.pdf;
https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session19/resolutions/votingprocess/L35.pdf; and
https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session19/resolutions/votingprocess/L36.pdf respectively (Accessed July 28, 2018).
Note: Unfortunately, the video recording of this debate could not be found on the UN website at the time of writing.

[64] See Chapter III.

membership in the UN Human Rights Council—the prime subsidiary organ of UNGA on global human rights issues. The compilation on rotating functions can be seen in *Table 6* below.

Table 6. Rotating EU and V4 presidencies and UN Human Rights Council membership of the V4 countries 2004–2014

	2004/1	2004/2	2005/1	2005/2	2006/1	2006/2	2007/1	2007/2	2008/1	2008/2	2009/1
Czech Republic						HRC	HRC				
Hungary											
Poland						HRC	HRC				
Slovakia										HRC	HRC
	2009/2	**2010/1**	**2010/2**	**2011/1**	**2011/2**	**2012/1**	**2012/2**	**2013/1**	**2013/2**	**2014/1**	**2014/2**
Czech Republic						HRC	HRC	HRC	HRC	HRC	
Hungary	HRC	HRC	HRC	HRC	HRC	HRC					
Poland			HRC	HRC	HRC	HRC	HRC	HRC			
Slovakia	HRC	HRC	HRC	HRC							

Legend:

V4 Presidency

EU Presidency

HRC Human Rights Council Membership

Note: The start date of the table (2004) corresponds with the 'relaunched' V4 presidency program, as well as with the beginning of the EU membership of the V4 countries. The end date (2014) corresponds with the end of the time frame covered by the dissertation.

Source: Compiled by A.M. based on information from V4 website, EU website and UN website.

Another institutional factor addressable with the help of the multi-level game metaphor[65] is the political affiliation of national governments. Throughout the twenty years of the study period, governments of all seven of the studied countries would have changed many times—see *Table 7* for an overview of prime ministers, including the dominant political-ideological affiliations of their cabinets.[66] The overall aim of this study, however, does not include differentiating between the multi-level games played by governments of different affiliations, but is instead focused on mapping out more stable policy trajectories characteristic of the countries of the two subregional groups throughout the study period, including any trends of change that are revealed from the data.

[65] For details on the metaphor, see the section on *Foreign Policy Analysis* in the previous Subchapter.

[66] While the analysis of the possible relationship between domestic government and policy stances expressed on global human rights issues is a meaningful academic exercise, it is one that falls outside the scope of the present study.

Table 7. Prime ministers of Nordic and V4 countries 1994–2014

Year	SE	FI	DK	PL	CZ	SK	HU
1994	Carl Bildt (C) Ingvar Carlsson (S)	Esko Aho (L)	Poul Nyrup Rasmussen (S)	Waldemar Pawlak (C)	Václav Klaus / (C)	Vladimír Mečiar* (C)	Péter Boross (C) Gyula Horn (S)
1995		Paavo Lipponen (S)		Józef Oleksy (S)			
1996	Göran Persson (S)			Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz (S)			
1997				Jerzy Buzek (S)	Josef Tošovský (I)		
1998					Miloš Zeman (S)	Mikuláš Dzurinda (L-C)	Viktor Orbán (C)
1999							
2000							
2001			Anders Fogh Rasmussen (C)	Leszek Miller (S)			
2002					Vladimír Špidla (S)		Péter Medgyessy (S)
2003		Anneli Jäätteenmäki (L) Matti Vanhanen (L)					
2004				Marek Belka (S)	Stanislav Gross (S)		Ferenc Gyurcsány (S)
2005				Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz (C)	Jiří Paroubek (S)		
2006	Fredrik Reinfeldt (C)			Jarosław Kaczyński (C)	Mirek Topolánek (C)	Robert Fico (S)	
2007				Donald Tusk (L/C)			
2008							
2009			Lars Løkke Rasmussen (C)		Jan Fischer (I)		Gordon Bajnai (L-S)
2010		Mari Kiviniemi (L)			Petr Nečas (C)	Iveta Radičová (L-C)	Viktor Orbán (C)
2011		Jyrki Katainen (C)	Helle Thorning-Schmidt (S)				
2012						Robert Fico (S)	
2013					Jiří Rusnok (I)		
2014	Stefan Löfven (S)	Alexander Stubb (C)		Ewa Kopacz (L/C)	Bohuslav Sobotka (S)		

** Vladimír Mečiar was temporarily replaced by his foreign minister, Jozef Moravčík, March–December 1994*

C—Conservative; S—Socialist/Social Democrat; L—Liberal/Centrist; I—Independent

Source of data: Wikipedia articles on the 'List of Prime Ministers' of each of the seven countries analyzed in the dissertation (accessed February 15, 2019); compiled and complemented by A.M.

Governments and political affiliations are included at this point primarily for illustrative purposes, and are referenced sporadically in the data analysis of Chapter III if and when deemed relevant to the policy domain being analyzed. Some of the prime ministers included in *Table 7* occasionally appear among the country speakers whose interventions are analyzed in the qualitative accounts of Chapter III.

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As was foreshadowed in the Kroměříž Declaration, the post-accession period of V4 cooperation has been characterized by a strong foreign policy focus on the neighbors of the EU. According to Dangerfield (2014), this has been a result of several factors, including

> the need for the [V4] states, and new members in general, to find their niches in CSDP [Common Security and Defence Policy]; the need to find appropriate targets for the Overseas Development Assistance programmes that EU membership now obliged them to have; as mostly adjoining states to the EU's new eastern neighbours and/or West Balkan EU aspirants the VG [Visegrad Group] are key stakeholders in the formers' future development and EU integration prospects (p.81).

One institutionalized outcome of the above effort has been the EU's Eastern Partnership (EaP) program, launched in 2009 to promote relations with the EU's six eastern neighbors—Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. According to Dangerfield (2009), 'EU presidencies in principle provide a major opportunity for the V4 to promote shared positions in EU affairs and the 2009 Czech Presidency was the first chance to test this out'—seeing the prioritization and eventually launch of the EaP (p.1743). While the EaP was tabled as a Polish-Swedish initiative, scholarship has either called for (Duleba, 2007) or, post facto, pointed out the instrumental, albeit 'secondary' or 'incremental' role played by the V4 in its conception (e.g. Dangerfield, 2009; 2014).

Already before the EaP, however, in 2006, the V4 had endeavored to act multilaterally to influence the direction of European Neighborhood Policy. In 2006, the V4 proposed a 'non-paper' in the EU General Affairs Council, which was the first significant effort made at multilateral V4 action in this domain (Dangerfield, 2014:p.83). Declarations and, to some extent, substantive actions of the V4 in the Eastern Partnership domain have outlined a preference for the three 'Western Newly Independent States' (WNIS—Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine), and a particular slant towards Ukraine, and, to a smaller extent, Moldova, within the EaP country group (Dangerfield, 2014:p.82; 2009:p.1742). Interestingly, according to a 2006 survey in Slovakia, the majority of respondents expressed a preference for focusing international development efforts on Belarus (Interview #5).

The V4 seem to have been a favored negotiation partner for Eastern neighbors for three main reasons:

(1) they create a sense of 'privileged access,'
(2) they are perceived as 'a particularly sympathetic and receptive audience' and
(3) they serve as a 'platform … [for] promot[ing] … [the neighbors'] European credentials'

(Dangerfield, 2009:p.1744).

The analysis of discourse (unilateral or joint) goes well beyond the limits of this dissertation, but—in a phenomenon that might be seen as having to do with the V4's 'non-policy towards Russia,' which stands in stark contrast with the extensive Russia programming of the Nordic group (Dangerfield, 2014:p.85), the ingenuity and substance of V4 commitment towards Ukraine (the country supposedly most-preferred by the V4 under EaP) has repeatedly been called into question by commentators.[67]

To conclude, some of the weaknesses and limitations of the V4 as a multilateral actor warrant attention. Using Eastern policy as the case study, Dangerfield (2009) summarized the weaknesses as follows:

1. 'the relatively greater commitment of Poland'—as well as its 'size and its longstanding self-perception as a regional power' (p.1748);
2. 'bureaucratic procedures and diplomatic issues' (p.1748);
3. limited multilateral resources to assist neighbors in their reform processes (p.1749);
4. 'unwillingness of the V[4] to enlarge', which 'undermines its image as a serious player in the Europeanisation process of key neighbours' (p.1749);
5. 'lack of a Visegrad Secretariat empowered to develop and coordinate new instruments and measures, and to act as a policy entrepreneur' (p.1749);
6. 'capacity and motivation of V[4] state institutions to engage in knowledge transfer and experience-sharing activities' (p.1749);
7. diverging assistance trajectories and priorities—e.g. Hungary prioritizing the Western Balkan states (p.1749–1750).

Finally, and most importantly for this dissertation, EaP has also served as the main trajectory for V4 coordination and cooperation on foreign human rights policy. Perhaps the most prominent trans-border intra-group human rights issue in the V4 is minority rights, a topic which features prominently in the domestic discourse of V4 countries, mostly because of the large trans-border ethnic minority populations. That said, minorities is a topic that is primarily placed on the Council of Europe agenda, and not on that of European integration (Interview #5, 2014). This may be ascribed to the fact that the 'minority landscape' of the V4/Central

[67] See, for example, an October 2017 event featuring some well-renowned V4 policy experts: https://www.euractiv.com/section/europe-s-east/news/v4-no-longer-a-role-model-for-eastern-partnership-countries/ (accessed July 19, 2018).

Europe is not generally present, well-understood or relevant in most other European countries or in the European institutions.

Institutional Conclusions

Based on an institutional analysis, and drawing on interviews conducted in Geneva, New York and Bratislava, it is meaningful to give a brief overview of the institutional framework in which the objects of the dissertation are located. The institutional frameworks reviewed in this section have included V4 and Nordic activity and coordination—including at the UN—as well as the stance of these groups towards the EU's Eastern Partnership (EaP) program.

The term 'Nordic cooperation' has been observed as having two main trajectories of formal coordination—interparliamentary and intergovernmental. Interparliamentary cooperation in the Nordics is driven by the Nordic Council; while Nordic Council of Ministers embodies the intergovernmental dimension of coordination. While the Council of Ministers formations are, as the Council committees, inwardly-focused, some of their portfolios have been noted to touch on policy and legislative domains (e.g. gender) that can be credited for forging common ground on global human rights issues.

When it comes to the UN, the Nordics have been seen to be particularly active. Some of the first and most generous donors to the UN system, the Nordic countries have traditionally leveraged multilateral institutions to put forward policy stances. As a point of cultural proximity, arguably relevant for institution-building, it has also been noted that the working languages of the Nordic group enjoy a very high level of mutual intelligibility. This may easily have paved the way for 'constructivist' exercises such as discussion and coordination on international norms.

In contrast to the linguistic intelligibility in the Nordic group, it has been noted that the V4 enjoy no comparable level of intelligibility, and have maintained English as the working language of cooperation and coordination. It has also been noted that the V4 group is much more limited in its degree of institutionalization. The single formal institution of the V4 is the Visegrad Fund—best conceived as a grant management body for intra-V4 projects. The V4, according to its website, prioritizes two other 'regional bodies' which it considers priority partner groups for cooperation: the Benelux and Nordic group—alongside geographic priorities that are the six countries in the EU EaP program, and the Western Balkan countries.

EaP has been noted as a priority area for V4 coordination on external affairs,[68] including as a target region for V4 development aid policy. In fact, the Visegrad Fund itself can be construed

[68] See also in Chapter I.

as a development agency, with its foreign dimension focusing on the Eastern Partnership countries. Szentivanyi & Tetenyi (2008) have argued that Communist past and the unique transition experience of the V4 have shaped the international development aid policies of these countries in a unique way, resulting in 'distinctly Central and Eastern European' policies (p.574).

Per the 2004 Kroměříž Declaration, key priorities of V4 cooperation have been identified as (1) intra-group cooperation, (2) cooperation with the EU, support to EU enlargement and partnership with Eastern and Southern EU neighbors, and cooperation with NATO and other international organizations. The declaration also updated the V4 mechanisms for '[c]onsultation and co-operation of Permanent Representations to the EU and NATO in Brussels, as well as in all relevant fora (OSCE, UN, CoE, OECD, WTO, etc.)'[69] Some level of routine coordination has already been detected in Geneva, the UN's 'human rights headquarters'—and the city that serves as the seat of the UN Human Rights Council. However, this phenomenon has been observed as being much more recent than coordination by the Nordic countries, mostly to gain relevance after the timeframe covered by this dissertation.

[69] See http://www.visegradgroup.eu/cooperation/guidelines-on-the-future-110412 (accessed July 19, 2018).

3. Research Framework

The overall goal of the research project is to contribute the literature on the foreign policies of EU subregional groups. Bearing in mind necessary limitations to its scope—both thematic, and regarding the range of its objects, the study focuses on the Nordic and V4 EU member states, as members of two subregional groups within the EU region. As has been demonstrated in Chapter *I*, human rights is a policy field in which EU member states enjoy a high level of unity, yet this is also the field where the EU fails to exert international influence that is proportionate to its economic power, and its internal coordination record. Departing from this intellectual puzzle, the study places its thematic focus on the human rights domain.

Throughout the dissertation, 'EU' or 'EU member states' refers to the current EU28 countries (unless noted otherwise)—regardless of whether or not they had all already acceded at the time. This simplification is necessary to ensure comparability of approaches (particularly indices of group voting) throughout the study period (1994–2014). During this period, with the 'EFTA enlargement' of the EU (1995), Finland and Sweden became member states, and, with the first round of 'Eastern enlargement' (2004), the V4 countries also joined. Croatia joined close to the end of the study period (2013), but, with candidate status granted to the country as early as 2004, and strong evidence in the literature that suggests that candidate countries tend to align their policy stance with the EU-consensus already well before accession (Hosli et al.,2010; Luif, 2013), Croatia is also included—noting that its exclusion would arguably not have been a methodological choice that would have been equally defensible.

The methodology of the study is characterized by a mixed-methods approach, relying on semi-structured interviews, UN resolutions and meeting records as qualitative sources; as well as on the quantitative analysis of UN voting records. Interviews are primarily employed to guide the hypotheses and focus the scope of inquiry. The quantitative component comprises the adoption and adaptation of two indices of group voting: the *Agreement Index* and the *Cohesion Ratio*. UN resolutions and meeting records are then analyzed branching out from the quantitative results. Details on the data, as well as on their analysis, are provided in Chapter *III*.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The main research question which the study seeks to answer is the following:

QI: What are the Nordic and Visegrád components of global EU human rights policy?

The overarching hypothesis connected to QI is the following:

H_1I: The Nordic and Visegrád groups rely on small state strategies to play a strong and pro-active role in influencing global EU human rights policy.

H_1I is informed by the following considerations:

- Small states within the EU employ three different trajectories of techniques to maximize their foreign policy leverage: (1) specialization, (2) capacity-building strategies, and (3) shaping strategies (see Panke, 2012a:p.332). Noting that all the objects of the study except Poland may be regarded as small states, the Nordic and Visegrád countries are hypothesized to employ such strategies.
- Small states are known to 'limit their behavior to their immediate geographic arena' (Hey, 2003:p.5), which, both the Nordic and V4 cases, can be expected to cause an East European slant in their foreign human rights policy (as opposed to it being truly global in its outlook), as this is the region where both the Nordics and V4 have the most immediate foreign policy stakes.
- The human rights domain seems particularly conducive to a pro-active small-state approach, because small states have a 'tendency to emphasize internationalist principles, international law, and other "morally minded" ideals' and 'to secure multinational agreements and join multinational institutions whenever possible' (Hey, 2003:p.5).
- Panke's *causal arguing* and *moral arguing* strategies, as subcategories of the shaping strategies trajectory (2012b) seem to be particularly relevant to the human rights domain. Regarding *moral arguing*, Panke (2012b) observes that small states are often seen as more impartial in defending 'incorporated norms and values' than are their big counterparts (p.321).
- Hosli, Mattila & Uriot have found that all in all, older EU members are more likely to oppose the EU majority than new members (2011: p.1266) and that larger new EU member states are more likely to oppose the EU majority (in the Council) than smaller new member states (2011:p.1267).

Hypotheses for the two subregional groups, informed by both the scholarly literature and interviews conducted for the present dissertation, are laid out in the following:

H_1I_N: The Nordic group relies on small state strategies to play a strong and pro-active role in influencing global human rights policy, acting as a proponent of progressive issues (second- and third-generation human rights)—including refugee issues, gender issues, and human rights-based development.

The following preliminary findings are relevant to H_1I_N:

- The Nordic value base vis-à-vis the UN consists of the following components: 'a strong multilateralist ethic, a small state commitment to and appreciation for the concept of collective security, and the externalization of the norms of Social Democratic governance' (Laatikainen, 2003:p.414).
- In New York, at the General Assembly Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues)—GA3, which deals with human rights issues also, the Nordics are particularly active on the issue of refugees (on which they typically propose a resolution every year—Interview #3, 2013), and gender (Interviews #2 and #3, 2013). The Nordic countries have also acted as strong proponents of the human rights-based approach to development, which superseded the traditional approach that had been based on political conditionality (Interview #7, 2015).
- The Nordics, based on their long UN membership, can be assumed to have ample resources to pursue Panke's capacity-building strategy 'Learning from past experiences and creating an institutional memory' (2012b:p.318).
- The human rights domain might be seen as an example situated at the crossroads of Panke's shaping strategies 'Causal arguing/technical arguing' and 'Moral arguing/shaming' (2012b:p.320), considering that small states with solid domestic human rights records as well as high levels of social welfare (such as the Nordic countries), might be comparatively well-positioned to pursue an active foreign human rights policy—provided that this policy is not alien to the broader institutional logic of major UN treaties, or the global humanitarian/development agenda.

H_1I_V: The Visegrád group aspires to play a strong and pro-active role—albeit more limited than that of the Nordic group—in influencing global human rights policy; with V4 priorities including topics that are more immediately relevant to post-Soviet democratic transition (i.e. first-generation or civil and political rights), as well as a geographic focus on the Eastern Partnership countries.

The following considerations are relevant to H_1I_V:

- Hosli, Mattila & Uriot have noted that new EU member states are less likely to oppose the EU majority (in the Council) than old member states (2011:p.1266).
- The V4 have been anecdotally pictured to pursue the capacity-building strategy 'Contacting institutional actors (secretariats, chairs)' of Panke's small states strategies (2012b:p.318).

- The V4 countries have been described as having a foreign policy slant towards the EU's eastern neighbors, particularly the Western Newly Independent States of the EU Eastern Partnership program (Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine). In fact, the Visegrad Fund itself can be construed as a development agency, with its foreign dimension focusing on the Eastern Partnership countries.
- Szentivanyi & Tetenyi (2008) have argued that Communist past and the unique transition experience of the V4 have shaped the international development aid policies of the V4 countries in a unique way, resulting in 'distinctly Central and Eastern European' policies (p.574).
- Dangerfield has observed that the V4 seem to have been a negotiation partner favored by Eastern neighbors for three main reasons: (1) they create a sense of 'privileged access,' (2) they are perceived as 'a particularly sympathetic and receptive audience' and (3) they serve as a 'platform ... [for] promot[ing] ... [the neighbors'] European credentials (2009:p.1744).
- The V4 countries, which, even though they were members of the UN, largely acted as satellites of the Soviet Union until 1989/1990, may be assumed to not have ample resources to pursue Panke's capacity-building strategy 'Learning from past experiences and creating an institutional memory' (2012b:p.318).
- The international influence of the V4 is hampered by the following factors (Dangerfield, 2009): 'the relatively greater commitment of Poland'—as well as its 'size and its longstanding self-perception as a regional power' (p.1748); 'bureaucratic procedures and diplomatic issues' (p.1748); limited multilateral resources to assist neighbors in their reform processes (p.1749); 'unwillingness of the V[4] to enlarge', which 'undermines its image as a serious player in the Europeanisation process of key neighbours' (p.1749); 'lack of a Visegrad Secretariat empowered to develop and coordinate new instruments and measures, and to act as a policy entrepreneur' (p.1749); 'capacity and motivation of V[4] state institutions to engage in knowledge transfer and experience-sharing activities' (p.1749); diverging assistance trajectories and priorities—e.g. Hungary prioritizing the Western Balkan states (p.1749–1750).
- More broadly, Poland's non-small-state foreign policy appears to have a potential to supersede the small-state strategies of the other three V4 countries.[70] Poland can easily

[70] Luif (2018) has used a dyadic indicator to measure the 'distance' of EU member state votes in the 71st session of the UNGA (2016–2017). While this session falls outside the period studied in the present dissertation, Luif's account does raise a flag about the possible 'third-way' voting behavior of Poland. Notably, Luif has found that while the six other (*small*) states studied for this dissertation would fully align with the EU majority on human rights issues in this UNGA session, Poland would be placed at a (moderate) distance of 2.7 (minimum distance: 0; maximum distance: 100) from it (p.11).

become the elephant in the room by assuming leadership in joint projects, undermining the V4 in becoming an effective platform of coalition-building among small states.[71]

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The secondary research question of the study—following on from the first—is linked to possible subregional factors of the EU's external ineffectiveness on the global human rights scene:

QII: Do the subregional groups play a role in the EU's impaired external effectiveness in the human rights domain?

The following working hypotheses (both of which support 'yes' as the answer to QII) may be stated for the two subregional groups, noting that these are expected to be refined by the findings of the present study.

H_1II_N: The Nordics are strong proponents of a progressive approach to human rights which is unlikely to be widely accepted globally.

H_1II_V: The V4 have in their history a shared Soviet-style communist experience and subsequent democratic transition which makes these countries especially keen on certain civil and political rights that other members of the international community are largely unresponsive to due to their lack of such an experience.

Not finding evidence to support either of the two working hypothesis would mean a return to the null-hypothesis that the EU's external effectiveness might be ascribed to (a) external factors, or (b) EU-internal factors to do with the coordination processes, or with member states other than the members of the two subregional groups studied in this dissertation.

Upon stating the research questions and hypotheses, the study sets out to test these hypotheses and address the research questions; focusing first on its main research question (QI).

[71] A non-human-rights example is the Visegrád EU Battlegroup, in which Poland has assumed a lead role as 'framework nation.'

CHAPTER III:
DATA AND ANALYSIS

This third Chapter provides an overview of the data used in the study, as well as an in-depth analysis of the data, for both exploratory and hypothesis-testing purposes. The first Subchapter provides some general considerations on sources of data consulted for the purposes of the dissertation, as well as providing a list of semi-structured interviews conducted for the dissertation. Then, it briefly describes Voeten's UNGA voting dataset (2013), as well as the subset of these data that have served as the basis of the quantitative analysis performed in this study. Subsequent parts of the Chapter provide a detailed, mixed-methods analysis of the data. Conclusions are presented at the end of each Subchapter, and the findings emanating from the hypothesis-test are then summarized and synthesized in the final part of the dissertation text, *Conclusions on Hypotheses*.[72]

This Chapter is comprised of seven Subchapters. The first Subchapter provides an overview of the data consulted for the dissertation, particularly the primary and 'soft' primary sources—i.e. sources other than the scholarly literature analyzed in previous Chapters. The second Subchapter introduces and adapts to the purposes of the study two measures of group voting drawn from the scholarly literature: the *Cohesion Ratio* and *Agreement Index*. The third Subchapter calculates and compares *Agreement Index* and *Cohesion Ratio* values for the UN, EU, Nordic Group and V4 on UNGA human rights resolutions adopted in the period of study. Branching out from resolutions that saw vote contestation within the two subregional groups—based on the values of the two above indices—, the fourth Subchapter analyzes meeting records with Nordic or V4 interventions on the topics of these contested votes. The fifth Subchapter does the same for topics contested across the two subregional groups, i.e. those with markedly different Nordic and V4 votes. The sixth Subchapter describes patterns of voting coherence, comparing and contrasting those of the Nordic and V4 subregional groups, as well as that of the EU region. The seventh Subchapter gauges topics on the UNGA human rights identified as 'typical Nordic' or 'typical V4' themes—ascertaining to what extent these attributions may be accurate, and exploring, based on the data, the related policy nuances of the studied countries.

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[72] Starting on p.200.

In terms of exploring answers to the research questions, and testing the hypotheses, Subchapters 3 through 5, as well as 7 are centered around the main research question:

QI: What are the Nordic and Visegrád components of global EU human rights policy?

and its alternative hypothesis (**H_1I**) and two sub-hypotheses (**H_1I_N** and **H_1I_V**).

Subchapter 6 also contributes to **QI**, while exploring the secondary research question of the study and its two working hypotheses (**H_1II_N** and **H_1II_V**):[73]

QII: Do the subregional groups play a role in the EU's impaired external effectiveness in the human rights domain?

[73] See Chapter II and the section on *Research Questions and Hypotheses* (starting on p.97) for further details.

1. Collection and Description of Data

This Subchapter describes the qualitative and quantitative data consulted—or generated—for the purposes of the study. First, it provides an overall matrix of primary and secondary sources used; second, it lists the interviews conducted during the research project; and third, it briefly describes the UN voting data set used for the quantitative analysis.

Data Sources

The original aspiration of this study, at the time of writing of the detailed research proposal (2013–2014), was to conduct mixed-methods research which would primarily rely on qualitative sources of information—including UN verbatim records, as well as strategic documents and expert interviews as sources of primary data. The mix of sources to be used would gradually change as the research project moved forward. Data sources eventually consulted for the dissertation are summarized by type in *Table 8* below, corresponding to each of the 'levels' of the multi-level game metaphor drawn on in the study.[74]

Table 8. Data sources consulted for the dissertation

Source type	Level I	Level II	Level III
primary	UN voting data and verbatim records	spoken interventions at UNGA meetings	spoken interventions at UNGA meetings
'soft' primary	participant interviews (UN and permanent representation staff)	*not applicable*	expert interviews
secondary	scholarly literature	scholarly literature	scholarly literature

While the intention to triangulate has remained throughout the research project, many of the originally-planned interviews (which would have included interviews at most V4 and at least some Nordic capitals), were superseded by the versatility and increased availability of UN voting data and meeting records. The research design has seen an appreciation of these latter components, a less pronounced reliance on interviews, and the supersedence of other sources (i.e. strategic documents such as publications, statements, or national foreign policy strategies—at Levels II and III).[75]

[74] See the relevant discussion in the section on *Foreign Policy Analysis* in Chapter II, Subchapter 1 for details on the metaphor and its application to the present study.

[75] At the time of writing of the research proposal (2013–2014), UN voting data (described in the following section) were only available until 2012, while, during a 2016 update, the dataset would be expanded to include the complete period of study. Therefore, these data were analyzed to gain additional insight, at the 'expense' of the use of other sources which would have played a (larger) role per the original research design. The role of these voting records, as well as the information on national policy stances extracted from related UNGA meeting records, has been scaled up compared to the originally proposed design.

Interviews

Between 2013 and 2015, six interviews were conducted with participant and expert interviewees, providing primarily anecdotal evidence, and informing the research design by pointing towards sources and phenomena which would bear relevance to the study. The list of interviews and (anonymized) interviewees is provided in *Table 9* below. Interviews conducted for this study are referred to throughout the text of the dissertation when and where relevant, but it is to be noted that they are, first and foremost, used as supplementary data, therefore no stand-alone systematic analysis of their content is presented at any given point in the dissertation.

Table 9. List of interviews conducted

#	Interview type	Interviewee role	Place	Time
1	Participant	V4 country ambassador in UN Human Rights Council	Geneva, CH	May 8, 2012*
2	Participant	V4 country delegate in UNGA Third Committee	New York, USA	December 16, 2013
3	Participant	UN political affairs staff in UNGA Third Committee	New York, USA	December 17, 2013
4	Expert	University professor and researcher on V4 and EU foreign policy	Bratislava, SK	May 12, 2014
5	Expert	V4 researcher and former civic activist	Budapest, HU (phone-based)	July 9, 2014
6	Participant	Chargé d'affaires a.i. of V4 country permanent mission to the UN in Geneva	Geneva, CH	November 11, 2014
7	Expert	Professor of human rights and international development	Pécs, HU	June 5, 2015

* *Interview #1 was conducted for an earlier research project, before the present doctoral research was started, but it has informed the present study a great deal, and is therefore included in the list.*

UNGA Voting

The dissertation relies on the raw dataset on voting in the UNGA compiled by Voeten (2013), which contains records of UNGA roll-call votes on resolutions adopted between 1946 and 2015. This dataset is, at the time of writing, the most comprehensive data on UNGA voting behavior that is openly available. It contains records on the vote of each country on each of the resolutions that were put to a contested vote in the UNGA. Possible vote choices by each member state for each vote are 'yes,' 'abstain,' 'no,' 'absent,' and 'not a member.' In addition to listing the vote choice, each record is associated with one or more of the following issue codes, based on the topic of the pertaining resolution: 'Palestinian conflict,' 'nuclear weapons and nuclear material,' 'arms control and disarmament,' 'colonialism,' 'human rights,' and '(economic) development' (Bailey, Strezhnev & Voeten, n.d.).

Neither resolutions adopted without a vote (i.e. unanimously) or votes on rejected resolutions, parts of resolutions, motions or decisions are included in the dataset—data on such votes need to be extracted from the (narrative) meeting records of UNGA sessions.[76] Including these votes can be argued to further the comprehensiveness of any quantitative study on UN voting—however, as Rasch and Jin & Hosli have found, their inclusion yields only marginal differences in cohesion results (Rasch, 2008:p.213; and Jin & Hosli, 2012:p.1282). Without prejudice to their utility, the present study excludes these votes due to limitations to scope and length.

For the purposes of this dissertation, I created a subset of Voeten's data, containing only the voting records on resolutions related to human rights, and in the period studied in the dissertation (1994–2014)—corresponding to UNGA sessions 49–69, with December 2014, the end of the 69th regular session as the cut-off date. The resulting sub-dataset contains a total of 73,541 records (votes) on a total of 377 resolutions adopted in the UNGA.[77] For managing the dataset (including extraction, transformation, aggregation, etc.), as well as for visualizations, I used *Tableau*, while for simple arithmetic operations and functions (typically performed on various extracts of the dataset), I used *Microsoft Excel*. For inferential statistics, I used *R* with *Deducer*.

[76] See Luif (1995) for a study that includes all of these.

[77] I am, of course, ready to provide, through correspondence, access to any of the data files, Tableau workbooks, or Excel sheets used throughout the study.

2. Cohesion and Contestation

This Subchapter analyzes the two measures of group voting—i.e. of group cohesion and vote contestation—drawn from the scholarly literature and adapted to fit the objective of the study. The first section offers insight into the use of the *Cohesion Ratio* as applied to the EU and its two subgroups; and the second section does the same for the *Agreement Index*.

Group Cohesion: The Cohesion Ratio

Using the sub-dataset extracted from Voeten's raw data (2013), I computed *Cohesion Ratios* for each of the human rights resolutions in the dataset (per Hosli et al., 2010 and van Kampen, 2012):

$$C = |\, AVx - 0.5 \,| \times 2 \times 100$$

I computed both the *C1* and *C2* versions of the index: the former treating the weight of abstentions (0.5) as half of the weight of 'yes' votes (1); and the latter treating abstentions equally to no votes (0).[78]

The 'average vote' (*AVx*) concept warrants a closer look at this point, as it lies at the core of the notion captured by the *C* index, and its values will also, occasionally, be subjected to separate scrutiny in this study. For each resolution *x*, *AVx* may be computed as the weighted arithmetic mean of votes:

$$AVx = (n_{\text{yes}} \times w_{\text{yes}} + n_{\text{abst}} \times w_{\text{abst}} + n_{\text{no}} \times w_{\text{no}}) \,/\, n_{\text{total}}$$

where *n* equals the number of 'yes' / 'no' / 'abstain' / total votes on the resolution, and *w* equals the weight corresponding to 'yes' (=1 for both *C1* and *C2*), 'abstain' (=0.5 for *C1*, and 0 for *C2*), and 'no' (=0 for both *C1* and *C2*) votes. To arrive at the value of *C*, this 'average vote' is standardized by subtracting 0.5 (half the arithmetic difference between the 'yes' and the 'no' vote) and multiplying the absolute value of the result by 2. Finally, the decimal *C* is expressed as a percentage value, which may be read as 'the percentage of cohesion on resolution *x*.' For a unanimous vote, the value of *C* will be 100—including for a unanimous 'yes,' and for a unanimous 'no'—as both scenarios can be construed as cases of full cohesion (either in favor of or against the resolution).

A 'fuzzier' case of cohesion is 'cohesion' on abstention, and the degree to which it can be considered a meaningful concept—and what its meaning is. *C2*, in treating abstentions equally to 'no' votes, creates the (illusory) notion that abstentions should be as cohesive with each

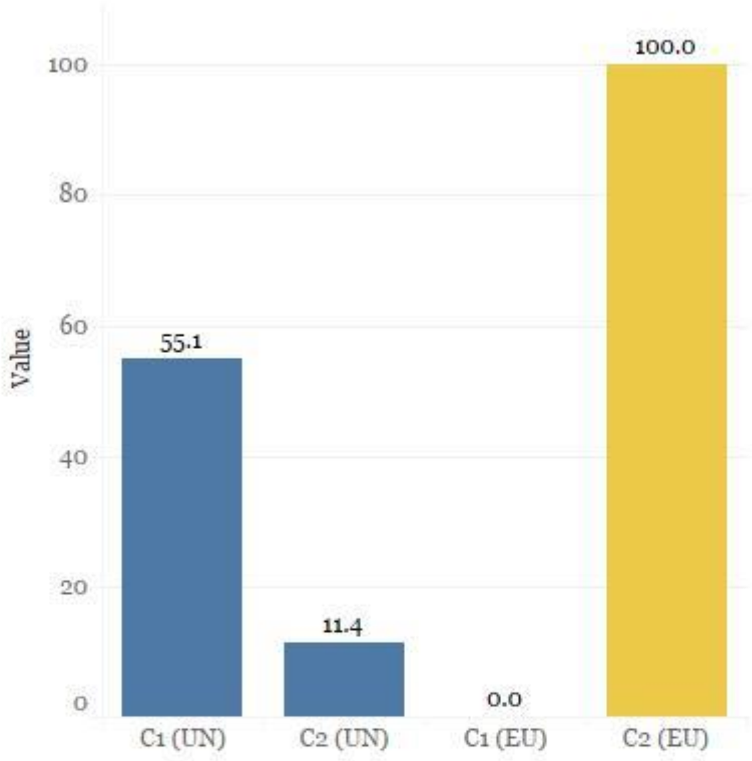
[78] See the section on *Measures of Cohesion* in Chapter I, Subchapter 1 for details.

other, and with ‘no’-s, as are ‘no’-s with each other; however, the reasons for abstaining might be very diverse. This is why van Kampen argues in favor of *C1* (2012:p.34).

Assigning abstentions half the ‘weight’ of ‘yes’ votes is one trajectory within scholarly tradition. This approach also speaks to the main limitation of treating voting preferences as dyads—and expressing differences between them as ‘distances,’ as in a unidimensional policy space. In addition, even if the policy space may be construed as unidimensional, in reality, there might be reasons for weighting an abstention as 0.1 (*almost a ‘no’*), and another one as 0.9 (*practically a ‘yes’*) depending on the exact political scenario, but any such aspirations would arguably make it impracticable to conduct large-N studies of voting behavior in the UN, limiting the researcher to case studies instead.

In lieu of comprehensive sensitivity testing, it is instructive to observe the case of a resolution for which the use of *C1* v. *C2* makes every bit of a difference within the EU context. I computed *C1* and *C2* values for resolution R/52/121 (1998)—which addressed family reunification and remittance payments by migrants—for all UNGA members, as well as for the EU28 separately. Values of the indices are depicted in *Figure 21* below. While the *C1* and *C2* values for UN are markedly different—with *C2* being substantially lower—, the difference between *C1* and *C2* for the EU is even more remarkable. What happened in the case of this resolution was that all of the EU member states abstained during the vote, which the *C1* index treats as zero cohesion (*AVx*=0.5) while *C2* treats it as full cohesion (*AVx*=0).

Figure 21.
UN and EU *Cohesion Ratios* for UNGA resolution R/52/121 (1998)



The case may be instructive not only in that it sheds light on a substantial limitation of the Cohesion Ratio (brought on by its standardization mechanism), but also in that while, per van Kampen's (2012) line of argument, there would be no obvious reason why abstentions should be rooted in the same policy stance *in general*, the counter-assertion that an otherwise cohesive group of countries (such as the EU) abstain on an issue *en bloc* for reasons of cohesion might gain credibility in *specific* cases. The counter-assumption will gain all the more credibility in policy domains in which the group of countries in question might be perceived to have a 'typical' or cohesive stance (even above and beyond the *typical* EU unity in human rights in general). To ascertain whether migration and remittances might have been such a 'typical (pan-)European' issue in 1998 goes beyond the aspirations of the present inquiry.

Setting the specific case aside, it might be observed that, when studying EU v. UN cohesion with the help of the Cohesion Ratio, the above difference between *C1* and *C2* in treating '*en-masse* abstention' clearly translates into a difference at the aggregate level: *Figure 22* (on p.109) juxtaposes the respective *C1* and *C2* value averages per UNGA session. Notwithstanding the possible disproportionalities created by this aggregation method, the difference is clearly visible.

Figure 22.
UN and EU Cohesion Ratio (*C1*, *C2*) averages per UNGA sessions 49–69 (1994–2014)

Note: blue—UN / yellow—EU

To determine whether the values of *C1* and *C2* are significantly different, a paired-sample t-test for mean difference can be performed. An otherwise cohesive group (such as the EU) can be assumed to abstain *en masse* in a much more coordinated and more frequent fashion as would an otherwise much less cohesive group of states (such as all UN members). *C1*, in assigning 0.5 weight to abstentions when aggregating them, can be hypothesized to 'reward' UN cohesion—or, conversely, to 'punish' EU cohesion. At the same time, *C2* can be hypothesized to do the exact opposite, i.e. 'reward' the EU and 'punish' the UN. This asymmetry is also clearly visible from the example in *Figure 21*, as well as the average values presented by UNGA session in *Figure 22*. Therefore, directional hypotheses for a one-tailed t-test are appropriate, which can be stated as follows.

For the UN:

$$H_{0(C,UN)}: \mu_{d(C1,C2)} = 0$$
$$H_{1(C,UN)}: \mu_{d(C1,C2)} > 0$$

For the EU:

$$H_{0(C,EU)}: \mu_{d(C1,C2)} = 0$$
$$H_{1(C,EU)}: \mu_{d(C1,C2)} < 0$$

where μ_d equals the mean difference between *C1* and *C2* values.

Both of the tests reveal a significant difference (i.e. both $H_{0(C,UN)}$ and $H_{0(C,EU)}$ can be rejected at $p < 0.05$ (also at $p < 0.01$). It can be concluded that the mean difference between *C1* and *C2* values for the UN is positive; and the mean difference between *C1* values and *C2* values for the EU is negative, which confirms the above-described negative 'bias' of *C1* and the positive 'bias' of the *C2* index towards the cohesive regional group that is the EU. The statistically significant mean difference between the Cohesion Ratio indices reinforces the necessity of observing careful judgement regarding their use for the analysis of voting cohesion.

For a cohesive group of countries (such as the EU, or any of its subgroups), and in a policy domain in which they tend to be the most cohesive (human rights), it appears logical to opt for the *C2* version of the Cohesion Ratio, as the reasons for *en-bloc* abstention may be as coherent as for an *en-bloc* 'no' vote.

***

Extending the line of argument presented on abstentions above, it can be assumed that staying away from a vote might also have more coherent reasons for such a group of countries in such a policy context. Therefore, in the following, to supplement Hosli et al.'s two version of the Cohesion Ratio (2010), a *C3* version is computed for the purposes of studying EU-subregional group cohesion (Nordic and V4) in the UNGA. For *C3*, 'yes' votes are weighted 1, while 'no' votes, abstentions and absences are weighted 0, per the following formula:

$$AVx = (n_{\text{yes}} \times w_{\text{yes}} + n_{\text{abst}} \times w_{\text{abst}} + n_{\text{no}} \times w_{\text{no}} + n_{abse} \times w_{abse}) \;/\; n_{\text{total}}$$

To sum up the arithmetic differences among the three versions of the Cohesion Ratio referred to in this section, *Table 10* below summarizes the parameters used to compute each of the three indices.

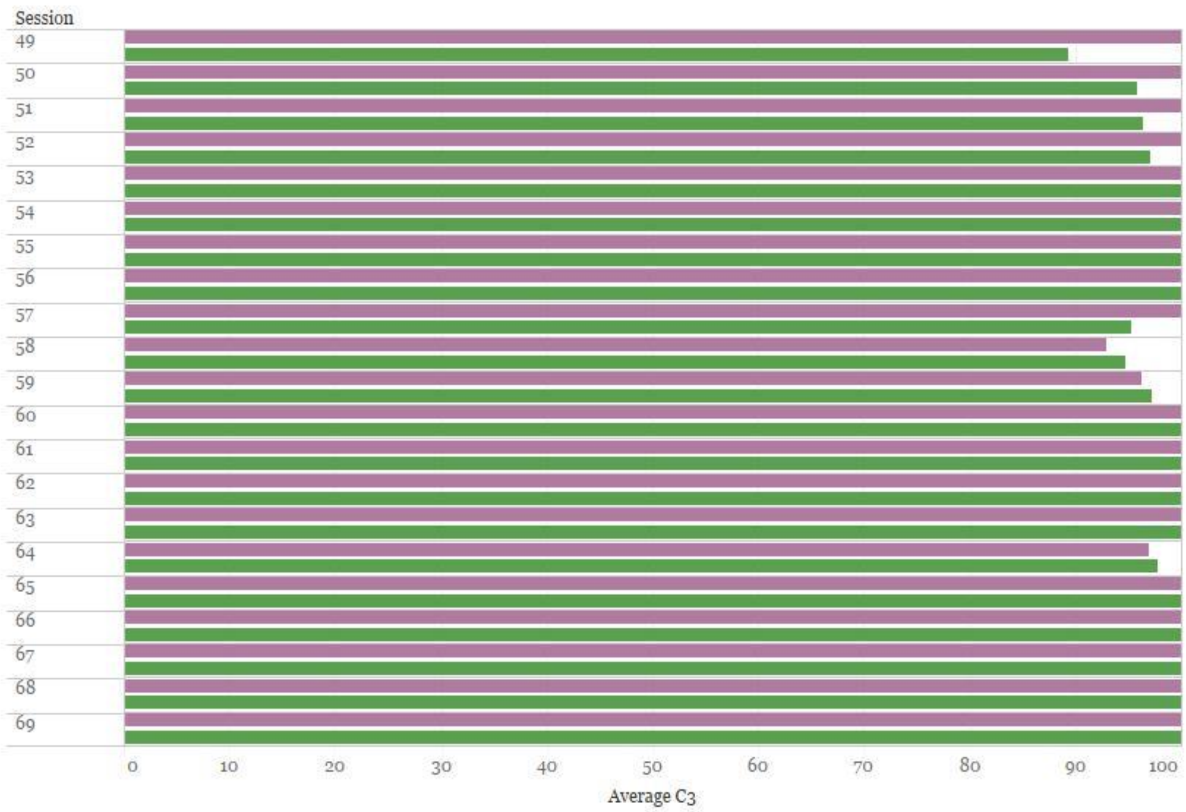
Table 10.
Summary of vote weights used for different versions of the Cohesion Ratio

	C1	**C2**	**C3**
w_{yes}	1	1	1
w_{abst}	0.5	0	0
w_{no}	0	0	0
w_{abse}	n.a.	n.a.	0

Note: w_{abse} is not applicable to C1 and C2, as these indices treat absences as missing data.

Based on the above, *Figure 23* below visualizes the average *C3* values for the Nordic and V4 groups per each of the UNGA sessions in the study period.

Figure 23.
Nordic and V4 Cohesion Ratio (*C3*) averages per UNGA sessions 49–69 (1994–2014)



Note: purple—Nordic / green—V4

As is visible from the figure, eight of the twenty UNGA sessions in the period of study saw less-than-full cohesion among the countries of the Nordic and/or V4 group based on the value of *C3*. A look at the voting data aggregated by resolution reveals that a very low number of contested votes per each of the sessions (1–3 votes per session, 12 in total) with 'Nordic- or V4-contested' votes are the cause of the *C3* values being lower than 100.

Vote Contestation: The Agreement Index

An *Agreement Index* (AI) for votes of UN or EU member states can be computed from Voeten's dataset (2013) for each separate resolution. For resolution i:[79]

$$AI = \frac{MAX(Y_i, N_i, A_i) - 0.5[(Y_i + N_i + A_i) - MAX\,(Y_i, N_i, A_i)]}{Y_i + N_i + A_i}$$

where Y_i, N_i, and A_i are the number of 'yes,' and 'no' votes and abstentions on the resolution, respectively. In Burmester & Jankowski's account (2014), the *AI* expresses divergence from a majority vote—and is best-fitted for measuring the *contestation level* of a vote, i.e. the magnitude of the majority vis-à-vis the minority.

The above version of *AI* will be referred to as *AI2* in the following—consistently with the numbering of *C2*—as both of them afford equal weight to 'no' votes and abstentions.

It is meaningful to also compute an *AI1* version of the index which takes abstentions into account with half the weight of 'yes' and 'no' votes. Such a transformation is also relevant to counter Burmester & Jankowski's criticism of the *AI* (2014) that, in affording the same status to 'no' votes and abstentions, the index masks difference in scale between a pair of countries voting 'yes' and 'no'; and 'yes' or 'no' and 'abstain'—the latter of which, similarly to Lijphart (1963), they consider to be importantly smaller. To reflect this difference in scale, the *AI*1 version of the index may be computed as follows:

$$AI1 = \frac{MAX(Y_i, N_i, 0.5A_i) - 0.5[(Y_i + N_i + 0.5A_i) - MAX\,(Y_i, N_i, 0.5A_i)]}{Y_i + N_i + 0.5A_i}$$

AI2 (equaling *AI* 'plain' above) is repeated below, for ease of reference:

$$AI2 = \frac{MAX(Y_i, N_i, A_i) - 0.5[(Y_i + N_i + A_i) - MAX\,(Y_i, N_i, A_i)]}{Y_i + N_i + A_i}$$

Average *AI1* and *AI2* values of UN and EU member states per UNGA session in the study period are visualized in *Figure 24* (on p. 116). Visually, the difference in session averages is much less marked than it was for *C1* and *C2* (see *Figure 22* on p.109).

The *AI1* and *AI2* indices for individual resolutions also warrant closer scrutiny, as their arithmetic treatment of abstentions produces different results per resolution than does *C1* vis-

[79] From Hix, Noury & Roland (2005:p.215) — see the section on *Measures of Cohesion* in Chapter I, Subchapter 1 for details.

à-vis *C2*.[80] In a similar vein to the case of the *C1* and *C2* Cohesion Ratios, paired sample t-tests may be performed on the mean difference between *AI1* and *AI2* values per resolution. The directional hypotheses for these (one-tailed) tests are as follows:

For the UN:

$$H_{0(AI,UN)}: \mu_{d(AI1,AI2)} = 0$$
$$H_{1(AI,UN)}: \mu_{d(AI1,AI2)} > 0$$

For the EU:

$$H_{0(AI,EU)}: \mu_{d(AI1,AI2)} = 0$$
$$H_{1(AI,EU)}: \mu_{d(AI1,AI2)} < 0$$

where μ_d equals the mean difference between *AI1* and *AI2* values. The results of the t-tests show that $H_{0(AI,UN)}$ can be rejected at *(p < 0.05 (p < 0.01),* however, $H_{0(AI,EU)}$ cannot ($p = 0.9852$). It appears that while *AI1* is slightly 'biased' towards the UN (as is *C1*), *AI2* is *not* towards the cohesive regional group that is the EU. That said, a two-tailed t-test for the EU with the below hypotheses does return a significant result at $p < 0.05$ (not at $p < 0.01$).

$$H_{0(AI,EU)}: \mu_{d(AI1,AI2)} = 0$$
$$H_{1(AI,EU)}: \mu_{d(AI1,AI2)} \neq 0$$

The conclusion that can be drawn from the above is that the two *AI* indices do function differently for the EU, which is to say that the mean difference between these two indices is significantly different from zero, therefore, $H_{0(AI,EU)}$ can be rejected for the two-tailed test. However, the failure to reject $H_{0(AI,EU)}$ for the one-tailed test reveals that there is not enough evidence to conclude that the *AI2* version of the Agreement Index favors the EU compared to the *AI1* version—as opposed to the finding on the *C2* version of the Cohesion Ratio compared to *C1* (see previous section).

Not over-interpreting the results of the tests, it can be noted in conclusion that, while the value of the Cohesion Ratio is sensitive to the treatment of abstentions in this study, the Agreement Index is less so. Furthermore, while *AI1* and *AI2* are—to some extent—different, these differences do not translate into such a clear skew towards either all-of-UN or (and especially) towards regional group cohesion data, as do the differences between *C1* and *C2*. This assumption, which could already be formulated based on the visual representations per session in *Figure 21, Figure 22* and *Figure 24*, is also confirmed by the tests of mean difference.

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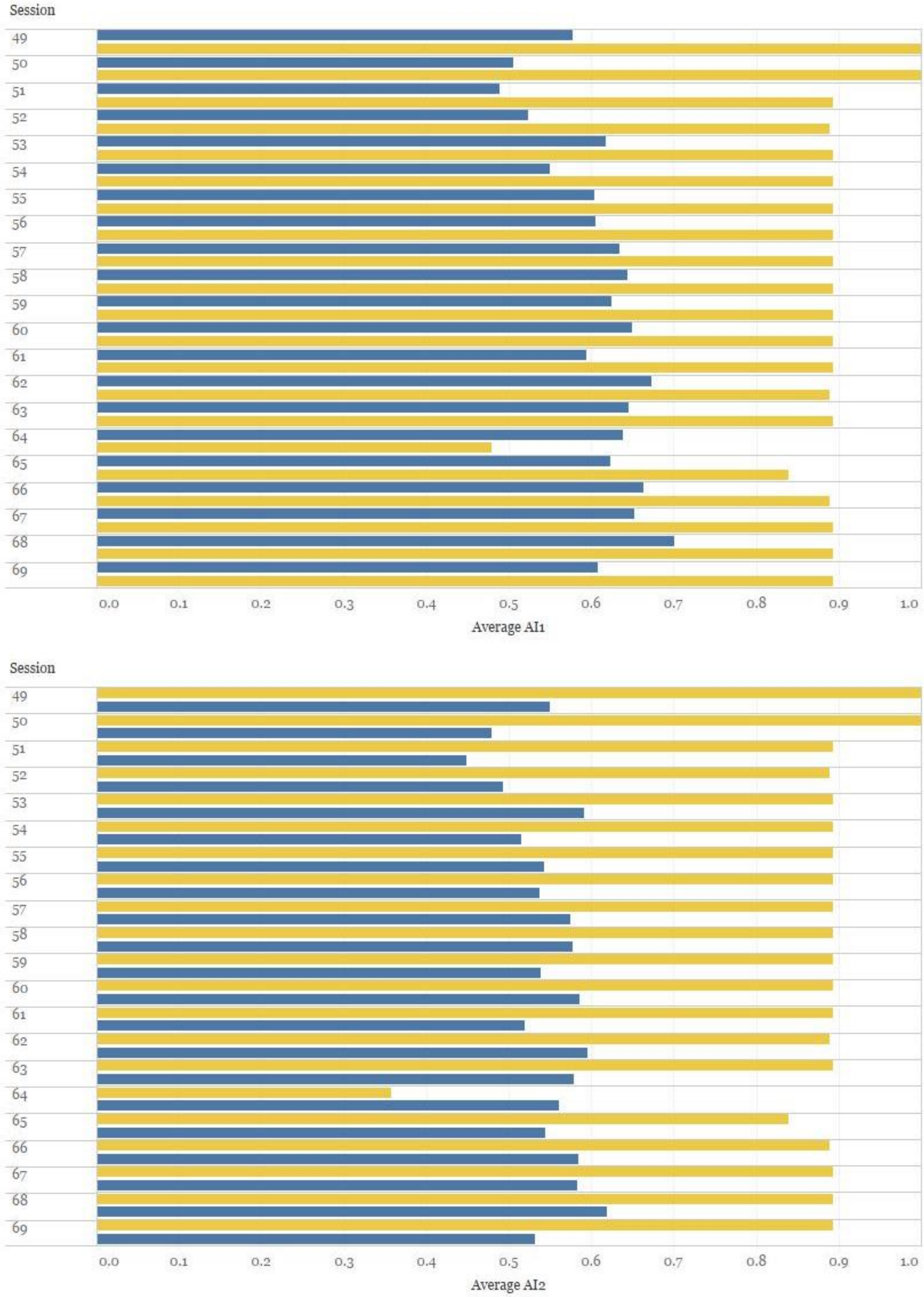
[80] See *Figure 21* on p. 108, and the related discussion on the use of *C1* and *C2* starting on p. 108.

Consequently, for the purposes of this study, the choice between *AI1* and *AI2* does not appear as important from a methodological perspective as does the choice between *C1* and *C2*. Nevertheless, *AI2* is considered slightly preferable, because it can be assumed to produce more balanced measures of cohesion for the cohesive group that is the EU, as well as its two subregional groups that serve as the objects of the study.

Figure 24.
UN and EU Agreement Index (*AI1*, *AI2*) averages per UNGA sessions 49–69 (1994–2014)



Note: blue—UN / yellow—EU

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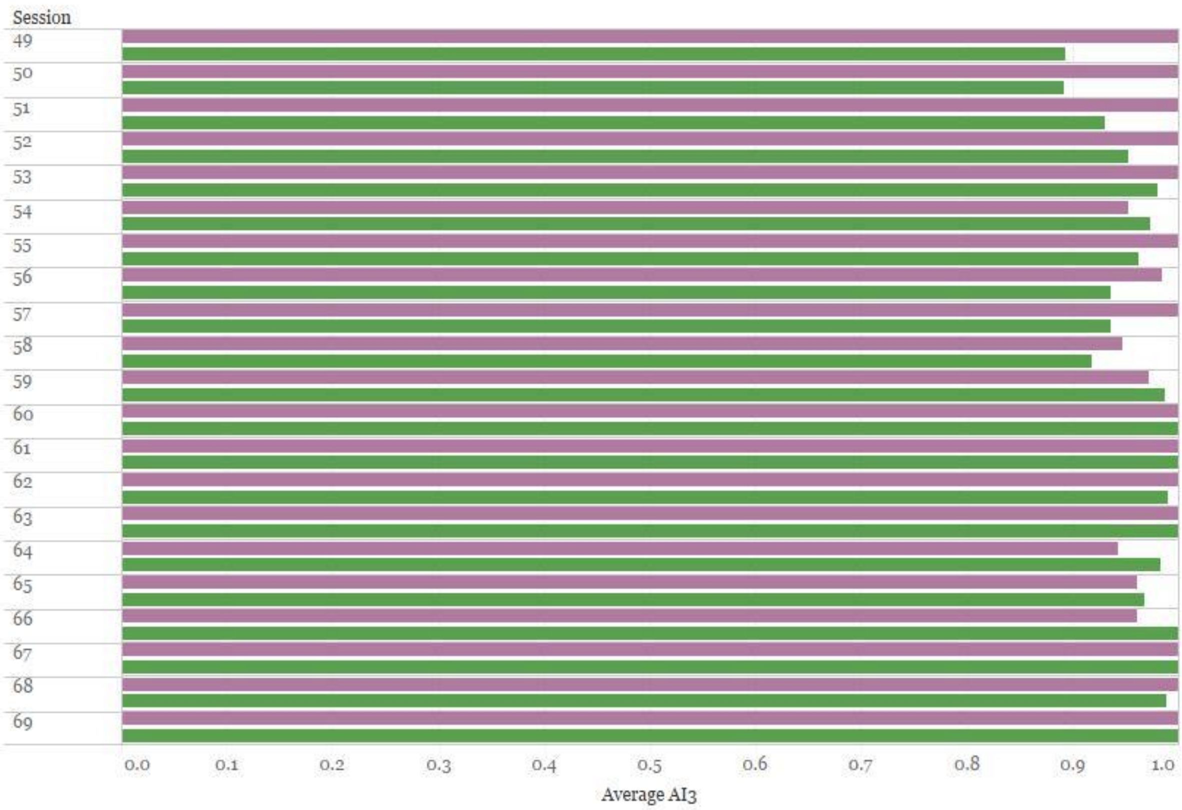
Following the same line of argument as was used for computing the *C3* version of the Cohesion Ratio, an *AI3* version of the Agreement Index may also be computed. This is done based on the formula for *AI1,* and taking into account the 'partial splits' caused by absences ('yes'/absent and 'no'/absent) equally to partial splits caused by abstentions ('yes'/abstain and 'no'/abstain).[81] *AI3* is computed as follows:

$$AI3 = \frac{MAX\left(Y_i, N_i, 0.5A_{i,} 0.5X_i\right) - 0.5[(Y_i + N_i + 0.5A_i + 0.5X_i) - MAX\ (Y_i, N_i, 0.5A_i, 0.5X_i)]}{Y_i + N_i + 0.5A_i + 0.5X_i}$$

where X_i is the number of countries absent from the vote on resolution *i*. Average *AI3* values per UNGA session for both subregional groups are visualized in *Figure 25* below.

Figure 25.
Nordic and V4 Agreement Index (*AI3*) averages per UNGA sessions 49–69 (1994–2014)



Note: purple—Nordic / green—V4

[81] Taking Burmester & Jankowski's (2014) criticism of the *AI* into account (see above), *AI2* (and not *AI1)* is used as a basis of computing *AI3*.

3. Subregional Voting

The present Subchapter rounds up the case for applying the *AI2* and *C2* versions of the Agreement Index and Cohesion Ratio, respectively, for the purposes of the study. Subsequently, it plots and compares *AI2* and *C2* values for the UN, EU, Nordic Group and V4, and analyzes the differences observed between these values.

Use of Indices

The raw dataset of voting records aggregated by vote choice yields two important observations regarding the recorded absences of the objects of the study. Firstly, none of the Nordic countries were absent from any of the votes, therefore, for this group of countries, values of *C2* and *C3*, as well as *AI1* and *AI3*, respectively, are equal. Secondly, a sporadic absence from a low number of votes can be observed for the V4 countries (from votes on a total of 10 out of the 377 resolutions included in the dataset). *Table 11* below presents a list of votes with recorded V4 country absences.

Table 11. Absence of V4 countries from votes on human rights resolutions adopted at UNGA sessions 49–69 (1994–2014)

UNGA session	Resolution	Date	Absent
49 ('94-95)	R/49/62A	4 December 1994	Slovakia
	R/49/62B	4 December 1994	Slovakia
	R/49/202	6 December 1994	Slovakia
	R/49/243	3 April 1995	Czech Republic
50 ('95-96)	R/50/84A	6 December 1995	Hungary
	R/50/84B	6 December 1995	Hungary
	R/50/138	5 December 1995	Poland
51 ('96-97)	R/51/103	5 December 1996	Poland
53 ('98-99)	R/53/155	4 December 1998	Czech Republic
62 ('07-08)	R/62/80	10 December 2007	Hungary

Notably, V4 absences do not follow any obvious pattern—rather, their sporadic nature appears to suggest that V4 countries do not have a tendency to 'vote with their feet'—that is, that reasons for their absence are likely *extrinsic* to the subject matter of the vote. It can further be noted that two absences took place sequentially (i.e. Slovakia was absent on 4 and 6 December 1994—no vote was taken on 5 December), and no single instance of 'group absenteeism' is observable.

Therefore, the evidence suggests that the assumption that absences may be worth treating as a vote option may be dropped for the objects of this study. Consequently, the use of *C3* and *AI3* can be argued to cause a decrease in the parsimony of the Cohesion Ratio and Agreement Index (i.e. adding 'noise') for no meaningful gain.

In sum, the present inquiry confirms the appropriateness of treating absences as missing data (Lijphart, 1963; Voeten, 2000; 2015; Birnberg, 2009; Hosli et al., 2010; van Kampen, 2012; Burmester & Jankowski, 2014). It also weighs in favor of the use of the *C2* version of the Cohesion Ratio and the *AI2* version of the Agreement Index for the purposes of this study, but it does not advise strongly between *AI1* and *AI2*. To treat the notion of abstentions uniformly throughout the study (i.e. as a *genuine* vote option), as well based on the finding that it is a more balanced measure for the purposes of this study than is *AI1* (see previous Subchapter), the *AI2* version of the Agreement Index will be used.

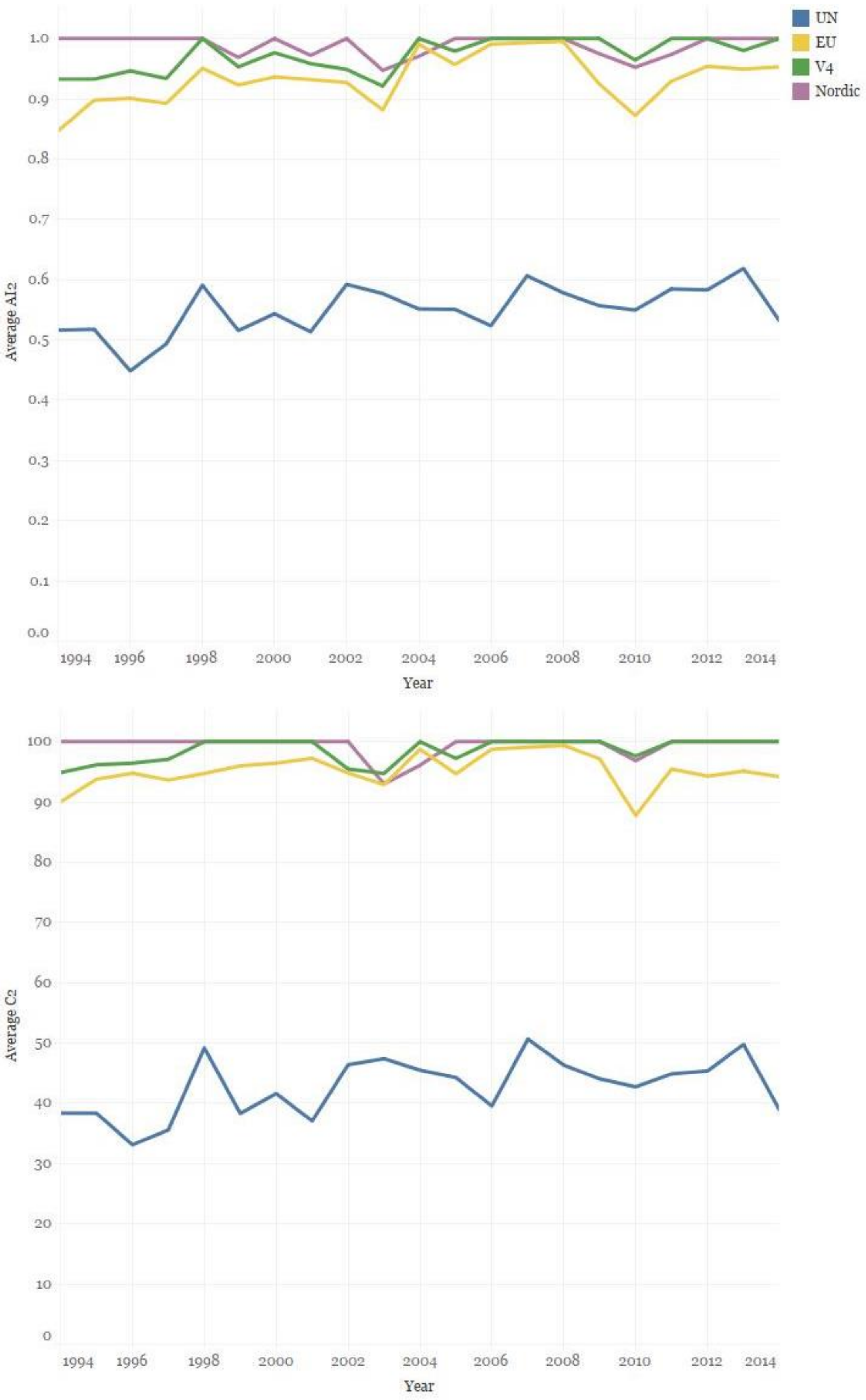
AI2 and C2

The *AI2* and *C2* values (averaged by year throughout the study period) are visualized as line charts in *Figure 26* (on p.120). A methodological point to be taken note of is that the data visualized in these figures are not properly fitted for line-graph representation, as they are not, in fact, proper time-series data, equally spaced in time. Furthermore, aggregation of UNGA votes by year is arguably less appropriate than aggregation by UNGA sessions, which run across two calendar years each.[82] That said, line charts are included at this point for demonstrative purposes only—so as to present an overall visual image of cohesion trends, as well as to compare overall cohesion levels for the UN, EU, Nordic and V4 countries, throughout the study period.

Some observations can be made with the help of *Figure 26* even without treating it as a 'proper' time series. Firstly, EU cohesion (on human rights, in the study period) is markedly higher than overall UN cohesion—whichever of the two indices is used. This is in keeping with the widely-described fact that the EU enjoys a high degree of cohesion in the UNGA, and that human rights is the policy domain in which it tends to be the most cohesive. Since, as can be observed in *Figure 26,* the EU is *almost* fully cohesive *almost* throughout the entire period, it is difficult to observe a major difference between its level of cohesion and those of the Nordic and V4 subregional groups.

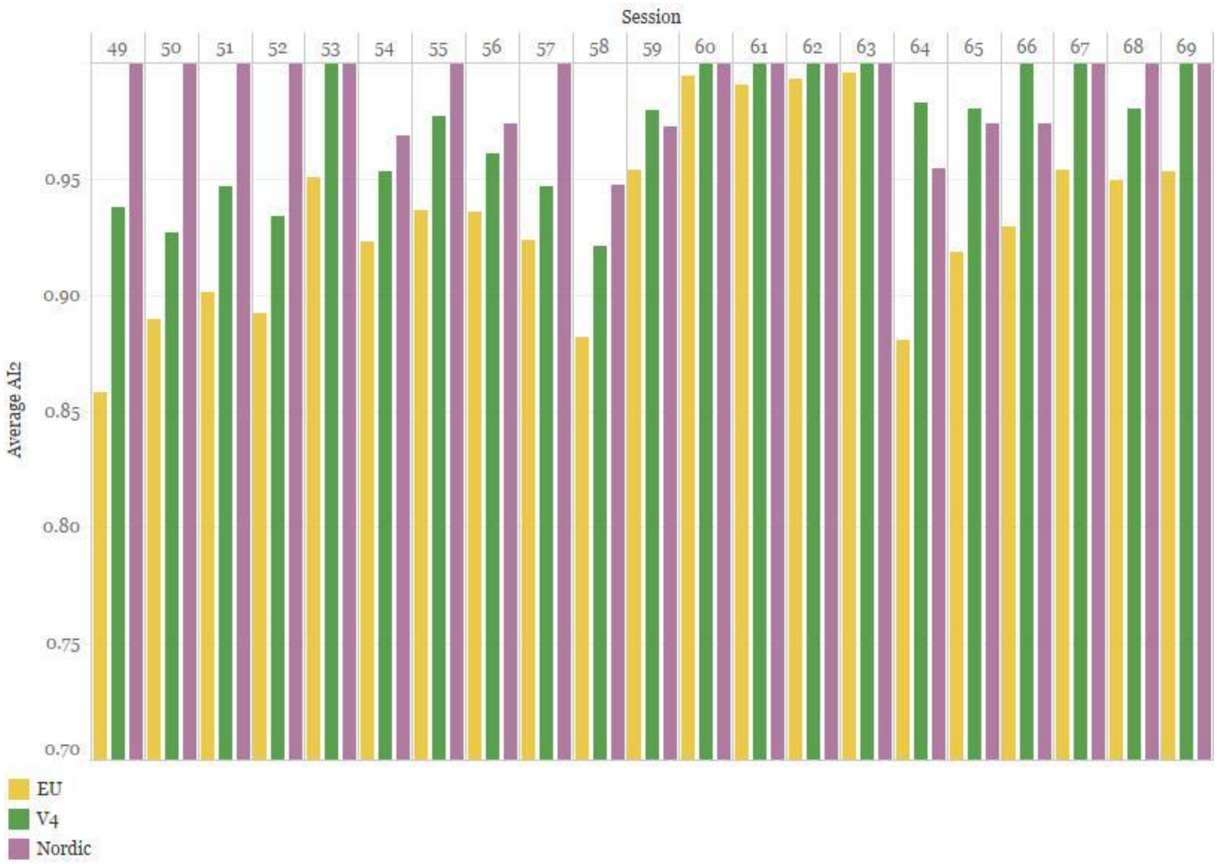
[82] Note: For session 69, December 2014 is used as the cutoff date in this study.

Figure 26. UN, EU, Nordic and V4 Agreement Index (*AI2*) and Cohesion Ratio (*C2*) averages by year, 1994–2014



The difference between EU and subregional cohesion becomes all the more apparent if cohesion data are aggregated by UNGA session—see *Figure 27* and *Figure 28* below.

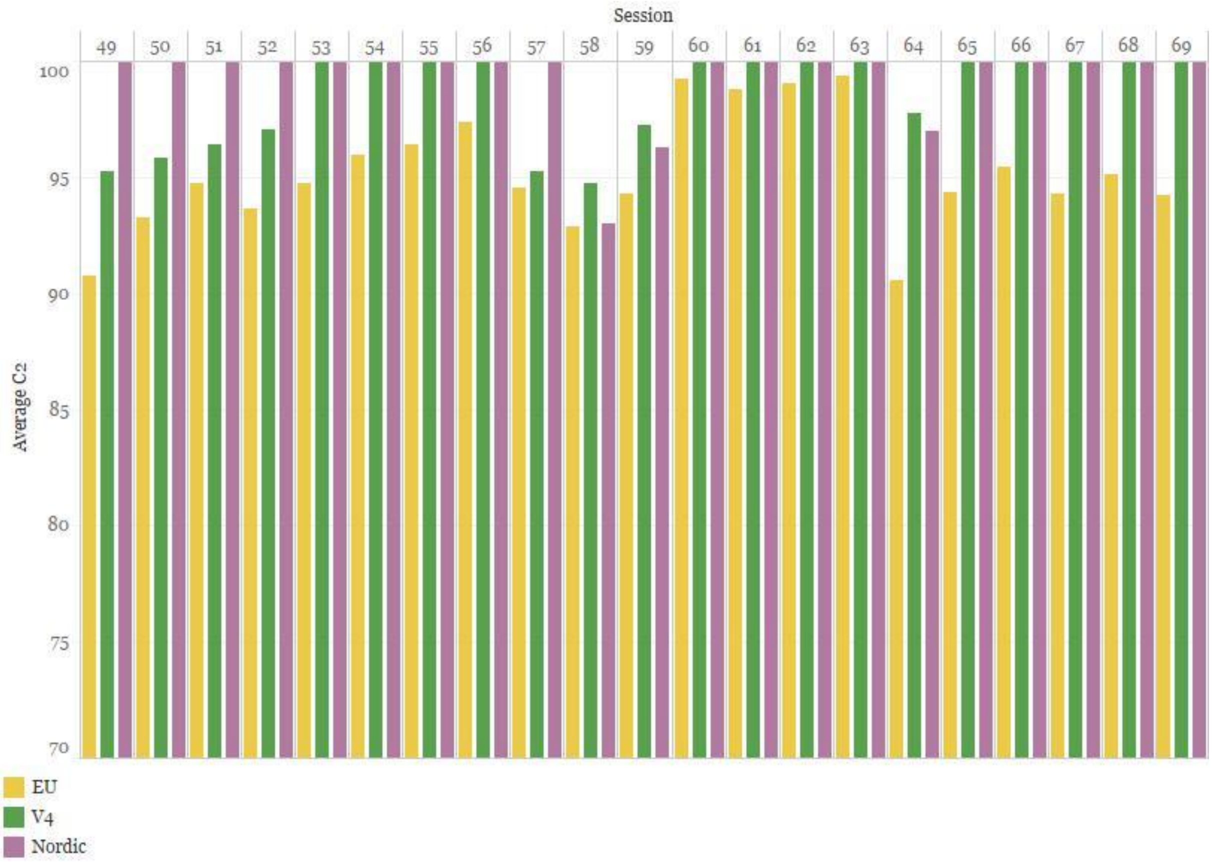
Figure 27.
EU, Nordic and V4 Agreement Index (*AI2*) averages per UNGA sessions 49–69 (1994–2014)



As is visible from *Figure 27*, the average value of *AI2* is higher for both the Nordic and V4 groups than it is for the EU in each of the sessions in the study period. In addition to that, the average Nordic *AI2* value is as high as, or higher than the average V4 *AI2* value for most of UNGA sessions studied—with the exception of sessions 59, 64, 65 and 66.

The average values of *C2* paint a similar picture—see *Figure 28* below:

Figure 28.
EU, Nordic and V4 Cohesion Ratio (*C2*) averages per UNGA sessions 49–69 (1994–2014)



As in the case of *AI2*, the average Nordic and V4 *C2* values are higher for every session than the average EU *C2* value. As is visible from *Figure 28* above, the Nordic *C2* average is higher than or equal to the V4 average in all but three sessions: 58, 59 and 64. Interestingly, only two of these sessions overlap with those indicated by the average values of *AI2* (sessions 59 and 64).

***

Having observed that—unsurprisingly for subregional groups—the average Nordic and V4 *AI2* and *C2* is higher than the average EU *AI2* and *C2*, respectively, a one-tailed t-test can be performed for the difference of means (two-sample test). The following directional hypotheses may be formulated:

For *AI2*:

$$H_{0(AI2,\,NOR)}: \mu_{d(NOR,EU)} = 0$$
$$H_{1(AI2,\,NOR)}: \mu_{d(NOR,EU)} > 0$$

$$H_{0(AI2,\,V4)}: \mu_{d(V4,EU)} = 0$$
$$H_{1(AI2,\,V4)}: \mu_{d(V4,EU)} > 0$$

For *C2*:

$$H_{0(C2,\,NOR)}: \mu_{d(NOR,EU)} = 0$$
$$H_{1(C2,\,NOR)}: \mu_{d(NOR,EU)} > 0$$

$$H_{0(C2,\,V4)}: \mu_{d(V4,EU)} = 0$$
$$H_{1(C2,\,V4)}: \mu_{d(V4,EU)} > 0$$

For the Nordic v. EU *AI2*, the result is significant at $p < 0.05$ (p-value is < .000001); as is for the V4 v. EU *AI2* (p-value is .000054.) For the Nordic v. EU *C2*, the result is also significant at $p < 0.05$ (p-value is < .00001); as is for the V4 *C2* v. EU *C2* (p-value is .000026). Consequently, interpreting the differences between the indices, it can be stated that, based on the values of *C2* and *AI2*, both the Nordic and V4 groups are (1) more cohesive, and (2) have a smaller tendency to dissent from their respective group majorities, than does the EU group.

***

To compare the Nordic and V4 indices, a two-sample t-test for difference in means can be performed. Having observed that Nordic cohesion and agreement values tend to be higher than V4 values, directional hypotheses can be formulated for each of the two indices.

For *AI2*:

$$H_{0(AI2)}: \mu_{d(NOR,V4)} = 0$$
$$H_{1(AI2)}: \mu_{d(NOR,V4)} > 0$$

For *C2*:

$$H_{0(C2)}: \mu_{d(NOR,V4)} = 0$$
$$H_{1(C2)}: \mu_{d(NOR,V4)} > 0$$

The one-tailed test for *AI2* returns a significant result at $p < 0.05$; however, the test for *C2* does not (p-value is 0.129). It is possible to restate the hypotheses for *C2* as per the two-tailed t-test, as follows:

For *C2*:

$$H_{0(C2)}: \mu_{d(NOR,V4)} = 0$$
$$H_{1(C2)}: \mu_{d(NOR,V4)} \neq 0$$

The two-tailed test for *C2* does not return a significant result at $p < 0.5$ (p-value is 0.259) either.

The tests for the difference in means for *AI2*—which, according to Burmester & Jankowski, 2014, measures divergence from a majority vote, i.e. vote contestation—conclude that members of the Nordic group tend to diverge less from the Nordic majority than do the V4 countries from the V4 majority.

The tests for the difference in means for *C2* conclude that the cohesion levels of the Nordic and V4 groups are not significantly different. All in all, however, it is difficult to reconcile the opposite results of these two tests, conceptually. With the fact remaining that only one of the two indicators chosen to measure group alignment have proven to be significantly different for the two groups, the evidence does not provide for a clear departure from the overall null-hypothesis that there would be no significant difference between how closely the V4 and Nordics vote together as a group.

Summing up the observations from the *AI2* and *C2* values of the two subregional groups, the following observations can be drawn. First, in the study period (1994–2014), none of the Nordic countries were absent from any of the human rights votes in the UNGA, and only a sporadic absence of V4 countries could be detected (10 out of 377 resolutions)—likely explained by factors that are extrinsic to the votes. Second, both *AI2* and *C2* are generally higher for both the Nordic and V4 groups than they are for the EU in the study period—with the mean differences being statistically significant. Third, the average Nordic *AI2* and *C2* values are as high as, or higher than the respective average V4 *AI2* and *C2* values for most of UNGA sessions studied. T-tests for the difference in means for subregional *AI2*s conclude that members of the Nordic group tend to diverge less from the Nordic majority than do the V4 countries from the V4 majority. The tests for the difference in means for subregional *C2*s conclude, however, that the cohesion levels of the Nordic and V4 groups are not significantly different.

4. Intragroup Splits

Observations of trends based on average *AI2* and *C2* levels warrant a closer look at the individual votes that are driving these trends. As the number of votes contested within each of the two subregional groups is small, it is possible to list all of them in an easily-digestible form.

Based on the values of the *AI2* and *C2* indices, a total of 29 votes on adopted resolutions were contested within one or both of the subregional groups during the twenty years of the study period (1994–2014). *Table 12* on p.126 lists the votes on these resolutions. Looking at the individual voting records, it can be noted that none of the contested resolutions saw 'hard' three-way splits ('yes'/'no'/'abstain'), either in the Nordic or in the V4 group. In addition, in 28 of the 29 cases, contestation manifested in its 'soft' version as well, i.e. votes featured intragroup splits between 'yes' and 'abstain', or 'no' and 'abstain'—and not 'yes' and 'no.'[83] The single case of 'hard' contestation was brought on by the Czech Republic in the case of resolution R/59/280 (2005) on human cloning. On this resolution, the Czech Republic voted 'no' (together with the Nordic countries), in opposition to the other V4 countries' 'yes' votes.[84]

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[83] Even though abstentions are, for the purposes of this inquiry, generally considered to be conceptually further away from 'yes' votes than from 'no' votes (and are treated by the *C2* and *AI2* indices equally to 'no' votes), this is not to say that a 'yes'/'abstain' split would be equivalent to a 'yes'/'no' split.

[84] See the section on *Human Cloning* starting on p.138.

Table 12.
UNGA human rights resolutions adopted 1994–2014 with contested Nordic or V4 votes, based on value of the Agreement Index (*AI2*) and Cohesion Ratio *(C2)*

UNGA session	Year	Resolution	AI2 Nordic	AI2 V4	C2 Nordic	C2 V4
49	1994	R/49/150	1	0.625	100	100
49	1994	R/49/202	1	0.5	100	33.33
50	1995	R/50/138	1	0.5	100	100
50	1995	R/50/190	1	0.625	100	50
51	1996	R/51/83	1	0.625	100	100
51	1996	R/51/111	1	0.625	100	50
52	1997	R/52/112	1	0.625	100	100
52	1997	R/52/136	1	0.625	100	100
52	1997	R/52/139	1	0.625	100	50
54	1999	R/54/151	1	0.625	100	100
54	1999	R/54/175	0.5	0.625	100	100
55	2000	R/55/86	1	0.625	100	100
56	2001	R/56/146	1	0.625	100	100
56	2001	R/56/150	0.5	1	100	100
56	2001	R/56/232	1	0.625	100	100
57	2002	R/57/175	1	0,25	100	0
57	2002	R/57/196	1	0.625	100	100
58	2003	R/58/99	1	0.625	100	50
58	2003	R/58/162	1	0.625	100	100
58	2003	R/58/172	0.5	1	33.33	100
58	2003	R/58/173	0.5	0.625	33.33	50
58	2003	R/58/245	1	0.625	100	100
59	2004	R/59/185	0.5	1	33.33	100
59	2005	R/59/280	1	0.625	100	50
64	2009	R/64/172	0.5	1	100	100
64	2010	R/64/292	0.5	0.625	33.33	50
65	2010	R/65/219	0.5	0.625	100	100
66	2011	R/66/143	0.5	1	100	100
68	2013	R/68/151	1	0.625	100	100

Note: Indices signaling a contested vote (AI2<1; C2<100) are marked in red.

Color coding of resolution IDs: orange: mercenaries / blue: right to development / green: Kosovo /purple: racism and xenophobia.

Branching out from the contested votes listed in *Table 12* above, *Table 13* below summarizes the results of targeted keyword searches in the speeches database of the United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISnet). The four most frequent topics of contestation (mercenaries, right to development, Kosovo, racism/xenophobia) are complemented by two salient topics which saw one contested vote each in the study period: Iran and human cloning.

Table 13.
Number of interventions by delegates of Nordic and V4 countries in the UNGA plenary and committees on topics that saw contested votes 1994–2014

	Mercenaries	Right to development	Kosovo	Racism/ xenophobia	Iran	Cloning
SE	0	1	0	0	0	3
FI	0	3	1*	0	1	2
DK	0	0	1*	1	0	1
PL	1	0	0	2	0	3
CZ	0	0	1	2	5	0
SK	0	0	2*	1	0	2
HU	0	0	1	3	0	1
Total	**1**	**4**	**6**	**9**	**6**	**12**

* *Three of the six interventions on Kosovo (one each by Denmark, Finland and Slovakia—all in 2008) pertained to Kosovo's declaration of independence, and not to human rights issues.*

Source of data: UNBISnet, compiled by. A.M. based on targeted keyword searches.

These interventions—and the debates that served as their context—are further explored in the sections below.

Mercenaries

Remarkably, 9 of the 29 total contested votes—all 9 of which were contested within the V4—pertained to the use of mercenaries 'to violate human rights and to impede the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination.' The topic is one of the recurring themes of the UNGA agenda—a resolution was voted on and adopted on it each year, against a clear 'no' vote of the EU majority (EU *AVx* between 0.00 and 0.04). In all but one session (session 53, 1998), the V4 assumed a two-way split on the topic ('no'/'abstain'). In the first five cases of contestation (1994–1999), Hungary voted 'no' on the resolution, while the other three V4 countries abstained.[85] In the remaining four votes (2000–2004), Poland and the Czech Republic joined the 'no' coalition, with only Slovakia abstaining.

[85] Except for session 50 (1995), when Poland was absent from the vote.

This topic has been a clear-cut case of a classic 'West v. rest' division in the UNGA—as evidenced by the intervention of the Polish representative at a GA3 meeting during the 66th UNGA session (November 11, 2011).[86] The Polish delegate, Ms. Grabianowska, speaking on behalf of the EU (as well as candidate, associated and several other like-minded countries), explained that the EU would vote against the draft resolution because it did not agree with its conflation of mercenaries with private security companies—or that this issue be discussed in GA3 or the HRC, 'from the perspective of human rights or of the threat posed by such activity to the rights of peoples to self-determination' in the first place (A/C.3/66/SR.45, 2011:p.6).[87] In this light, and bearing in mind the virtually zero value of the EU average vote, no evidence supports treating 'no'/'abstain' vote splits within the EU (or the V4) as even 'soft' versions of contestation. It might also be noted that the split votes detailed above occurred exclusively in the first decade of the study period (between 1994 and 2003)—none in the second, which signals approximation leading to full alignment on the issue within the EU and its subgroups.

Right to Development

The second most frequent source of contestation in the period studied is the 'right to development,' which, as argued in Chapter *II*, might be considered a 'Nordic topic.'[88] In the study period, seven resolutions were passed on this topic with a split vote within either of the subregional groups. Two of these resolutions were passed with the support of the EU (EU *AVx*=0.96), and the other five clearly without (EU *AVx* between 0.00 and 0.11). Resolutions favored by the EU and those opposed would appear to the casual reader as having addressed very similar topics (historical injustices endured by developing countries; the responsibility of developed countries to contribute to international development efforts)—possible nuances of difference are difficult to detect.

Notably, the V4 tended to vote with the EU majority on this topic (both in favor and against resolutions)—with the source of V4 contestation being two-way splits between 'no' and 'abstain' in cases where the EU was clearly against the resolution. The Nordics, which were split on the topic more frequently (at six of the seven votes), also incurred soft two-way splits, with Sweden and Finland taking turns in abstaining, and Denmark voting with the EU majority in every case.

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86 Please see Chapter I for the pertaining discussion of the literature on the 'rest vs. West' divide, starting on p.30 (referred to hereinafter as 'West v. rest').

87 References made in this dissertation to UNGA meeting records are by document ID only. All referenced records are available from the United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISnet), http://unbisnet.un.org.

88 See Subchapter 2 and the section on *Nordic Cooperation*, starting on p.83.

The right to development has been habitually debated at the UN as one of 'alternative approaches' to human rights under the UNGA agenda item on the *Promotion and protection of human rights*.[89] In spite of the fact that the right to development may be dubbed a 'Nordic topic,' there have been relatively few Nordic interventions on it in the UNGA in the study period: one by Sweden and three by Finland. Notably, however, none of the V4 countries intervened on this topic at all.

This topic is a case of 'West v. rest' contestation in the UNGA, on which the Nordics (as well as V4) have broadly aligned with the EU stance. An intervention made by the Swedish representative on behalf of the EU at a GA3 at a debate of November 19, 2009, eloquently underlines the ideological divide: according to the EU stance, right to development cannot precede states' primary responsibilities to their citizens in this domain. In his vote explanation on draft resolution A/C.3/64/L.47 on the right to development, the Swedish delegate, Mr. Javaheri

> expressed [the EU's] full support for the right to development as an integral part of fundamental human rights. The European Union would continue to play an active role in the implementation of that right. Lack of development must not, however, be invoked to justify the curtailment of internationally recognized human rights. [...]
>
> While national development efforts needed to be supported by an enabling international economic environment, States continued to have primary responsibility for creating the conditions necessary for the realization of the right to development. It was therefore the understanding of the European Union that human rights instruments dealt with the obligations of a State to its citizens and not responsibilities between States.
> (A/C.3/64/SR.44, 2009:p.6)

The only 'proper' Nordic intervention on the topic (i.e. not made on behalf of the EU) was made by the Finnish representative, Ms. Jane Anttila, at a GA3 session on November 24, 2008, in the debate on the draft resolution on the 'right to food.' The delegate of Finland noted that while her country was 'a traditional sponsor of the resolution on the right to food,' '[a]s a strong advocate of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, it had not been able to accept the last-minute amendment [to a draft resolution on the right to food] whereby the reference to that instrument had been weakened,' therefore Finland would no longer sponsor the resolution but it would continue to support it along with the rest of the EU (A/C.3/63/SR.46, 2008:p.11).

While this highly-specific point of criticism by Finland does reveal some nuance about Finnish state policy, it does not prove sufficient to change the vote choice of Finland on the resolution

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[89] See, for example, item 69 (b) on the adopted agenda of the 64th UNGA session: https://undocs.org/en/A/64/252 (accessed January 5, 2019).

at hand. As such, it also does not lend an opportunity for more general conclusions about the Finnish stance on the broader topic area of right to development.

Human Rights in Kosovo

The third most frequent topic among contested resolutions was the human rights situation in Kosovo. Resolutions were brought to a vote that was contested within the V4 three times during the study period, in the years leading up to the Kosovo War (1995, 1996 and 1997). The reason for contestation, 'soft' on all three occasions, was the same each time: Slovakia's abstention. All three resolutions condemned human rights violations by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo, and called upon the Yugoslav government to bring an end to these violations. The EU majority, as well as the Nordic group and the other three V4 countries, voted in favor of the resolutions.

There were no interventions by any of the seven studied countries in any of the debates at the time of the three contested Kosovo resolutions—the first intervention would come from Hungary, in the 53rd session of the UNGA, on September 29, 1998. In this speech, Hungarian foreign minister János Martonyi listed a series of pressing international challenges, among them the spread of violence in Kosovo, over which he expressed deep concern and Hungary's commitment to Security Council resolution 1199 (1998), which had demanded bringing an end to hostilities. Martonyi expressed Hungary's hope that negotiations would lead to 'a lasting settlement granting broad autonomy to Kosovo while preserving the territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia' (A/53/PV.20, p.21–22). Speaking to the broader Balkan situation (including Bosnia), Martonyi also signaled Hungary's willingness to 'contribute to the international community's action to restore long-term stability and the rule of law in the region' (A/53/PV.20, 1998:p.22).

A year later, at the 54th UNGA session, the representatives of Slovakia and the Czech Republic would both make mention of Kosovo in their speeches. Making a speech on September 21, 1999, was the Slovak prime minister, Mikuláš Dzurinda, who had been appointed a year before, in October 1998, following the September 1998 parliamentary elections in Slovakia which had brought an end to the three-term Mečiar era. Dzurinda, who addressed the situation in the Balkans at length in his speech to the General Assembly, expressed Slovakia's commitment to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), which had authorized international civilian and military presence in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and the interim UN administration in Kosovo. Dzurinda also welcomed the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe (an EU initiative to establish stability against the backdrop of the Kosovo War), and showcased the work of Slovak foreign minister Eduard Kukan in his capacity as Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General for the Balkans (A/54/PV.7, 1999:p.8).

At the same session, on September 22, 1999, Czech foreign minister Jan Kavan also referred to the situation in Kosovo. In his address, Kavan expressed Slovakia's support for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY)—calling Kosovo 'the benchmark for the success achieved by international institutions' in bringing to account perpetrators of 'massive and systematic violations of human rights' (A/54/PV.9, 1999:p.47). He also noted that the under-financing of peacekeeping operations due to member states not honoring financial obligations, had caused problems for the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Besides supporting UNMIK, he noted the Czech Republic's commitment to 'democratic and multi-ethnic society in Kosovo,' which, based on a recent trip he had made to Prishtina, did not appear realistic anytime soon, due, inter alia, to the

> diminishing number of Serbs in Kosovo, the continuous threats of murder — even to very old Serbian ladies — the rising influence of a mafia, which [Head of UNMIK] Mr. Kouchner told me about, the ever-present spirit of revenge, the lack of trained police forces, the absence of local civil administration, the disease of corruption and rivalry between different sectors of the Kosovo Albanians (A/54/PV.9, p.47).

Ten years later, after Kosovo declared independence from Serbia in February 2008, the topic became a source of V4 contestation, albeit not as a human rights topic. The Serbian delegation submitted draft resolution A/63/L.2, which would request an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the following question:

> "Is the unilateral declaration of independence by the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government of Kosovo in accordance with international law?"
> (A/63/L.2)

The draft resolution was debated at the UNGA plenary of October 8, 2008, where the representatives of several countries, including Denmark, Finland and Slovakia intervened with vote explanations (A/63/PV.22, 2008). The representatives of Denmark and Finland, which, alongside 48 countries, had already recognized the independence of Kosovo, mentioned that they had abstained from the vote because their legal positions on independence had already been made clear (Denmark, p.14), or because they did not want the advisory opinion to provide grounds for an uncertainty of independence (Finland, p. 13). The Slovak representative made a very brief intervention, citing Slovakia's support for the draft resolution based on 'the right of every Member State to seek advisory opinions from the International Court of Justice' (p.7). The draft resolution would eventually be adopted with 77 votes in favor, 6 against, and 74 abstentions, becoming UNGA resolution A/RES/63/3. In its subsequent advisory opinion of 2010, the ICJ ruled that the independence of Kosovo did not violate international law.[90]

[90] https://www.icj-cij.org/en/case/141 (accessed October 21, 2018).

Notably, as this is not a human rights resolution, its voting record does not appear in the dataset used for the purposes of this dissertation, and it will also not be analyzed further here. It is remarkable, however, that, this resolution has been seen to put, for a second time, comparably more 'Kosovo skeptic' Slovakia at odds with the six other countries studied in this dissertation, on the topic of Kosovo.[91] The case also reflects a more Serbia-friendly stance of Slovakia compared to the other V4 (as well as the Nordic) countries, already ten years after the three Kosovo human rights resolutions (which had condemned the federal Yugoslav government), on which Slovakia had abstained while still under Mečiar government.

Racism and Xenophobia

Racism/xenophobia featured as the topic of two resolutions that would give way to split votes within the V4 or Nordic group (one in each). Both resolutions condemned contemporary forms of racism and xenophobia (including neo-Nazi, neo-Fascist and skinhead movements), and reaffirmed the Durban Declaration and Program of Action. The first resolution (adopted in 2011) saw 'no' votes within both subregional groups—and an abstention by Finland. The second resolution (of 2013) saw a 'no' vote from the Czech Republic, and abstentions from all other countries within the two subregional groups. Both resolutions were clearly adopted against the will of the EU countries, including the Nordics and V4 (all three *AVx*s=0). This topic is yet another case of 'West v. rest' contestation in the UN.

The representative of Poland, Ms. Grabianowska, intervened on behalf of the EU and its allies in the debate on the draft resolution which eventually led to the first of the two EU-contested resolutions (R/66/143, 'Inadmissibility of certain practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance,' 2011). According to the joint stance presented by the Polish representative at the GA3 session of November 17, 2011, the text before the committee failed to adopt a human-rights approach to the issue. According to the intervention, the text fell short of expectations to protect universal human rights in five substantive aspects—all five of which would eventually end up being included in the text of the adopted resolution:

(1) inaccurate citations from the judgement issued by the Nuremberg Tribunal, … [which] implied a principle of common responsibility;
(2) [t]he issue of monuments and memorials, on which the draft resolution placed particular emphasis, was an internal matter for States and not relevant to the human rights agenda;
(3) [t]he reference […] to the need for "increased political and legal vigilance" in order to prevent the spread of extremist movements left room for inappropriate interpretations, raising serious concerns regarding the independence of the judiciary or freedom of assembly and association […];

[91] Slovakia has not, to date, recognized Kosovo as an independent state.

(4) [the] request to the Special Rapporteur to focus on [specific] aspects of … [racist and totalitarian ideologies] ran counter to the principle of respecting the independence of the mandate-holder […];

(5) a biased assumption on civil society activity to combat racism. (A/C.3/66/SR.45, 2011:p.5)

No evidence for the abstention of Finland presents itself from the meeting records; the records support the overall explanation that both subregional groups may be seen as having aligned themselves with the EU on the 'West v. rest' logic.

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Further to the above, the study period yielded an abundance of interventions from countries of both two subregional groups on the topic of racism, racial discrimination, and xenophobia: eight interventions were made on top of the mentioned speech by the representative of Poland on behalf of the EU. These eight interventions provide nuanced insight into the emphases of the policy stances of the V4 countries on this agenda item, as well as a brief look into that of Denmark. Seven of the eight interventions (all of which were delivered by V4 countries) would be made between 1994 and 2005, well before the debates that would lead up to the two EU-contested resolutions.

At the GA3 meeting of October 14, 1994, the Slovak delegate, Mr. Jan Varšo, intervened with a longish speech on Slovakia's efforts made at combating racism (A/C.3/49/SR.5). Apart from listing his country's efforts on the global scale, it may be seen as remarkable how Mr. Varšo would reference the Central-Europe-specific national minority issue under this item, as follows:

> 52. The right to self-determination was closely connected with the rights of national minorities, a matter that was of great concern to Slovakia as a multi-ethnic society. In dealing with potential problems it was very important both to preserve the territorial integrity of the multi-ethnic State and to ensure that human rights were respected for all. It was also necessary to adopt appropriate universal rules, based on a multilateral treaty, to be applied to persons belonging to national minorities throughout the world.
>
> 53. It was particularly important to emphasize that those principles were applied by Slovakia, especially in view of certain criticism to the effect that his country did not have the will or the means to deal with the problem of national minorities.
>
> (A/C.3/49/SR.5, 1994:p.10)

Point 53 is an obvious reference primarily to debates surrounding the collective rights of the Hungarian minority, by far the largest national minority in Slovakia.

At the GA3 meeting three days later, on October 17, 1994, the Hungarian and Czech representatives would each deliver remarks (A/C.3/49/SR.7 and A/C.3/49/SR.8, respectively). Both representatives juxtaposed the abolition of apartheid in South Africa—a positive overall development in eliminating racial discrimination and xenophobia—with new forms of discrimination gaining ground in the wake of the end of the bipolar world order, including against ethnic minorities. Both representatives made note of their country's domestic measures to counter this phenomenon—with the Hungarian delegate, Mr. Hegyi, focusing on constitutional provisions and the defeat of the extreme right in 1994 elections (A/C.3/49/SR.7, 1994:p.9); and the Czech delegate, Mr. Slaby, on the status of minority languages and affirmative action favoring the 'Romany' (or Roma) (A/C.3/49/SR.8, 1994:p.2). Both speakers condemned racially-motivated war crimes in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, with Hungary explicitly welcoming the establishment of the ICTY.

Five years later, at a GA3 session in October 1999, it was again the Hungarian and Czech representatives who would intervene on the topic (A/C.3/54/SR.20 and A/C.3/54/SR.22, respectively). The Hungarian UN ambassador, André Erdős, dedicated his intervention to the situation of Roma—speaking at length on recent measures adopted by the Hungarian government, domestically. In his view, minority questions (including those of the Roma), 'should … be addressed from a global perspective, with attention to regional considerations'—leaving a key role to regional organizations such as the EU (A/C.3/54/SR.20, 1999:p.4). Erdős also noted that Hungary 'associated itself with the statement made by the European Union' on the topic, and applauded the socializing role of the EU in combating racial discrimination—in that '[t]he set of measures designed to combat racism in countries seeking admission to the European Union was a catalyst for change and reform in those countries' (A/C.3/54/SR.20, 1999:p.3).

The Czech intervention was made in response to a statement delivered in committee on behalf of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The Czech speaker, Mr. Malenovsky, noted that, in the Czech view, the Special Rapporteur's report was not balanced as it singled out the Roma question in the Czech Republic and two other European countries,[92] and it did not adequately address 'current manifestations of racism, discrimination or xenophobia in other parts of the world' (A/C.3/54/SR.22, 1999:p.13). In particular, Mr. Malenovsky mentioned the 'regrettably uninformed manner' in which the Special Rapporteur had reported on a wall erected in the north Czech city of Usti nad Labem—which would serve as a neuralgic point causing much controversy as well as sharp EU- and international criticism at the time.[93] The intervention

[92] The allusion is to Hungary and Slovakia.

[93] Commentators would argue that the wall was an effort to seal off the Roma population (see, for example, https://www.theguardian.com/world/1999/oct/24/humanrights.kateconnolly, accessed November 11, 2018); and the government, including in the intervention at GA3, would maintain that it was erected to defuse a dispute between citizens. Eventually, the wall would be pulled down on November 24, 1999—see http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/534383.stm (accessed November 11, 2018).

then went on to underline the emphasis and measures made by the Czech government to address the minority issue, and a re-iteration of the assertion that it must be dealt with in a regional and global perspective. Among the regional organizations, the intervention mentioned the OSCE and Council of Europe, but conspicuously omitted the EU.

At an October 2000 GA3 meeting, the Slovak representative, Mr. Priputen, intervened with a vote explanation—aligning himself with the EU stance presented by the French delegate. In the bulk of the vote explanation, the Slovak representative expressed concern that a low number of countries had declared under article 14 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 'that [they] recognized the competence of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to receive and consider communications from individuals or groups of individuals within its jurisdiction claiming to be victims of a violation by that State party of any of the rights set forth in the Convention' (A/C.3/55/SR.27, 2001:p.8). The Slovak delegate also seized the speaking opportunity to note that '[i]n Slovakia, as in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the situation of the Roma minority was a sensitive issue,' and to list his government's recent efforts made to address it (A/C.3/55/SR.27, 2001:p.8–9).

A year later, at the GA3 meeting on February 1, 2002, Hungarian ambassador Erdős made a similar maneuver as he welcomed the outcomes of the 2001 Durban World Conference against Racism—focusing on its implications for the Roma, 'a sizeable ethnic minority in Hungary,' and 'welcom[ing] the affirmation that States had a responsibility to protect minority groups' (A/C.3/56/SR.59, 2002:p.2). He then went on, as before, to list his government's recent domestic efforts in this domain (A/C.3/56/SR.59, 2002:p.2–3).

In an intervention at the GA3 session of November 3, 2004, the Polish delegate, Mr. Wolski, reflected on a speech made by the Dutch representative on behalf of the EU, which had listed efforts of European countries to combat anti-Semitism (A/C.3/59/SR.35). In his remarks, the Polish representative (1) asserted that the Holocaust, perpetrated under the Nazi occupation of Poland, had been 'the most horrific crime in the history of modern Europe,' (2) reiterated a call to the international community against anti-Semitism, and (3) listed recent efforts made in Poland on awareness-raising, particularly educational activities related to the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp (A/C.3/59/SR.35, 2005:p.11).

The single Danish intervention on racism/xenophobia centered around three brief questions on the topic—addressed to the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, at a GA3 session of November 1, 2010. In her intervention, the Danish delegate, Ms. Jørgensen, inquired (1) about the special rapporteur's assessment of challenges faced with efforts to address different forms of racism and discrimination in the same way; (2) about practical measures governments could take to consult ethnic minorities on ethnically-disaggregated data collection; and (3) 'how States could counter the increasing use of the Internet for propaganda purposes while not interfering with the freedom of opinion and expression' (A/C.3/65/SR.36, 2011:p.4–5).

Human Rights in Iran

Other topics that led to contested resolutions (one each) in the study period included human rights in Iran; the equitable geographical distribution of the membership of human rights treaty bodies; the future operation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW); human rights in Palestine; the right to health; the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict; human cloning; and the right to water and sanitation. In most of these votes, both the Nordic and V4 group voted, by and large, with the EU majority.

Even the resolution on human rights in Iran, (R/49/202, 1994), which was fairly contested within the EU (*AVx*=0.79), would feature a 'soft' three-way split in the V4—one of a total of two in the study period: with Poland abstaining, the Czech Republic and Hungary voting 'yes,' and Slovakia being absent. The resolution—a modern episode of a decades-old agenda item of the UN—was put forward to express concern over the human rights situation in Iran, including executions, torture and religious persecution, and to call on the government of Iran to abide by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It also mentioned Salman Rushdie, who was receiving life threats seemingly originating from the Iranian government.

UNGA meeting records do not provide an explanation for Poland's abstention or the absence of Slovakia. The latter might be assumed to have to do with resource constraints in the still new Slovak foreign ministry, less than two years after the dissolution of Czechoslovakia. Slovak representatives were absent from unrelated votes immediately before the vote on the resolution in question, which makes intrinsic reasons for the absence very unlikely.[94]

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A total of six interventions were made in the UNGA on the topic of Iran in the study period by the countries studied for this dissertation—one by the representative of Finland, who introduced a draft resolution on behalf of the EU. The other five interventions were all made by representatives of the Czech Republic, all significantly later (between 2004 and 2014) than the vote on resolution R/49/202 had been taken. The first intervention, made on November 17, 2004 in GA3 in support of EU-co-sponsored draft resolution A/C.3/59/L.50 on the

[94] See *Table 4* on p.15 and the pertaining discussion for details.

deteriorating human rights situation in Iran, would feature a passionate and personal testimony drawing on Czechoslovakia's own transition to democracy. In her statement, the Czech Delegate, Ms. Ivana Grollová would assert that

> 15 years ago to the day, she and her fellow students had been beaten on the streets for the non-violent expression of their civic views. That incident had marked the start of the "Velvet Revolution", which had later brought to the Presidency a man whose hopes and energy had for decades been fuelled by the moral support of the international community. Had there been no change, she herself would even now have been unable to work abroad without joining the only political party permitted to exist, to share in the responsibility for her country's development by participating in regular democratic elections, to have access to foreign media or even to travel, which was young people's best opportunity to engage in dialogue between nations and cultures. It was therefore an honour for her to be able, on behalf of her Government, to join with those who cared about the protection of fundamental freedoms and human rights for all (A/C.3/59/SR.45, 2005:p.7).

The other four Czech interventions in the study period included (morally/ideologically loaded) questions during hearings of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran. As a rule, each year from 2011, the Czech delegates in GA3 expressed their government's concerns over the human rights situation in Iran; particularly civil and political rights, executions, freedom of assembly and of the press. They also repeatedly asked the Special Rapporteur how the international community could more effectively promote the observance of human rights in the country (A/C.3/66/SR.24, 2011:p.4; A/C.3/67/SR.23, 2012:p.4; A/C.3/68/SR.24, 2013:p.5; A/C.3/69/SR.32, 2014:p.11).

International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

The single contested resolution passed in the study period on gender issues was the one on the 'Future operation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women' (R/57/175, 2002). The resolution applauded the work and extended the mandate of the working group for the institute, and encouraged fundraising and voluntary contributions, as well as the recruitment of a director.

The vote saw a relatively split EU (EU *AVx*=0.32), and the abstention of all the Nordic countries, as well as Poland and Hungary—and 'yes' votes from the Czech Republic and Slovakia. While targeted keyword searches for the name of the institute in UNBISnet would return no interventions by any of the studied countries in the study period, this does not in fact reflect the reality of debates. Nordic and V4 country interventions on broader women's issues were abundant—totaling 45 in the study period, several of which concerned repeated debates on the institute, particularly its funding status. These debates are presented as they were uncovered in the research project—in Subchapter 7.[95]

Human Cloning

The resolution adopting the Declaration on Human Cloning (R/59/280, 2005), on which the EU itself was highly split (EU *AVx*=0.407) resulted in a 'hard' two-way split in the V4—the only one observed in this study. The Czech Republic—together with the Nordic group—voted 'no,' while Poland, Slovakia and Hungary votes 'yes' on the resolution. The main points of the declaration would pertain to (1) the protection of human life in the application of life sciences; (2) prohibition of human cloning that is incompatible with human dignity and human life; (3) prohibition of genetic engineering that is contrary to human dignity; (4) prevention of the exploitation of women in the application of life sciences; (5) legislation to this effect; and (6) consideration for HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, 'which affect in particular the developing countries' (R/59/280, 2005).

Leading up to or around the time of the adoption of the resolution in 2005, representatives of all studied countries but the Czech Republic intervened in one or more speeches on the topic of human cloning. UNGA resolution A/RES/56/93 (2002) established an ad hoc committee for the purpose of considering the elaboration of an international convention against the reproductive cloning of human beings. The committee became a working group of the UNGA Sixth Committee (GA6—Legal) in 2002. Already at the GA6 debate which had deliberated on the ad-hoc committee (on November 19, 2001), the representative of Poland, the only country from the objects of the present study that would intervene, would assert that '[f]our years after the adoption by UNESCO of the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights, the time was ripe to move forward on elaborating a legally binding document *prohibiting human cloning*, an area on which a general consensus seemed to exist' (A/C.6/56/SR.27, 2001:p.2, emphasis by A.M.)

In the ensuing debate which lasted almost five years, arguments and working documents gravitated around the points of reproductive v. therapeutic uses of human cloning—and the differences in moral and pragmatic approaches to these questions. At a GA6 debate of October 17, 2002, the chairman of the ad-hoc committee and subsequent working group (Peter Tomka, the Slovak UN ambassador at the time), provided an enlightening synopsis of the nature of the debate and contestation on the issue:

> There was general agreement that such cloning should be banned, because it raised ethical, moral, religious, scientific and other concerns, and had far-reaching implications for human dignity. However, different views had been

[95] See the section on the *Advancement of Women*, starting on p.189.

> expressed concerning the scope of the proposed ban. One view favoured a step-by-step approach: an international convention banning the reproductive cloning of human beings would be elaborated as a priority, and other forms of cloning would be addressed at a later stage. Supporters of that approach believed it was a matter of urgency to elaborate a convention against reproductive cloning, in order to send a clear message that such a practice would be intolerable. Others preferred a convention providing for a comprehensive ban, to include cloning for other purposes, such as therapeutic and experimental purposes. They believed that a partial ban would be ineffective, because the technology used for other forms of cloning was essentially the same as for reproductive cloning. According to that view, such a ban would send the wrong signal to the international community, since it might implicitly authorize the creation and destruction of embryos for experimental purposes. (A/C.6/57/SR.16, 2002:p.2)

A year later, on October 21, 2003, the Swedish and Polish representatives would intervene in a debate at the GA6 (A/C.6/58/SR.11, 2003), albeit on different sides. The interventions came in follow up to the event of October 3, 2003, when the Working Group of the Sixth Committee on an international convention against the reproductive cloning of human beings had discussed three competing documents on the issue: (1) a proposal by Costa Rica on a *Draft international convention on the prohibition of all forms of human cloning*; (2) draft resolution A/C.6/58/L.2, supported mostly by countries of the global South, by Italy and Spain from the EU group, as well as by the United States; and (3) draft resolution A/C.6/58/L.8, supported by other EU members of GA6 (including the Nordics and Czech Republic, but not Hungary, Poland or Slovakia), as well as other countries.[96] Draft resolution L.2 would opt for a total ban on reproductive cloning, and very strict measures against therapeutic cloning and genetic engineering, as well as '[s]trongly encourag[ing] States and other entities to direct funds that might have been used for human cloning technologies to pressing global issues in developing countries' (p.2). Conversely, the focus of draft resolution L.8 would be placed almost exclusively on banning reproductive cloning, although it would envision an international convention that would obligate states to 'control other forms of human cloning' by means of a ban or moratorium (p.2).

At the GA6 debate of October 21, 2003, the Swedish representative, Ms. Miller, expressed concern that the working group had failed to establish consensus on the topic of human cloning. In particular, she noted that the work of the working group had left those countries at odds with its work which had 'a scientific knowledge of cloning techniques' (A/C.6/58/SR.11, 2003:p.7). She also re-affirmed Sweden's commitment to draft resolution A/C.6/58/L.8, and the importance of reaching consensus on the cloning issue. At the same debate, the Polish representative, Mr. Makarewicz, explained that Poland adopted a policy stance against all forms of human cloning 'from a moral standpoint,' and that, in his delegation's view,

[96] See http://legal.un.org/committees/cloning/ (accessed January 5, 2019).

reproductive and therapeutic cloning differed only 'in the objective of the procedure' (A/C.6/58/SR.11, 2003:p.6).

The debate on this item would continue in committee until November 6, 2003, when Iran, on behalf of the member states of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, put forward a motion to adjourn the debate until the 60th session of the UNGA (2005). The motion passed narrowly, with 80 'yes' votes, 79 'no' votes and 15 abstentions, and the proposals were tabled until the 60th UNGA session.

Nevertheless, the issue was put back on the table still during the 59th session.[97] A draft resolution proposing a complete ban on human cloning (A/C.6/59/L.2) was submitted in GA6 on September 29, 2004; and a counter-draft sponsored by the countries advocating for more lenient regulations on therapeutic cloning (A/C.6/59/L.8) was submitted on October 6, 2004—following the same pattern as that of the 58th session.

As the debate proceeded, on October 22, 2004, the representative of Sweden, Mr. Lidén, made an intervention in favor of draft L.8, which, in his view, 'represented the common denominator' because 'reproductive cloning must be banned ..., but other forms of human cloning should be regulated nationally'—he also asserted that 'stem cell research ... offered great potential as a source of new treatments for serious and hitherto incurable diseases' and that '[t]hat quest for knowledge must be promoted, not prevented' (A/C.6/59/SR.12, p.5). At the same debate, the representative of Slovakia, Mr. Smid, intervened to explain that his country's constitution 'provided that human life deserved protection before birth,' and asserted that 'the issue of human cloning was relevant to every individual and every State,' therefore it was not enough to regulate the issue domestically, but a comprehensive international ban (as laid out in draft L.2—see below) would be preferable.

Draft L.2. was introduced by Costa Rica at the GA6 debate on January 14, 2005, and would subsequently be debated in committee. The Finnish representative, Mr. Sareva, intervened in the debate on February 18, explaining that her delegation sponsored draft L.8 as opposed to L.2 because it 'represented a consensus solution' (A/C.6/59/SR.11, 2005:p.4). She explained that:

> [t]o some [states], stem cell research constituted an unacceptable violation of human life, while others considered that it could potentially save human lives. Her delegation was among those which believed that therapeutic cloning had great potential for curing a wide range of serious illnesses involving damaged tissues. Therefore, it could not accept a solution aimed at a total prohibition of therapeutic cloning. (A/C.6/59/SR.11, 2005:p.4)

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[97] http://legal.un.org/committees/cloning/ (accessed September 29, 2018).

With the debate moving forward, on February 18, 2005, the GA6 session would undertake to finalize the text of a declaration on human cloning. After several amendments to the text devised by previous working group sessions, the final text would be adopted with a contested vote in committee. Representatives of Finland, Denmark and Sweden, countries which voted against the declaration, would intervene to add vote explanations. The Finnish delegation took issue with the fact that, in their opinion, the text 'represented a shift in focus from reproductive cloning to therapeutic cloning'—the latter being a practice that was allowed by Finnish legislation, and the delegation of Finland could not support the text because it 'prejudged national decision-making on the subject' (A/C.6/59/SR.28, 2005:p.9). The Danish delegation did not explain its 'no' vote beyond 'reasons already given by many previous speakers,' and the Swedish representative reiterated her delegation's previously explained assertion that cloning should be regulated in domestic law; also pointing out that Sweden 'could not accept any statement that could be interpreted as banning therapeutic cloning' (A/C.6/59/SR.28, 2005:p.9).

Finally, the declaration was put to a vote in the UNGA plenary of March 8, 2005. The declaration was adopted with a contested vote—on which the EU itself was largely split (*AVx*=0.407).[98] *Table 14* below summarizes the votes of EU countries on the resolution that adopted the declaration.

Table 14. EU member state votes on UNGA resolution R/59/280 (2005) on the United Nations Declaration on Human Cloning

Yes (11)	No (15)	Abstain (1)	No vote (1)
Austria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia	Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom	Romania	Greece

Source: United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISnet), http://unbisnet.un.org

Following the vote, the Hungarian representative, Mr. Simon, added a vote explanation, noting that the delegation of Hungary had supported the declaration on this contested issue because it had wanted to send a strong message that reproductive cloning was unacceptable. In his intervention, Mr. Simon would also leave the door open for discussing therapeutic cloning, by expressing Hungary's hope 'that the present Declaration is only one step — not the final stage — in the consideration of human cloning' (A/59/PV.82, 2005:p.5).

[98] See p. 138 for details on the content of the adopted declaration.

Subsequently, the representative of Poland would intervene with a lengthy vote explanation, including a long list of conditions which his delegation held to be crucial for research on embryonic stem cells to be considered acceptable:

> stem cells and stem cell lines are obtained from reliable and documented sources; human embryos used to obtain human stem cells or to create stem cells lines are supernumerary cells, meaning embryos which were created in the process of in vitro fertilization aimed at initiating a pregnancy but are no longer aimed at achieving the said goal; the donors of embryos have expressed in a written form their free and unequivocal will for their embryos to be used in a particular way; anonymous donors of embryos are excluded and the personal data of donors, including their genetic data, is subject to full protection; the donors of embryos were not given or promised any pecuniary or material benefit.
>
> If any of the aforementioned conditions are not met, Poland is opposed to any kind of use of embryonic stem cells (A/59/PV.82, 2005:p.7).

Notably, the adopted declaration is such a 'low' (and arguably not even quite a 'common') denominator on the topic, that its language is very far removed from the medical specificities of cloning, including those captured by the Polish intervention above, which departs from an in-vitro fertilization scenario. In this regard, the declaration mentions broad concepts such as 'scientific and technical progress in life sciences' and 'genetic engineering techniques,' which it juxtaposes with human rights and dignity, asserting no more, and no less, than that the latter should always be respected in the application of the former (A/RES/59/280, 2005:p.2).

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To sum up the implications of the debate on human cloning for the present study, it may be observed that the issue, which caused significant contestation within the UNGA as well as in the EU group, would leave the Nordic EU members voting differently from the V4 (minus the Czech Republic). It would also become the only issue to see 'hard' contestation within either of the two subgroups within the study period—brought on by the fact that the Czech Republic voted 'no' against the 'yes' voted of the other three V4 members. That said, meeting records consulted in this section have not explained the vote choice of the Czech Republic, whose representatives, like those of Slovakia, did not intervene in the debates at any point. Poland could be observed as the staunchest advocate against human cloning, while Hungary's stance can be conceived of as 'lowest common denominator.'

Conclusions on Intragroup Splits

In summary of the findings on votes contested within the two subregional groups, the following conclusions can be drawn. First, based on the values of the *C2* and *AI2* indices, a total of 29 votes on resolutions were contested within one or both of the subregional groups during the twenty years of the study period. Second, topics that most frequently saw contested subregional votes were (a) mercenaries, (b) right to development, (c) Kosovo, and (d) racism/xenophobia. Third, none of the contested resolutions saw 'hard' three-way splits ('yes'/'no'/'abstain') either in the Nordic or in the V4 group. Fourth, in 28 of the 29 cases seeing split votes, contestation would manifest in its 'soft' version—i.e. votes would feature intra-group splits between 'yes' and 'abstain', or 'no' and 'abstain.' The single case of 'hard' contestation would be brought on by the Czech Republic in the case of resolution R/59/280 (2005) on the Declaration on Human Cloning, where it voted 'no' together with the Nordic countries, and against the 'yes' vote of the three other V4 countries.

The topic of mercenaries has been observed as a long-standing case of 'West v. rest' division in the UN. Based on the virtually zero value of the EU average vote on the topic, coupled with no evidence to be drawn from the meeting records of the study period that would suggest that the 'no'/'abstain' vote splits within the V4 represented substantive contestation, this study has inferred that the V4 countries were aligned by and large with the Western view on this topic—as were the Nordics.

The right to development, dubbed a 'Nordic topic,' would see relatively few Nordic interventions in the UNGA in the study period—and none of the V4 countries intervened once on this topic. From the meeting records, this topic has also been confirmed as a classic case of 'West v. rest' division, on which the Nordics and V4 would largely align with the EU stance—which primarily considers the fulfillment of the right to development as intra-state responsibility, not a multilateral issue.

On the topic of Kosovo, three resolutions would be passed in the study period with votes contested within the V4—all three of which were contested due to Slovakia's abstention. From the meeting records on the Kosovo topic beyond the human rights domain, Slovakia has been revealed as comparably more 'Kosovo-skeptic' relative to the other three V4 countries—a policy stance revealed during the Mečiar era, but apparently prevailing well beyond. Slovakia's dissent on the broader Kosovo issue serves as a likely reason for its abstention on the studied human rights resolutions, as well.

Racism/xenophobia has been revealed as yet another topic marked by 'West v. rest' contestation in the UN, on which the subregional groups have largely aligned themselves with the EU stance—with no country-specific trajectories detectable in the meeting records related to the contested resolutions. However, digging deeper into the topic area has revealed a number of subregional-specific nuances on the V4's part, including: (1) overwhelming attention to the Roma issue by the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, and a penchant for showcasing related government efforts in UN debates; (2) calls by the Czech Republic and Hungary that the minority issue be addressed in regional and global perspective (with Hungary specifically referencing the EU as a relevant institutional framework to take it on); (3) Czech and Hungarian references to ethnically-motivated atrocities in the former Yugoslavia; and (4) Poland's focus on the Holocaust and emphasis on the importance of awareness-raising and education. A single intervention by Denmark has revealed a markedly more 'cosmopolitan' approach to the issue, focusing on broad horizontal issues such as sensitivities connected to data collection, or the dilemma related to freedom of expression.

On the issue of human rights in Iran, the activity of the Czech Republic stood out as the single most remarkable phenomenon for the purposes of the study. Through a total of five interventions in the study period, Czech delegates would—like no other representatives from the two subregional groups—vocally express their government's concerns in the GA3 over the human rights situation in Iran; particularly civil and political rights, executions, freedom of assembly and freedom of press.

The debate on human cloning has been seen to pit the Czech Republic against the other three V4 countries. It was also the only issue with 'hard' contestation within either of the two subgroups in the study period—brought on by the fact that the Czech Republic voted 'no' against the 'yes' voted of the other three V4 members. However, the vote choice of the Czech Republic, which would not intervene in any of the related debates, could not be explained from the meeting records. Even so, the studied debates have uncovered a clear-cut rift between two opposing approaches, with the Czech Republic clearly taking the other side than the other three V4 countries.[99]

As has been revealed from the study of voting and of interventions, the issue of human cloning would leave the Nordic EU members voting differently from the V4 (except the Czech Republic). Through the study of interventions, a number of relevant arguments have been identified for supporting the declaration on human cloning (V4 minus Czech Republic), ranging from (1) full-blown opposition to any form of human cloning, including for therapeutic aims (Poland)[100] to (2) supporting it to *at least have something* adopted on the international

99 See the next paragraph for the main lines of argument and policy.

100 Except for 'supernumerary cells' produced for but not to be used during in-vitro fertilization, with a long list of prerequisites—see previous section.

level that would condemn reproductive cloning—even in lack of any degree of consensus on therapeutic cloning (Hungary). The main lines of argument identified against the declaration (Nordic group) have featured (1) a general distaste for regulating the issue of human cloning beyond domestic law, and (2) an affinity to adopting a more open approach to therapeutic uses of human cloning, and stem cell research in particular.

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While the primary aim of the present Subchapter has been to identify and analyze issues that would see either of the two subregional groups split among themselves, its analysis has also touched on votes and debates revealing other, related phenomena about the objects of the study. The following three Subchapters will take these insights further, as relevant for grasping topic areas seeing intergroup contestation (Subchapter 5), patterns of comparative group cohesion (Subchapter 6), and issues considered as 'typical Nordic' or 'typical V4' themes (Subchapter 7).

5. Contestation across Groups

To ascertain differences in opinion between the Nordic and V4 groups, resolutions adopted with markedly different votes cast by the members of the two subregional groups are to be subjected to analysis in this Subchapter. The *average vote* (*AVx*) value, as calculated for the *C2* version of the *Cohesion Ratio* index is employed as a useful heuristic for an aggregated group vote.[101] When it comes to comparing the *AVx* values of different groups of countries, where to draw the line between a 'minor' difference—i.e. one not to be analyzed in depth—and a 'major' difference—i.e. one that warrants further inquiry—presents itself as a major methodological question.

For the purposes of this study, an *AVx* value of 0.5 is taken as the cutoff point. An *AVx* value of 0.5 is equivalent to half the difference between a unanimous 'yes' and unanimous 'no' (and/or abstention). While this appears as a neutral rule of thumb, reminiscent also of the tendencies of the dyadic school within voting behavior analysis,[102] the exact implications of this value for the two studied subregional groups—i.e. what combinations of votes it may be derived from—is meaningful to look into.

Inquiring into the *average vote* concept for the two subregional groups, it can be observed that, for the three-member Nordic group, a 0.33 or 0.66 *AVx* will signal one country dissenting from the other two, while for the four-member V4, an *AVx* of 0.25 or 0.75 would signal a group split one by three, and a value of 0.5 a two-by-two split. The possible pairs of *average votes* for the two country groups, are plotted in *Table 15* below.

Table 15. Differences between all hypothetical Nordic and V4 average votes (*AVx*)

		V4				
	AVx	**0**	**0.25**	**0.5**	**0.75**	**1**
Nordic	**0**	0	0.25	0.5	0.75	1
	0.33	0.33	0.08	0.17	0.42	0.66
	0.66	0.66	0.41	0.16	0.09	0.33
	1	1	0.75	0.5	0.25	0

Note: differences greater than or equal to 0.5 (i.e. 'major differences' for the purposes of this study) are marked in red.

[101] See the description of the Cohesion Ratio, including the formula for the average vote (*AVx*) starting on p.106.

[102] Several studies would put an abstention half-way between a 'yes' and 'no' vote, or afford it half the 'weight.' Please refer to Chapter I, Subchapter 1 for a detailed review of the relevant literature and measures of voting behavior.

Table 15 yields the following observations regarding the individual votes leading to 'major' (0.5 or greater) differences between subregional group *AVx*s:

(1) A difference of 1 means that either all the Nordic countries votes 'yes' and the V4 voted 'no' or 'abstain;' or the other way around.
(2) A difference of 0.75 means that either the Nordics were united in voting 'yes' and the V4 were split one by three (with one 'yes' and three 'no'-s or abstentions); or the Nordics voted 'no' or 'abstain' and the V4 were split three by one (with three 'yes' votes and a single 'no' or abstention).
(3) A difference of 0.66 means that either the Nordics were split two by one (with two countries voting 'yes' and one voting 'no' or abstaining) and the V4 all voted 'no' or 'abstain;' or that the Nordics were split one by two (i.e. one country voted 'yes' and the other two 'no' or 'abstain') and the V4 voted 'yes' unanimously.
(4) A difference of 0.5 means that the Nordics either voted a unanimous 'yes' or all voted 'no' or 'abstain;' and the V4 were split two by two (i.e. two countries voting 'yes' and the other two voting 'no' or 'abstain').

In sum, it can be noted that, hypothetically, a major difference could occur if (1) the Nordic and V4 groups voted opposite to each other; (2) the majority of the V4 (i.e. three countries) voted opposite to the Nordics; (3) the majority of the Nordics (two countries) voted opposite to the V4; or (4) a cohesive Nordic vote was met with a fully split (two-by-two) V4 vote. It can be argued that option (4) speaks more to a division within the V4 group than it does to a difference between the two groups, but the provisional inclusion of such votes might still be warranted as reflecting a possible 'major difference' until proven otherwise through an in-depth analysis of the specific subject matter. This conceptual puzzle is solved for the purposes of the present inquiry with the help of an account of the resolutions adopted with 'major differences,' presented in the following.

Adopted resolutions on which the Nordic and V4 *AVx* differed from each other by at least 0.5 are listed in *Table 16* below. During the study period, only three such resolutions could be observed: notably, the first two such resolutions (R/57/175 on the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women—INSTRAW; and R/59/280 on the Declaration on Human Cloning—both marked in green in the table) have also been presented in *Table 11* (on p.118) on account of intragroup contestation, and have already been discussed in detail in the previous Subchapter.[103]

[103] See the respective sections, starting on p.137. The discussion of the pertaining debates on the advancement of women beyond the question of INSTRAW can be found in Subchapter 7, with the specific discussion starting on p.189.

Table 16.
UNGA human rights resolutions adopted 1994–2014 with major (0.5<) differences between the Nordic and V4 average vote values (*AVx*) as calculated for the Cohesion Ratio (*C2*)

UNGA session	Year	Resolution	AVx Nordic	AVx V4	AVx difference
57	2002	R/57/175	0	0.5	0.5
59	2005	R/59/280	0	0.75	0.75
64	2010	R/64/254	1	0	1

Note: resolutions discussed in previous sections of the study are marked in green.

For the purposes of analyzing intergroup contestation, some previously-made conclusions might be revisited at this point. Regarding the resolution on INSTRAW (R/57/175), it has been noted that no interventions could be found on the institute through keyword searches for its name. The broader debate on women's issues (including the debate on INSTRAW, which could not be recovered by the mentioned keyword search) is discussed in subsequent parts of the study.[104]

Human Cloning

On the resolution adopting the Declaration on Human Cloning (R/59/280), it has previously been explored that the split vote not only revealed contestation on the wording of the Declaration itself, but also a longer debate on the issue of human cloning, dating back to as early as 2001. After studying meeting records from seven UNGA meetings (both plenary and committee sessions)—which saw a total of 12 interventions by Nordic and V4 countries—as well as the documents produced by the working group on human cloning, the Nordic countries have been identified as proponents of a comparatively progressive approach to (therapeutic) human cloning, while the V4 have been found to be split on the question.

In fact, as has already been observed, the issue and the eventual vote on the Declaration was also the single topic to yield a case of 'hard' contestation within either of the two subregional groups—plotting the Czech Republic's 'no' against the 'yes' of the remaining three V4 countries. From the meeting records, Poland could be identified as the country from the two subregional groups which adopted the most conservative approach to the issue area, while Hungary has been seen to vote in favor of the Declaration while asserting that it represented the lowest common denominator.

[104] See Subchapter 7, with the section on the *Advancement of Women* starting on p.189.

The Nordic countries, identified as proponents of a more progressive approach to therapeutic cloning, took issue with the fact that a comparably conservative approach would eventually be enshrined in the text of the Declaration. No explanation for the Czech 'no' or the Slovak 'yes' arose from the meeting records, as neither of these countries intervened in the UNGA's human-cloning-related debates in the study period. While resolution R/59/280 might still be construed as a case of a vote contested *across* the two subregional groups (as well as within), it is at least to be seen as a 'fuzzy' case of intergroup contestation, given the Czech Republic's (assumedly) more Nordic-progressive policy stance and the lack of understanding of that of Slovakia.

UN Fact-Finding Mission in Gaza

The third resolution that yielded a major difference in the Nordic and V4 average votes in the study period appears, by far, as the clearest-cut case of intergroup contestation, albeit one that leads to conclusions well beyond the human rights domain. The resolution which clearly pitted the two subgroups against each other pertained to the 'follow-up to the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict (II)' (R/64/254, 2010).

Known as the 'Goldstone report,' the report in question created widespread political controversy at the time, in the international community as well as more broadly, spurring dismay by Israel for its alleged bias against the Jewish state.[105] With the present resolution, which was presented by the Arab group, the UNGA called on investigations by Israel and by the 'Palestinian side of investigations' on breaches of international humanitarian and human rights law in Gaza to be brought up to international standards. It also recommended that Switzerland, as depositary of the Geneva Conventions, convene the conference of parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to enforce the convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (R/64/254, 2010).

The resolution represents a genuine and unique case of intergroup contestation—with all three Nordic countries voting in favor, an all four V4 countries abstaining. Prominently, Israel and the United States voted 'no' on the resolution, while most of the Global South would end up voting 'yes.'

[105] The main author of the report, Judge Goldstone eventually decided to retract and reconsider the findings of the report—see https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/apr/14/goldstone-report-history (accessed January 8, 2019).

As the U.S. delegate, Ambassador Alex Wolff asserted in his vote explanation, the United States considered the Goldstone report

> deeply flawed. We have previously noted shortcomings that include its imbalanced focus on Israel, the negative inferences that it draws about Israel's intentions and actions, and its failure to deal adequately with the asymmetrical nature of the Gaza conflict and to assign appropriate responsibility to Hamas (A/64/PV.72, 2010:p.5).

This vote would leave the EU largely split (*AI2*=0.357; *C2*=14.286, *AVx*=0.571), with its member states divided along what seems to coincide, by and large, with an 'old v. new member states' divide (with the exceptions of the votes by Germany, the Netherlands and Slovenia). EU member state votes on the resolution are presented in *Table 17* below:

Table 17. EU member state votes on UNGA resolution R/64/254 (2010) on the 'Second follow-up to the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict'

Yes (16)	Abstain (12)
Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom	Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia

Source: United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISnet), http://unbisnet.un.org

At a plenary meeting of the UNGA on February 26, 2010—where the vote on the resolution had been taken—the Dutch representative, Mr. Schaper, would intervene with a vote explanation, on behalf also of the Czech Republic and Hungary (A/64/PV.72, p.6). According to this intervention, the Dutch, Czech and Hungarian abstention may be seen as reflecting a relatively more Israel-sympathetic tone compared to that of the report and its proponents. According to the joint intervention, the three countries' abstention would primarily relate to two concerns:

> (1) the difference in the follow-up until now by the parties concerned. The Israeli authorities are undertaking an ongoing investigation and have shared its interim findings with the Secretary-General, while the Palestinian Authority has until now only set up a committee; [...]
> (2) an operative paragraph calling for a Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention [...]. We feel that such a Conference would most probably be politicized and will therefore be detrimental to the efforts to relaunch the Middle East peace process. In that context, let me reiterate that it is our conviction that this matter should be pursued, first of all, in Geneva, and not in New York.
> (A/64/PV.72, 2010:p.6)

No other explanation of the stance of the studied countries on 'Gaza' has presented itself—either from these Verbatim Records, or other meeting records from the study period.[106] The only other European country to provide a vote explanation on resolution R/64/254 was Norway, which had voted 'yes' along with the other Western (including Nordic) EU members. According to the intervention of the Norwegian representative, Ms. Juul,

> Norway supports the main message of the resolution — that investigation by the parties should be independent and credible and comply with international standards. Further, we support the role of the Secretary-General in monitoring the national investigations.
> (A/64/PV.72, 2010:p.6–7)

The apparent East-West division of the EU on this vote seems counterintuitive—and is in opposition to the supposed affinity of the EU's Eastern members to align more closely with the Global South. The single vote explanation coming from an EU member state (the one made by the Dutch representative, discussed above) does not shed light on any additional explanatory factors of substance on this division, and neither does the intervention of the Norwegian delegate. In fact, the second point made by the Dutch delegate, Mr. Schaper, might be used to read the vote split properly in context: the Goldstone report became such a deeply-politicized question (even compared to the general level of politicization of Middle East issues), that the split on this vote is to be used with caution when endeavoring to make inferences regarding the broader policy stance of the countries studied in this dissertation, as well as of EU member states more broadly.

Using a minimalistic approach, however, this prominent split might be interpreted as revealing different shades of a willingness to support, through voting—if not through spoken interventions, but for Norway—a deeply politicized human rights resolution (Nordic countries) on the one hand; or, to adopt a comparably more Israel-friendly stance on the issue than most of the UN member states (V4), on the other. Drawing any further conclusions from the present vote would be both speculative and reaching beyond the scope of this study.

Palestine

As the vote on the Gaza report can be seen as sitting within the broader context of state policies on Palestine, targeted keyword searches for 'Palestine' in the UBIS speeches database may be used to uncover insights on the Palestine policy of the Nordic and V4 countries. Based on one intervention each at the UNGA plenary of November 29, 2012, Hungary and the Czech Republic had apparently been supporters of the so-called 'two-state solution'—i.e. statehood

[106] Targeted keyword searches for 'Gaza' in the UNBISnet speeches database returned no results between 1994 and 2014 for the seven countries studied in this dissertation.

for Palestine, parallel to that of Israel—for a long time (A/67/PV.44, 2012:p.19 and p.20, respectively). Peeling away the diplomatic pleasantries, it is notable that both interventions were made as vote explanations on resolution R/67/19, which had upgraded Palestine to non-member observer state status: Hungary had abstained in the vote, while the Czech Republic had voted against.

Regarding the stance of the other two V4 countries, the Slovak president, Mr. Ivan Gašparovič, had voiced Slovakia's endorsement of the two-state solution during his address to the UNGA plenary five years earlier—on September 25, 2007 (A/62/PV.5, p.30); and no Polish representative would make any interventions on the question of Palestine in the study period. *Table 18* below lists the votes of EU member states on resolution R/67/19, which addressed the issue of Palestine's UN membership status.[107]

Table 18. EU member state votes on UNGA resolution R/67/19 (2012) on the Status of Palestine in the United Nations

Yes (14)	No (1)	Abstain (13)
Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Sweden	Czech Republic	Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, United Kingdom

Source: United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISnet), http://unbisnet.un.org

Notably, the votes on this resolution followed a similar pattern to those cast on R/64/254 (presented in *Table 17* on p.150): with the Nordic countries (alongside most 'old' EU member states) voting in favor; Poland, Slovakia and Hungary (alongside most 'new' EU members) abstaining; and the Czech Republic voting 'no.' As in the case of the resolution on the Goldstone report, the United States, together with Israel, would end up voting 'no' on this resolution.

Denmark and Finland were the only countries from the two subregional groups studied for this dissertation that would intervene with a vote explanation on resolution R/67/19. At the UNGA plenary of November 29, 2012, Danish Ambassador Carsten Staur would assert that

> by voting in favour of resolution 67/19, we reaffirmed our commitment to a two-State solution, with the State of Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable State of Palestine [...] [The resolution] is a natural continuation of our firm support for a two-State solution and for Palestinian State-building. Our vote, however, does not imply formal bilateral recognition of a sovereign Palestinian State. That is a separate question that we will continue to consider within a framework established by international law. (A/67/PV.44, 2012:p.18).

[107] Note that this is not a human rights resolution, therefore its voting records are not included in the database used for the purposes of the present study.

At the same meeting, the Finnish representative, Mr. Viinanen, while explaining his country's 'yes' vote, would reiterate Finland's support for the two-state solution, explaining that 'the Palestinian Authority now has institutions that pass the threshold of what one can expect from a modern State,' while also pointing out that the Finnish 'yes' was not to be interpreted as a recognition of statehood in any way (A/67/PV.44, 2012:p.20). Apparently, the two Nordic 'yes' votes on this resolution, as arguably the 'yes' votes on resolution R/64/254, can be interpreted as a gesture towards Palestine—but one that falls short of any official recognition of its statehood.

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Moving away from the resolution on upgrading Palestinian membership, it may be noted that Finnish representatives intervened two other times in UNGA debates on the topic of Palestine. The Finnish president, Ms. Tarja Halonen, affirmed Finland's commitment to the two-state solution in her address to the UNGA plenary on September 21, 2011 (A/66/PV.11, p.40). A year later, her successor, Mr. Sauli Niinistö, would do the same, noting also that the conflict in Syria was 'overshadow[ing]' Middle East peace talks, and the two-state solution was 'slipping out of reach' (A/67/PV.6, 2012:p.25). These two interventions signal a continuity in Finnish policy on the topic of Palestine over a shift in the head of state position—president Halonen being a Social Democrat, and president Niinisto a Conservative.[108]

There were seven Swedish interventions on the question of Palestine in the study period—three of which were delivered during Sweden's 2009 presidency of the Council of the European Union, on behalf of the EU. Sweden is reputed as the first EU member state to have recognized Palestine as an independent state (see, for example, A/69/PV.59, 2014:p.11). That said, the present-day V4 countries had already recognized the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) shortly after its declaration of independence in November 1988.[109] As Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland were members of the Warsaw Pact at the time, however, their recognition of Palestinian statehood cannot be construed as reflecting the policy stance of the Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia or Hungary of the study period in any meaningful way.

[108] I acknowledge Paul Luif for making this point during a February 2019 consultation.

[109] See http://palestineun.org/about-palestine/diplomatic-relations/ (accessed December 9, 2018).

Table 19 below captures the recognition of Palestinian statehood by EU member states. Notably, Sweden remains the only EU country to have recognized the state of Palestine following the fall of the Iron Curtain.

Table 19. EU member states recognizing the statehood of Palestine

Country	Date of recognition
Bulgaria	November 25, 1988
Cyprus	November 18, 1988
Czech Republic	November 18, 1988
Hungary	November 23, 1988
Malta	November 16, 1988
Poland	December 14, 1988
Romania	November 24, 1988
Slovakia	November 18, 1988
Sweden	October 30, 2014

Source: Permanent Mission of Palestine to the United Nations, http://palestineun.org/about-palestine/diplomatic-relations/(Accessed December 9, 2018)

Swedish prime minister Göran Persson voiced Sweden's support for a two-state solution as early as 2004, in his address to the UNGA plenary on September 21 (A/59/PV.4, p.42). In 2006, the leader of the Swedish delegation, Ambassador Lidén, intervened in the UNGA plenary on September 27, asserting, in response to recent missile attacks against Israel, that 'Israel's right to exist should be unequivocally recognized by all,' while also expressing concern over 'the humanitarian situation in Gaza and the West Bank,' as well as over humanitarian access and the humanitarian law situation 'throughout the occupied Palestinian territories.' (A/61/PV.22, p.23). Mr. Lidén also noted that the 'expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories must stop' (A/61/PV.22, p.23). A year later, at the UNGA plenary of 2007, he would reiterate Sweden's call for a peaceful two-state solution once again (A/62/PV.15, p.40).

On November 19, 2009, the Swedish representative in GA4 (Special Political and Decolonization), Ms. Måwe, would address the committee to express, on behalf of the EU, deep concern over the humanitarian situation in Gaza—particularly over the lack of access to humanitarian aid and recovery efforts (A/C.4/64/SR.25, p.30). She would repeat these points at the UNGA plenary three days later, while also listing other EU concerns about Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories, and advocating for a peaceful, two-state solution (A/64/PV.54, 2009:p.5). Ambassador Lidén would do the same on November 30 (A/64/PV.51, 2009:p.14), as would Ambassador Grunditz at the UNGA plenary the following year (A/65/PV.22, 2010:p.39). Following these remarks, the most recent Palestine-related Swedish intervention within the study period would be delivered by Ms. Söder at a 2014 UNGA plenary meeting, to a largely similar effect as the above (A/69/PV.59, p.17). Sweden's recent (October 30, 2014)[110] recognition of the Palestinian state would also feature prominently among speakers at the same debate.

Danish representatives intervened three times in debates on the question of Palestine in the study period—with the most recent intervention being a vote explanation on resolution R/67/19, which has already been accounted for earlier in this section. The earliest Danish intervention on Palestine within the study period came in 2001, at a UNGA plenary meeting on December 3. In response to an uptick in fighting in the occupied territories that September, the UNGA had adopted a resolution A/RES/56/36 on the peaceful settlement of the Palestine question. The resolution, which would reaffirm the necessity for a peaceful settlement, had passed with 131 'yes' votes (including Finland, Sweden and Slovakia) against 6 'no'-s (including the United States and Israel), and 20 abstentions (including the Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary and Poland). The Danish representative, Mr. Løj, intervened with a vote explanation, stating: 'Denmark supported the inclusion in the text of wording regarding the prevention of all indiscriminate acts of terror and violence directed at civilians — Palestinians as well as Israelis' (A/56/PV.72, 2001:p. 13). The text of the adopted draft would eventually make reference to 'a high number of deaths and injuries, *mostly among Palestinian civilians*' (A/RES/56/36, 2001, italics by A.M. for emphasis). Therefore, the Danish abstention and intervention may be construed as an appeal for a more balanced (and comparably more Israel-friendly) approach to the Palestine question.

Denmark would make another Palestine-related intervention nine years later, at the UNGA plenary of September 28, 2010—the same meeting where Swedish Ambassador Grunditz would express Sweden's support for the two-state solution alongside Swedish concerns over Israeli settlements. At the meeting, Danish Ambassador Staur delivered the Danish delegation's opening statement, welcoming 'the recent relaunch of direct negotiations between the leaders of Israel and the Palestinian Authority,' and supporting 'United States efforts to facilitate the negotiations' and advocating for the two-state solution (A/65/PV.22, 2010:p.32).

[110] See http://palestineun.org/about-palestine/diplomatic-relations/ (accessed December 9, 2018).

Conclusions on Intergroup Splits

During the votes on adopted resolutions analyzed in this study, the Nordic and V4 stances substantially differed from each other on three occasions only: on resolutions about INSTRAW; the Declaration on Human Cloning; and on human rights in Gaza. The divided vote on INSTRAW yielded no interventions from representatives of the studied countries; and the more general debates on women's issues (including the question of the Institute) are captured in the related analysis in Subchapter 7.[111]

The vote on the Declaration on Human Cloning (R/59/280, 2003) has been observed in this study as a 'fuzzy' case of intergroup contestation—given the Czech Republic's alignment with the more progressive, pro-therapeutic-cloning stance of the Nordic countries. Due to a lack of spoken interventions, no genuine insight other than the vote has been secured into the Czech stance, however, and a lack of thorough understanding remains on the Slovak stance, as well.

The resolution on the UN fact-finding mission in Gaza (R/64/254, 2010) yielded a genuine and unique case of intergroup contestation—with all three Nordic countries voting in favor, an all four V4 countries abstaining. The Nordic 'yes' has been seen to align with the stance of most of the rest of the EU's 'old' member states', while the V4's caution to endorse the resolution would be met with a similar caution from most other 'new' EU members. This voting pattern would then be reproduced two years later, as the Nordic countries would join countries adopting a resolution on Palestine's UN membership status (R/67/19, 2012), and three of the V4 countries (Poland, Slovakia and Hungary) would abstain. Prominently, the Czech Republic—the only EU member state to do so—would vote against this resolution.

This voting pattern impresses a broader, (geo-)political (rather than a narrowly-conceived human rights) logic on the analysis of the Palestine policy of the Nordic and V4 countries, which also accounts for the votes of these countries on the 2010 resolution on the fact-finding mission in Gaza (R/64/254). The impression drawn from the voting pattern, as well as subsequent vote explanations, suggests a more markedly Israel-friendly, Atlanticist, or 'Palestine-cautious' V4—with the Czech Republic speaking loudest through its 'no' vote—; and a more verbally human-rights-advocating, or 'Israel-cautious' Nordic group. This logic also reaffirms the caution exercised by some scholars to include Palestine issues among 'human rights topics' in the first place.[112]

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111 See the section on the *Advancement of Women*, starting on p.189.

112 See Chapter I for a review of the relevant literature.

Votes on the Palestine status resolution—as well as assertions of support for a two-state solution—can be read in conjunction with the question of the international recognition of the state of Palestine. Sweden is the only EU member state to have recognized the statehood of Palestine in the study period. The only other EU countries to have previously done so were the former Soviet bloc countries (including the V4), which does not speak to the post-bipolar policy stance of these countries to any meaningful degree.

Both the Danish and Finnish representatives have been observed to deliver encouraging remarks subsequent to the adoption of the resolution on the 2012 upgrade of the status Palestine—yet both countries would also make it clear that the recognition of statehood was a separate question. Denmark would make the single most Israel-friendly gesture from the Nordic countries, by abstaining on a resolution on renewed fighting in Palestine on account of an omission of reference to violence against Israeli civilians. The Danish representative would also explicitly make this point during an intervention in the UNGA plenary. Denmark's praise of U.S. efforts to broker peace talks between Palestine and Israel are seen as being in keeping with a more pronouncedly Atlanticist Danish foreign policy, compared to that of the other two (neutral) Nordic countries.

Ultimately, this section has reaffirmed that questions and policies concerning Palestine—including the human rights resolution on the report of the UN fact-finding mission in Gaza—are to be understood within the broader logic of Middle East politics and policies. Based on this insight, and considering both the thematic and methodological limitations of the present dissertation, the study will not engage in any further analysis of the Palestine question beyond this point.

6. Group Cohesion Patterns

Taking a step back from the analysis of specific votes contested within or across the two subregional groups, this Subchapter employs the two used indices of group voting—the *Agreement Index* (*AI2*) and *Cohesion Ratio* (*C2*)—to assess and compare patterns of voting cohesion. As a reminder, it may be noted that the content of the two indices differs both mathematically and conceptually. On one hand, *AI2* is best construed as the degree of divergence from a majority vote—and measures the *contestation level* of a vote, i.e. the magnitude of the majority vis-à-vis the minority (Burmester & Jankowski, 2014).[113] *C2* values, on the other hand, can be interpreted as the cohesion level of a vote—i.e. the percentage of cohesion within the country group for which it is calculated.

As has been demonstrated earlier, average Nordic group *AI2* and *C2* values were as high as, or higher than the respective average V4 group *AI2* and *C2* values for most of the UNGA sessions studied in this dissertation.[114] T-tests for the difference in means for subregional *AI2*s have concluded that members of the Nordic group tended to diverge less from the Nordic majority than did the V4 countries from the V4 majority. T-tests for the difference in means for subregional *C2*s concluded, however, that the cohesion levels of the Nordic and V4 groups were not significantly different. Without prejudice to the statistical tests performed earlier in the study—but with the aim of refining the inference pattern offered by them—, it is meaningful to look at votes with greater or smaller Nordic and V4 unity vis-à-vis each other. This is done in the present Subchapter using a lighter descriptive-quantitative account (i.e. comparing the group indices per vote), as well as a more in-depth qualitative analysis (i.e. inquiring into the debates around these votes).

In the first section of the Subchapter, votes contested within the EU that saw higher degrees of V4 cohesion than Nordic cohesion are analyzed, with special regard for those resolutions which have not yet been addressed from the perspective of intra- or intergroup contestation. The second section does the same for the rest of the resolutions contested within the EU group—those for which Nordic unity would have exceeded V4 unity.

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[113] See Subchapters 2 and 3 within this chapter for details.

[114] See Subchapter 3 within this chapter for details.

V4 More United

Comparing the two subregional groups, it can be observed that, based on the values of *C2* or *AI2*, the V4 group was more cohesive than the Nordic group in a total of nine cases (four based on both *AI2* and *C2*, and five based on *AI2* only). *Table 20* below lists the resolutions that led to these votes, as well as the respective values of the group indices.

Table 20.
UNGA human rights resolutions adopted 1994–2014 with votes where the V4 group was more cohesive than the Nordic group, based on the value of the Agreement Index (*AI2*) or Cohesion Ratio (*C2*)

UNGA Session	Year	Resolution	C2 Nordic	C2 V4	AI2 Nordic	AI2 V4
54	1999	R/54/175	100	100	0.5	0.625
56	2001	R/56/150	100	100	0.5	1
58	2003	R/58/172	33.33	100	0.5	1
58	2003	R/58/173	33.33	50	0.5	0.625
59	2004	R/59/185	33.33	100	0.5	1
64	2009	R/64/172	100	100	0.5	1
64	2010	R/64/292	33.33	50	0.5	0.625
65	2010	R/65/219	100	100	0.5	0.625
66	2011	R/66/143	100	100	0.5	1

Note: Indices signaling a contested vote (AI2<1; C2<100) are marked in red.
Color coding of resolution IDs: blue: right to development /purple: racism and xenophobia.

The most obvious pattern detectable from *Table 20* is that six of the nine resolutions leading to higher V4 unity than Nordic pertained to a single topic: the right to development. In fact, all but one of the right-to-development-related resolutions that saw intragroup splits in the study period[115] would end up included in *Table 20*.

Table 21 below plots the individual votes cast by members of the Nordic and V4 groups on these six right-to-development resolutions. As has been demonstrated previously, meeting records of the study period have not afforded much inferential value regarding Nordic or V4 policy stances on this issue area. The overall logic of voting—regardless of intragroup contestation—has been observed to be 'West v. rest,' but this has not explained the nuances of the Nordic or V4 stance to any meaningful extent. In fact, the only spoken intervention on the issue was that of the Finnish delegate at a 2009 GA3 meeting, which would arguably have expressed such a minor nuance of Finnish policy that it would not allow for drawing

[115] See *Table 12* on p.126.

conclusions on policy regarding the broader topic of 'right to development' (A/C.3/63/SR.46, 2008:p.11).[116]

Table 21.
Nordic and V4 country votes on UNGA resolutions on the 'right to development' adopted 1994–2014 with votes where the V4 group was more cohesive than the Nordic group, based on the value of the Agreement Index (*AI2*) or Cohesion Ratio (*C2*)

UNGA Session	Year	Resolution	SE	FI	DK	PL	CZ	SK	HU
54	1999	R/54/175	n	a	n	a	a	a	n
56	2001	R/56/150	a	a	n	a	a	a	a
58	2003	R/58/172	a	y	y	y	y	y	y
59	2004	R/59/185	a	y	y	y	y	y	y
64	2009	R/64/172	n	a	n	n	n	n	n
65	2010	R/65/219	n	a	n	n	n	a	n

Vote options: y—yes / n—no / a—abstain

Source of data: United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISnet), http://unbisnet.un.org

On the resolutions listed in *Table 21*, the split Nordic vote was caused twice by a Swedish abstention during 'yes' votes by Denmark and Finland (R/58/172; R/59/185), thrice by the abstention of Finland during 'no' votes by Sweden and Denmark (R/54/175; R/64/172; R/65/219), and once by a 'no' vote from Denmark during the abstention of Sweden and Finland (R/56/150). The V4 group voted uniformly in all but two of these cases: (1) resolution R/54/175, where Hungary voted 'no' (together with Sweden and Denmark) while Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia abstained (as did Finland); and (2) resolution R/65/219, where Slovakia abstained (as did Finland) while Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary (alongside Sweden and Denmark) voted 'no.'

The broader pattern of 'right to development' voting, however, remains that both the Nordic and V4 majorities would align by and large with the EU majority—this is the conclusion lent by the above cases. The bigger picture of the two cases where the resolutions were supported by the EU, Nordic and V4 groups remains the following: (1) resolution R/58/172 was adopted almost unanimously in the UNGA (with only Israel, Palau and the United States voting against; and five abstentions including that of Sweden); and so was (2) resolution R/59/185 (with Israel and the United States voting 'no'; and four of the five countries abstaining that had abstained on R/58/172, including Sweden). The other four resolutions (R/56/150, R/56/150, R/64/172,

[116] See the respective section in Subchapter 4 of this chapter, starting on p.128.

and R/65/219) would all become cases where the 'rest' would adopt the respective resolution texts without the support of the 'West' (including the EU, as well as the Nordic and V4 groups).

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The stance of subregional groups on a different resolution—on the 'Inadmissibility of certain practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance' (R/66/143, 2011) has already been analyzed earlier in this study.[117] Easily considered a 'West v. rest' issue area—like the right to development—this topic would also not see any Nordic or V4 spoken interventions in the study period, but for a statement by the Polish delegate on behalf of the EU at a 2011 GA3 session. In this statement, the Polish EU presidency would outline five substantive aspects in which the debated (and eventually adopted) draft fell short of EU member states' expectations to protect universal human rights. The abstention of Finland—the only vote causing a split Nordic group on this resolution—would be left unexplained by the meeting records.

The two further resolutions listed in *Table 20* would address 'The right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health' (R/58/173); and 'The human right to water and sanitation' (R/64/292). Notably, these two issues are also development-related, but, as they have not yet been analyzed in this study, they are dealt with separately here. *Table 22* below lists Nordic and V4 country votes on these two resolutions.

Table 22.
Nordic and V4 country votes on UNGA resolutions R/58/173 ('The right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health') and R/64/292 ('The human right to water and sanitation').

UNGA Session	Year	Resolution	SE	FI	DK	PL	CZ	SK	HU
58	2003	R/58/173	a	y	y	y	a	y	y
64	2010	R/64/292	a	y	a	a	a	a	y

Vote options: y—yes / n—no / a—abstain

Source of data: United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISnet), http://unbisnet.un.org[118]

In terms of voting patterns, both resolutions can be considered 'false positives' as cases where the V4 voted more cohesively than the Nordic group. In fact, in both cases, one country would deviate from the respective group majorities—Sweden and the Czech Republic would vote 'yes'

[117] See the section on *Racism and Xenophobia* in Subchapter 4, starting on p.132. Note that this resolution is also listed in *Table 20* of this section (p.159).

[118] Note: in lieu of the UNBISnet voting records, the official press release was used to extract vote choices, as well as spoken interventions for resolution R/64/292. The UNBISnet database search returned an error message for this resolution.

on R/58/173, when all others abstained; and Finland and Hungary would vote 'yes' on R/64/292 when all others abstained. Consequently, these resolutions might rather be seen as potentially interesting cases of intragroup contestation, which were not analyzed in Subchapter 4 due to their sporadic nature.

Resolution R/58/173 (2003), on the right to health, was adopted in the UNGA by 174 votes in favor and 2 against (Marshall Islands, United States), and with 4 abstentions (Australia, Czech Republic, Sweden, United Kingdom). As such, it does not follow any obvious pattern that might be expected from a development-related resolution (i.e. 'West v. rest'), and the pertaining meeting records (A/58/PV.77, 2003) also do not contain any indication of the reasons for dissenting votes.

Resolution R/64/292 (2010), on the right to water and sanitation, on the other hand, seems to have followed more of a typical 'West v. rest' pattern, with mostly Western countries abstaining (41 in total), and 122 others voting in favor. Notably, Finland and Hungary would side with the 'rest' on this vote, with the Hungarian representative, Ambassador Márta Horváth Fekszi, intervening to explain that

> her Government considered access to water and sanitation to be part of the right to an adequate standard of living, and that was why the Hungarian delegation would vote in favour [of the resolution], despite concerns about how it had been negotiated[119]

The procedural concerns hinted at by Ambassador Horváth Fekszi, and shared by other members, apparently hinged on a supposed effort to undermine the so-called 'Geneva process,' a more comprehensive, Human Rights Council-based approach to elaborating an international legal framework for the right to water and sanitation. These concerns were captured by the U.S. intervention:

> Expressing regret that the text had diverted the Assembly from the serious international efforts under way to promote greater coordination on water and sanitation issues, he said it attempted to take a short cut around the serious work of formulating, articulating and upholding universal rights. It had not been drafted in a transparent, inclusive manner, and neither the Assembly, nor the Geneva process had yet considered fully the legal implications of a declared right to water. For those reasons, the United States had called for a vote and would abstain in the voting, he said.[120]

[119] Taken from the respective official press release (https://www.un.org/press/en/2010/ga10967.doc.htm, accessed January 11, 2019) rather than the official records, due to the unavailability of the latter in UNBISnet at the time of writing.

[120] Taken from the official press release (https://www.un.org/press/en/2010/ga10967.doc.htm, accessed January 11, 2019)—see footnote 119 for an explanation.

Apart from Hungary and Finland, of the EU group, Belgium, France, Germany and Italy also votes ‘yes’ on this resolution—resulting in a voting pattern marked by an EU divided in a way that does not appear relevant to the study of subregional group voting studied in the present section of the dissertation.

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This section has underlined that the Nordic group was split (albeit two ways and never three, and in ‘soft’ version) on the topic of ‘right to development’ comparatively frequently—even compared to the V4. Cohesion patterns have not allowed drawing any additional conclusions as to the mechanics of intra-Nordic contestation on the issue, which, considered a ‘typical Nordic’ theme, is to be further analyzed in Subchapter 7. No additional inferential value has been extracted from the remaining three human rights votes discussed here (on racism/xenophobia, the right to water and sanitation, and the right to health).

Nordics More United

Looking at the other side of the coin, it can be observed that Nordic cohesion was higher than V4 cohesion on 20 resolutions, out of which 13 based on the values of *AI2* only (and seven on both *C2* and *AI2*)—see *Table 23* below.

Table 23.
UNGA human rights resolutions adopted 1994–2014 with votes where the Nordic group was more cohesive than the V4 group, based on the value of the Agreement Index (*AI2*) or Cohesion Ratio (*C2*)

UNGA Session	Year	Resolution	C2 Nordic	C2 V4	AI2 Nordic	AI2 V4
49	1994	R/49/150	100	100	1	0.625
49	1994	R/49/202	100	33.33	1	0.5
50	1995	R/50/138	100	100	1	0.5
50	1995	R/50/190	100	50	1	0.625
51	1996	R/51/83	100	100	1	0.625
51	1996	R/51/111	100	50	1	0.625
52	1997	R/52/112	100	100	1	0.625
52	1997	R/52/136	100	100	1	0.625
52	1997	R/52/139	100	50	1	0.625
54	1999	R/54/151	100	100	1	0.625
55	2000	R/55/86	100	100	1	0.625
56	2001	R/56/146	100	100	1	0.625
56	2001	R/56/232	100	100	1	0.625
57	2002	R/57/175	100	0	1	0.25
57	2002	R/57/196	100	100	1	0.625
58	2003	R/58/99	100	50	1	0.625
58	2003	R/58/162	100	100	1	0.625
58	2003	R/58/245	100	100	1	0.625
59	2005	R/59/280	100	50	1	0.625
68	2013	R/68/151	100	100	1	0.625

Note: Indices signaling a contested vote (AI2<1; C2<100) are marked in red.

Color coding of resolution IDs: orange: mercenaries / blue: right to development / green: Kosovo /purple: racism and xenophobia.

Notably, all nine of the mercenaries-related resolutions that saw contested votes within the two subregional groups appear in *Table 23* (marked orange), as do all three related to Kosovo (marked green), as well as the resolutions on Iran (R/49/202, 1994), on the International Research and Training Institute on the Advancement of Women (R/57/175, 2002) and on human cloning (R/59/280, 2005).[121] A single resolution on the right to development (R/52/136, 1997) also appears in *Table 23*. As the debates surrounding these topics have already been addressed previously,[122] only the relevant points, i.e. those with additional observations to be made regarding cohesion patterns, are to be revisited here.

On human rights in Iran, the Czech Republic has been identified as having a markedly more vocal-progressive stance than the other V4 countries—however, this observation has been based on more recent interventions than the time of resolution R/49/202 (1994). The resolution itself would see a highly-contested EU (*AVx*=0.79; *AI2*=0.6875), and the only case of the V4 being split three ways (with Poland abstaining, and the Czech Republic and Hungary voting 'yes', and Slovakia absent). Slovakia's absence has been demonstrated as most likely rooted in extrinsic factors than intrinsic, but the unanimous Nordic 'yes' in the face of a highly-divided V4 (and EU) and a largely non-vocal international community[123] is still seen as a remarkable phenomenon.

The case of the Declaration on Human Cloning (resolution R/59/280, 2005), as well as Nordic and V4 policies on the issue area, have previously been analyzed in detail[124]—here it is only to be reminded that the declaration would present the only case of 'hard' contestation in either of the subregional groups: pitting the Czech Republic's 'no' against the rest of the V4, which would support the Declaration. The Nordic group, on the other hand, would stand fully united in voting 'no' on the resolution, revealing a shared progressive approach to therapeutic cloning.

The resolution on INSTRAW (R/57/175, 2002) would leave the EU relatively split (*AVx*=0.32; *AI2*=0.4642), and the V4 likewise: with Poland and Hungary abstaining and the Czech Republic and Slovakia voting 'yes.' Without further insight to be gained from the meeting records into the subject-matter of policy on the singular vote, and deferring the analysis of the broader debate on women's issues to Subchapter *7*, it can be stated that this vote appears as yet another representative of a pattern of a united Nordic group in the face of a split EU (and V4).

The single resolution on the right to development which would see a more united Nordic group than V4 was resolution R/52/136 (1997)—as opposed to the other six for which the opposite

[121] See *Table 12* on p.126 for all resolutions with intragroup splits.

[122] See the section on *Right to Development* in Subchapter 4.

[123] According to the summary records, the only countries that offered explanations (before the vote) were Algeria and the Maldives (A/C.3/49/SR.48, 1994:p.10–11).

[124] See the pertaining sections of Subchapters 4 and 5, from p.138 and p.148, respectively.

would be the case.[125] As such, the subregional voting pattern of the present resolution, which would see a Czech 'no' and abstentions by the other V4 countries—as well as a unanimous 'no' from the Nordic group—seems to be in keeping with the more general backdrop of an EU group not supporting the resolution. In fact, the EU group itself would be largely split between 'no' and abstention (EU *AVx*=0.1071; *AI2*=0.4642). As such, this resolution does not offer any additional insight within the focus area of this Subchapter.

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The topic of mercenaries, to be addressed in more detail in the present section, has previously been demonstrated as a classic case of 'West v. rest' contestation. Based on an EU intervention in GA3 (made by the Polish delegate), the EU has been observed as being opposed to the conflation of mercenaries with private security companies—or that this issue be discussed 'from the perspective of human rights or of the threat posed by such activity to the rights of peoples to self-determination' in the first place (A/C.3/66/SR.45, 2011:p.6). It has also been noted that the V4 would be split on votes taken 1994–2003, which might signal the subregional group's increasing alignment, moving forward in time, with the EU majority.[126] *Table 24* below shows the country-by-country breakdown of votes on the nine EU-contested 'mercenaries' resolutions that were cast by members of the two subregional groups.

[125] See the section on *Right to Development* in Subchapter 4 for further details.

[126] See more details in the pertaining discussion on p.127.

Table 24.
Nordic and V4 country votes on UNGA human rights resolutions on mercenaries adopted 1994–2014 with votes where the V4 group was more united than the Nordic group, based on the value of the Agreement Index (*AI2*) or Cohesion Ratio (*C2*)

UNGA Session	Year	Resolution	SE	FI	DK	PL	CZ	SK	HU
49	1994	R/49/150	n	n	n	a	a	a	n
50	1995	R/50/138	n	n	n	x	a	a	n
51	1996	R/51/83	n	n	n	a	a	a	n
52	1997	R/52/112	n	n	n	a	a	a	n
54	1999	R/54/151	n	n	n	a	a	a	n
55	2000	R/55/86	n	n	n	n	n	a	n
56	2001	R/56/232	n	n	n	n	n	a	n
57	2002	R/57/196	n	n	n	n	n	a	n
58	2003	R/58/162	n	n	n	n	n	a	n

Vote options: y—yes / n—no / a—abstain / x—absent

Source of data: United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISnet), http://unbisnet.un.org

As might be concluded from *Table 24*, Hungary can be seen as fully aligned with the EU (and Nordic) 'no' from 1994 already; and, from 2000, Poland and the Czech Republic would join the 'no' group, as well. Slovakia would remain the single V4 country abstaining as late as 2003. However, it is to be noted that the 'no' and 'abstain' votes on these resolutions would largely vary within the EU group, although the contestation level of the EU vote (i.e. the size of the majority compared to the minority) would always remain smaller than that of the V4 vote. *Table 25* reveals this trend by comparing the *AI2* values for the EU with those of the V4 for the votes in question.

Table 25.
EU and V4 Agreement Index (*AI2*) values for UNGA human rights resolutions on mercenaries adopted 1994–2014 with split votes in the V4

UNGA Session	Year	Resolution	AI2 EU		AI2 V4
49	1994	R/49/150	0.3035	<	0.625
50	1995	R/50/138	0.28	<	0.5
51	1996	R/51/83	0.2777	<	0.625
52	1997	R/52/112	0.3571	<	0.625
54	1999	R/54/151	0.5178	<	0.625
55	2000	R/55/86	0.3571	<	0.625
56	2001	R/56/232	0.3125	<	0.625
57	2002	R/57/196	0.3571	<	0.625
58	2003	R/58/162	0.3571	<	0.625

Therefore, the alignment with the 'no'-s may more accurately be described as the alignment with the Nordic group or another EU subgroup which may have served as an example for the V4 (minus Slovakia)—rather than with the EU as a whole.[127] In any case, for a topic on which the EU was this split (albeit within the bounds of disapproval, i.e. 'no'/'abstain'), it is remarkable that the Nordic group would have managed to maintain unanimity on 'no' throughout the study period.

[127] This is a fascinating probability, which might be confirmed or rejected through further in-depth analysis in an eventual study focusing on the issue of human rights and mercenaries, e.g. during interviews with V4 diplomats who were present at these votes.

All three resolutions on human rights in Kosovo would see a more united Nordic group than V4 group. The reason for V4 disunity, however, would be the same in all three cases: the abstention of Slovakia—see *Table 26* below.

Table 26.
Nordic and V4 country votes on UNGA human rights resolutions on Kosovo adopted 1994–2014 with votes where the V4 group was more united than the Nordic group, based on the value of the Agreement Index (AI2) or Cohesion Ratio (C2)

UNGA Session	Year	Resolution	SE	FI	DK	PL	CZ	SK	HU
50	1995	R/50/190	y	y	y	y	y	a	y
51	1996	R/51/111	y	y	y	y	y	a	y
52	1997	R/52/139	y	y	y	y	y	a	y

Vote options: y—yes / a—abstain

Source of data: United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISnet), http://unbisnet.un.org

As has previously been explained, the Slovak abstention (still under Mečiar government) on these votes might be linked to Slovakia's comparative Serbia-friendliness.[128] It cannot be used to infer about the broader Kosovo-policy (let alone Western Balkan policy) of the V4 group. The larger story of all three votes should arguably be seen as a story of the unity of the EU on them—and within it the unity of the Nordic group and the V4, minus Slovakia.

Besides Slovakia, only Romania of the EU group would abstain on all three resolutions. Bulgaria would abstain twice (R/51/11 and R/52/139), and Greece would abstain on one occasion (R/50/190) and would be absent on another (R/51/111). It is notable how, besides Slovakia, only votes of countries from the Balkan Peninsula, with borders to the former Yugoslavia, would vary in any way beyond a 'yes' vote. Ultimately, the issue of Kosovo serves as an indication of Slovak policy in opposition to that of the EU majority, and is not conducive to comparing Nordic and V4 subregions in terms of level of coherence.

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Individual vote choices for the three remaining resolutions on which the coherence level of the Nordic group exceeded that of the V4, are listed in *Table 27* below. As is visible, the split V4 vote would be caused by three different countries for the three different resolutions—which are only listed in a single table for convenience, not to suggest that they belong together thematically, or in terms of representing any particular pattern of voting.

[128] See the section on *Kosovo* within Subchapter 4, starting on p.130.

Table 27.
Nordic and V4 country votes on UNGA human rights resolutions on R/56/146 (2001), R/58/99 (2003) and R/58/245 (2003)

UNGA Session	Year	Resolution	Topic	SE	FI	DK	PL	CZ	SK	HU
56	2001	R/56/146	Human rights treaty bodies	n	n	n	n	n	a	n
58	2003	R/58/99	Israeli practices in Palestine	y	y	y	y	a	y	y
58	2003	R/58/245	Special rep. for children and armed conflict	n	n	n	n	a	a	a

Vote options: y—yes / n—no / a—abstain

Source of data: United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISnet), http://unbisnet.un.org

Resolution R/56/146 on the 'Equitable geographical distribution in the membership of the human rights treaty bodies' (2001) would express 'concern at the clear regional imbalance in the current composition of the membership of the human rights treaty bodies' (p.1) and recommend 'establishing [a] quota for each geographical region in each treaty body' (p.2). The vote on this resolution would see a clear 'West v. rest' pattern, with the 'rest'—the obvious beneficiaries of the resolution—voting in favor, and most Western countries (including all EU member states but Slovakia) against. Slovakia, together with only four other countries (Argentina, Brazil, Gambia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) would abstain in the vote.

The pertaining UNGA plenary meeting records contain no vote explanations presented by any country (A/56/PV.88, 2001), and targeted keyword searches in the UNBISnet meeting records database have returned no results (including from GA3, which had submitted the draft to the plenary)—therefore the debate on this item, and Slovakia's abstention on the resolution, remains unexplained at this point of the analysis.[129]

Resolution R/58/99 (2003) is titled 'Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.' The resolution, as the name would suggest, would condemn Israeli practices in the occupied Palestinian territories, and demand that they be brought to an end. Israel, the United States and four small island states would vote against the resolution, while 150 countries would vote in favor, and 19 would abstain. Of the EU group, only the Czech Republic, Germany and the United Kingdom would end up abstaining. The Czech minority abstention, even in lack of

[129] Searches were completed for 'equitable geographic,' 'equitable distribution,' and 'human rights treaty bodies.'

spoken interventions at this debate (A/58/PV.72, 2003), reaffirms the comparative Israel-friendliness of the Czech Republic identified previously in this study.[130]

The third resolution, R/58/245 on the 'Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict' (2003) would express concern over the financial instability of the office, and decide that it be financed from the UN regular budget. While the Global South would largely support this resolution, EU countries would end up being split three ways on it, as represented in *Table 28* below. No spoken interventions would be made at the UNGA plenary on this resolution (A/58/PV.79, 2003), and no speeches on the office of the special representative could be retrieved from the UNBISnet database.[131]

Table 28.
EU member state votes on UNGA resolution R/58/245 (2003)
on the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict

Yes (8)	No (10)	Abstain (9)
Austria, Cyprus, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Romania, Slovenia	Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, United Kingdom	Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain

Source: United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISnet), http://unbisnet.un.org

As is visible from *Table 28*, the Nordic group managed to maintain unity on this vote, against the backdrop of a highly-divided EU, and two-way divided V4. Notably, intra-EU division does not follow any obvious pattern (e.g. geographical, old v. new member states, etc.), making Nordic unity perhaps even more noteworthy.

130 See the section on *Palestine* in Subchapter 5, starting from p.151.

131 Targeted keyword searches completed for 'Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict,' and 'children and armed conflict.'

EU and Subregional Votes

This section juxtaposes voting patterns in the EU on the one hand, and its two subregional groups studied for this dissertation, on the other. The primary aim at this point, unlike during the rest of the Subchapter thus far, is to provide an interpretation of the data to endeavor to answer the secondary research question of the study (**QII**):[132]

QII: Do the subregional groups play a role in the EU's impaired external effectiveness in the human rights domain?

Based on the value of the *Agreement Index*, 112 of the 377 human rights resolutions adopted in the study period, would be contested within the EU group (EU *AI2* < 1). Out of these, based on the value of the *Cohesion Ratio*, only 96 would have been contested (EU *C2* < 100). The difference of 16 resolutions represents those resolutions that saw votes where the EU group was split between 'no' and abstention, while the 96 are those which saw 'yes'/'no' or 'yes'/'abstain' splits (as well).

Out of the 112 resolutions contested within the EU based on *AI2*, the Nordic group voted identically (*AI2* = 1) in 103 cases, while the V4 voted identically in 88 only. Of the 96 resolutions contested in the EU based on *C2*, the Nordic group voted cohesively in 92 cases, while the V4 voted cohesively on 87 resolutions. Rather than hinting at any thematic subregional agendas, these large proportions of subregionally-united votes compared to the total of regionally-united ones first and foremost affirm the assumption that subregional groups should see higher degrees of unity than regional groupings that include these subregions. This is not to prejudice the results of the statistical tests performed earlier in the study, which have compared regional and subregional levels of cohesion,[133] merely to assert that the comparatively high level of subregional unit is more across-the-board than thematic in nature.

While the Nordic group would see only two-way splits (*AI2* = 0.5 or 1)—with no Nordic countries ever absent from a vote; the V4 would observe two three-way splits in the study period, but these, as has been described earlier, would be 'soft' versions of a three-way split ('yes'/'no'/'absent') rather than 'hard' versions ('yes'/'no'/'abstain')—at least one of which (the absence of Slovakia on resolution R/49/202) would most likely be brought on by factors extrinsic to the vote.[134]

[132] See the section on *Research Questions and Hypotheses* in Chapter II, Subchapter 3 (starting on p.97) for details.

[133] See in the section on *AI2 and C2* in Subchapter Subregional Voting3.

[134] See *Table 11* on p.118 and the discussion that follows afterwards, for details.

There does not appear to be an obvious methodological case for including only the smaller subset of resolutions (those contested based on *C2* only) in this section, therefore, and for the sake of consistency with previous sections, the slightly bigger subset (contested based on *AI2*) will be used as the basis for further analysis.

Setting out to provide an answer to **QII** based on the data analysis of this study, it is meaningful to look at resolutions where the EU was outvoted in the UNGA, and either of the two subregional groups voted in favor of the resolution. If this is the case, the subregional group in question (or at least its majority) would appear to have sided with the extra-EU supporters of the resolution (the 'rest'?), causing it to pass despite the EU group's relative unity on opposing it.[135]

Mathematically, a resolution with an EU *average vote* (*AVx*) close to zero would mean that that resolution would not have been supported by the EU majority. An EU *AVx* of zero would mean that EU member states would all have voted against or abstained on the resolution. As the present aspiration is to pick out cases of EU opposition *and* Nordic/V4 support, votes with an EU *AVx* of 0 will not be relevant, as these would mean that the subregional groups would have voted 'no' or 'abstain' with the EU. Therefore, a possible approach to selecting these votes would be to look at those votes where the EU *AVx* would be as close to zero as possible, while one or both the subgroup *AVx*s would have been as close to 1 as possible. To determine the cutoff point for the EU *AVx* where the EU may still be seen as opposing the resolution, *Table 29* below shows hypothetical values of the *AVx*s with different EU, Nordic and V4 voting scenarios, with each of the scenarios spelled out in the following.

Table 29.
Hypothetical values of the EU Average Vote (*AVx*) in case of different scenarios of EU minority support and V4 country support for a resolution opposed by the rest of the EU

		V4 AVx			
		0.25	**0.5**	**0.75**	**1**
EU Scenario	**S1 (EU24)**	0.0357	0.0714	0.1071	0.1428
	S2 (EU18)	0.25	0.2857	0.3214	0.3571
	S3 (EU16)	0.3214	0.3571	0.3928	0.4285
	S4 (EU13)	0.4285	0.4642	0.5	0.5357

[135] As the dataset contains only adopted resolutions, cases where the EU group may have supported a draft resolution which would then get voted down in the UNGA would not appear in it. These working documents, and the vote taken on them, would have to be extracted from the meeting records. In case there were votes where the EU majority supported a draft, but either the V4 or the Nordic group were (relatively) united in opposition to it, these cases would have to be picked up by hand, on a case-by-case basis. This exercise would exceed the aspirations of the present dissertation, but may be a meaningful trajectory for follow-up studies.

The hypothetical matrix spelled out in *Table 29* should be read as follows:

a) The horizontal dimension of the matrix represents different values of the V4 *AVx*. The values, from left to right, correspond with one V4 country supporting the resolutions (*AVx* = 0.25) through to all four of them doing so (*AVx* = 1).
b) The vertical dimension of the matrix represents four different voting scenarios of the rest of the EU (the 'EU24,' i.e. the EU28 minus the V4 countries) not supporting the resolution—i.e. voting 'no' or abstaining, per the logic of *C2/AVx*.[136]

The four different hypothetical scenarios considered for the rest of the EU, which are constructed to arrive at the respective hypothetical values of the EU *AVx*, are as follows:

- **S1 (EU24)**: All of the EU24 vote 'no' or 'abstain' on the resolution;
- **S2 (EU18)**: Three-fourths of the EU24 (=EU18) vote 'no' or 'abstain' on the resolution;
- **S3 (EU16)**: Two-thirds of the EU24 (=EU16) vote 'no' or 'abstain' on the resolution;
- **S4 (EU13)**: An absolute majority of the EU24, i.e. 50% of the EU24 plus one country (=EU13) vote 'no' or 'abstain' on the resolution.

Notably, while the hypothetical values of the EU *AVx* monotonously increase from left to right, top to bottom throughout the table for the most part, three pairs of values (marked with identical colors in the table), correspond to each other as they represent the same combinations of 'yes' v. 'no'/'abstain' votes (9, 10 and 12 'yes'-s), albeit cast by different countries.

With this understanding in mind, the EU *AVx* value of 0.5357 might be considered as the absolute most 'lenient' cutoff value for considering the EU-minus-the-V4 as an opponent of the resolution. However, this value only represents true EU24-majority opposition if the V4 is indeed unanimously supportive of the resolution. Therefore, EU *AVx* and V4 *AVx* values may only be read in pairs, and *Table 29* might be used as a compass while doing so. If the EU *AVx* is found to be 'close' to zero (i.e. not greater than 0.5357), the corresponding V4 *AVx* value would still need to be taken into consideration in order to make a judgment about the significance of the vote.

[136] See Subchapter 2, and its section on the *Cohesion Ratio* (starting on p.106) for the respective formulae and their explanations.

For the Nordic group, the respective hypothetical EU *AVx* values, based on analogous EU voting scenarios as those listed in *Table 29*, are as follows:

Table 30.
Hypothetical values of the EU Average Vote (*AVx*) in case of different scenarios of EU minority support and Nordic country support for a resolution opposed by the rest of the EU

		Nordic AVx		
		0.33	**0.66**	**1**
EU Scenario	**S1 (EU25)**	0.0357	0.0714	0.1071
	S2 (EU19)	0.25	0.2857	0.3214
	S3 (EU17)	0.3214	0.3571	0.3928
	S4 (EU13)	0.4642	0.5	0.5357

where the four hypothetical EU voting scenarios are:

- **S1 (EU25)**: All of the EU25 (the EU28 minus the Nordic group) vote 'no' or 'abstain' on the resolution;
- **S2 (EU19)**: Three-fourths of the EU25 (=EU19) vote 'no' or 'abstain' on the resolution;
- **S3 (EU17)**: Two-thirds of the EU25 (=EU17) vote 'no' or 'abstain' on the resolution;
- **S4 (EU13)**: An absolute majority of the EU25, i.e. 13 countries (=EU13) vote 'no' or 'abstain' on the resolution.

EU *AVx* value of 0.5357 might be considered as the cutoff value for considering the EU-minus-Nordic-group as an opponent of a resolution—the same cutoff value as identified in the case of the V4. As with the V4, EU *AVx* values should to be read in conjunction with the respective Nordic *AVx* if the Nordic outvoting of the EU is the issue to be considered.

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As the number of votes with an EU *AVx* of less than or equal to 0.5357 is only three (listed in *Table 31* below), it is possible to look at each of these resolutions one-by-one. Referring to previous sections of the dissertation, it can be noted that all three resolutions appearing in the table have already been discussed—and the only implications to be referenced here are those to do with 'outvoting.' Notably, none of the three cases included Nordic or V4 consensus on outvoting the EU, i.e. a unanimous 'yes' from either of the subregional groups.

Table 31.
UNGA human rights resolutions adopted 1994–2014 with one or more of the V4 or Nordic countries voting in favor, but not the EU group, based on the values of the respective average votes (*AVx*), i.e. EU *AVx* <=0.5357 *and* V4 *AVx* < 0 *or* Nordic *AVx* < 0

UNGA session	Year	Resolution	Topic	EU AVx	V4 AVx	Nordic AVx
57	2002	R/57/175	INSTRAW	0.3214	0.5	0
59	2005	R/59/280	Declaration on Human Cloning	0.4074	0.75	0
64	2010	R/64/292	Water and sanitation	0.3214	0.25	0.3333

On resolution R/57/175 (2002) regarding the 'Future operation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women,' the Nordic group unanimously abstained, together with Hungary and Poland of the V4, as well as the rest of the EU majority (13 other EU countries). The only EU country voting 'no' was the Netherlands. The Czech Republic and Slovakia, along with the remaining seven EU countries, voted in favor, contributing to the 'outvoting' of the clear EU majority. The meeting records of the UNGA plenary which adopted the resolution (December 18, 2002) contain no speeches by any countries in explanation to the vote (A/57/PV.77, 2002)—and, as has been noted earlier, no interventions by any of countries of the two subregional groups were recorded in the UNGA meeting records of the study period on the question of the institute.

Resolution R/59/280 on the Declaration on Human Cloning (2005) has been discussed at length under previous sections of the dissertation. A lively debate has been identified on this issue—including on the draft of the present resolution, which had already been debated in committee (GA6), likely prompting the acting president of the UNGA to remind delegates before the vote of the 10-minute speaking time limit, as well as the fact that

> under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that: "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, that is, either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote is different from its vote in the Committee." (A/59/PV.82, 2005:p.2)

Notably, the EU group would be highly split on this resolution (11 in favor, 15 against, Romania abstaining and Greece absent),[137] yet, based on the approach of this Subchapter, and the fact that this is the vote on which the V4 was the most united (three out of four) in opposing the EU

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[137] See *Table 14* on p.141 for the vote breakdown within the EU.

majority (and all the Nordic countries), it might be stated that the V4 majority contributed to the outvoting of the EU on this issue, siding with the 'rest' in the UNGA.[138]

Resolution R/64/292 (2010) on 'The human right to water and sanitation' appears in *Table 31* as the single case of a resolution where the EU was outvoted (*AVx* <= 0.5357) and a member of the Nordic group voted yes—as did a member of the V4. These two members were Hungary and Finland, as has been accounted for earlier in this study.[139] The resolution, sponsored by and large by countries of the Global South, and introduced by the representative of Bolivia, was one that would be fraught with disagreement about the proper process and forum to adopt international law on, pitting most Western countries—including the EU majority of 18 members—against 'the rest.' The logic of the debate in general, and the intervention of Hungarian Ambassador Horváth Fekszi to explain Hungary's vote on the issue in particular, places Hungary (alongside Finland) as countries that contributed to the West (including the EU majority) being outvoted on the resolution.

Summing up the findings of this section, it can be noted that the votes that saw either Nordic or V4 countries contribute to outvoting the EU totaled three, out of the 112 resolutions in the study period on which the EU was outvoted altogether. Therefore, this section has identified no convincing evidence supporting the alternative hypotheses to **QII**, and maintains that the likely overwhelming reasons for the EU's outvoting are external rather than subregional. Both the Nordic and V4 groups have tended, by and large, to support the EU majority, which would typically get outvoted *despite* this support coming from the subregional groups.

Even so, the nuances of contestation on singular votes (discussed primarily in previous sections) remain of interest, with the vote on the Declaration on Human Cloning being the most fruitful source of insight. In fact, this is also the only vote which bears thematic relevance to $\mathbf{H_1II_N}$, given the fact that a progressive Nordic stance was not met with broad support across the international community. However, with the EU group being as split on resolution R/59/280 as it was, it cannot be asserted that the pro-therapeutic subregional agenda would have been pushed through the EU-level by its proponents (be they the Nordic group or other countries) and resulted in failure at the global level. In fact, the degree of the EU's contestation on the issue speaks to a failure to move away from a more fractioned approach to the issue, rather than a remarkable effectiveness in representing a subregional agenda on it.

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[138] Please refer to the relevant section of Subchapter 4, starting from p.138.

[139] See *Table 22* on p.161 and the analysis that follows afterwards.

Conclusions on Cohesion Patterns

This Subchapter has used two previously explained and adapted indices of group voting—the *Agreement Index* (*AI2*) and *Cohesion Ratio* (*C2*)—to analyze patterns of voting cohesion in the Nordic and V4 group, as well as compare these patterns to each other, and to the broader voting pattern within the EU group. It would then analyze specific cases in which countries from either of the subregional groups could have contributed to the EU group being outvoted in the UNGA.

Based on the values of *C2* or *AI2*, the V4 group would have been more cohesive than the Nordic group in a total of nine cases—including six of the seven EU-contested resolutions that addressed the right to development. While this Subchapter has canvassed a number of nuances on subregional voting on the right to development, the conclusion it maintains is that both the Nordic and V4 majorities would align with the EU majority on this topic, in front of a backdrop of 'West v. rest' division in the UNGA.

Two of the remaining three resolutions on which V4 unity has been found to exceed Nordic unity (resolution R/58/173 on the right to health, and resolution R/64/292 on the right to water and sanitation) have been identified as false positives triggered by mathematical reasons only, not policy-substantive. In both cases, one country from each of the subregions (Hungary, Finland) would have deviated from its respective subgroup majority, resulting in the subgroups being split. This, in turn, would lead to a larger mathematical split in the Nordic group, due to its fewer number of members than those of the V4. In addition to this, the resolution on the right to health has been found to not follow the 'West v. rest' pattern otherwise to be expected from a development-related resolution, but no evidence has been identified in the meeting records to explain this. On the other hand, the resolution on the right to water and sanitation has been found to follow the 'West v. rest' pattern more closely. On this resolution, the voting alignments would place Hungary and Finland as countries that would contribute to the EU majority being outvoted in the UNGA.

Nordic cohesion has been found to be higher than V4 cohesion in 20 cases of resolutions contested within either of the two subregional groups. All three resolutions on Kosovo would fall into this category. These three resolutions would see a more united Nordic group than V4 group, with Slovak policy being the single reason for the V4 split. At the end of the day, however, the Kosovo issue has been argued unfit for measuring anything but Slovakia's policy on the issue, as opposed to speaking to any cohesion patterns at the subregional or regional level.

Nordic unity would also be maintained in several prominent cases. All nine resolutions on mercenaries—a typical case of 'West v. rest'—would see a (softly) split EU and V4, and a Nordic group that would maintain unanimity. On the resolution on Iran, once again a unanimous Nordic 'yes' in the face of a highly-divided EU and V4 has been identified; and the resolutions on INSTRAW and on the special representative for children and armed conflict, have also produced a similar pattern.

In the case of the resolution adopting the Declaration on Human Cloning, the single case of 'hard' contestation in either of the subregional groups—by the V4—has been found to be in stark contrast with a fully united Nordic group. In addition to that, the V4 majority has also been observed as contributing to the outvoting of the EU on this issue, siding with the 'rest' in the UNGA. Ultimately, this vote, lucrative in policy insights, has been argued as a likely case of the EU group's failure to move away from a fractioned approach to the issue, rather than a case of a remarkably well-represented subregional agenda being pushed across the EU-level to the global.

Specific but most likely minor cases of the outvoting of the EU exacerbated by Nordic and V4 countries have also been identified—as noted above. On the resolution on Israeli breaches of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories, the Czech minority abstention has been argued to confirm the previously-established relative Israel-friendliness of the Czech Republic. Ultimately, however, it has been noted that, despite the nuances of outvoting identified in this Subchapter, the likely overarching reason for the EU's outvoting would have been external rather than subregional.

7. Subregional Themes in the UNGA

Following on from the hypothesis-supporting insights arrived at in Chapter *II*, this Subchapter presents an analysis of UNGA meeting records, in search of human rights issues that have been argued to be potential cases of 'typical Nordic' or 'typical Visegrád' themes. Such topics are those that may most likely see a strong proactive role coming from the subregional groups (**H_1I**)—which would be expected to push an agenda on any these topics to and through the EU-level and UN-level of the multilevel game analyzed in the study. At least one likely suspect for being such a theme has already been identified: human cloning, which, instead of leading to a successfully coordinated EU stance, would see the Nordics and V4 countries split along a progressive/conservative intra-EU cleavage. Ultimately, this would also mean that the V4 majority would contribute to outvoting the EU majority (and the Nordic group) in the UNGA.[140]

The other 'typical Nordic' topic—confirmed also as such from the meeting records—that has been addressed in the study thus far is the right to development. As it has been previously highlighted, the topic would see relatively few Nordic interventions in the UNGA in the study period—and none from the V4. This issue has been seen to fall in line with the broader mechanics of 'West v. rest' contestation in the UNGA, and the Nordics and V4 would be largely aligning with the EU stance—primarily considering the fulfillment of the right to development as intra-state responsibility, not as a multilateral issue. As all the spoken interventions on the right to development have already been analyzed thoroughly, these interventions are only aggregated in the present Subchapter (see *Table 32* on p.183), without further commentary to follow.

There remain two potential 'typical Nordic' themes (as identified in Chapter *II*) that have not yet been addressed in the course of the study: (1) refugees, and (2) gender/sexual and reproductive rights, including women's issues.[141] The issue of human cloning might be seen as being closely linked to the broader issue area of sexual and reproductive rights. This topic would originally have appeared on the agenda of the 59th session of the UNGA under point F. 'Promotion of justice and international law'—most likely on account of being associated with GA6 (Legal). The original agenda item no. 150 (as adopted at the 58th UNGA session) would be called 'International convention against the reproductive cloning of human beings.'[142] The

[140] See Subchapter 6 for the related analysis.

[141] Targeted keyword searches in the UNBISnet speeches database on 'sexual' return no results for the studied countries in the study period; and the term 'gender' returns a single result: a Swedish intervention on women's issues. Therefore, the narrower term 'women' is used for this 'Nordic topic,' moving forward.

[142] See the agenda of the 59th UNGA session under https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N04/515/07/PDF/N0451507.pdf?OpenElement (accessed January 16, 2019).

formulation of the item itself—despite its 'legalistic' semantics and association with GA6—as well as the obvious human rights dimension to the debate surrounding the topic, can be argued to make a strong case for a 'typical Nordic' topic for the purposes of this inquiry.

Impressions of 'typical V4' topics have also been encountered through the analysis of meeting records thus far—albeit without having specifically hypothesized to this effect beforehand. The two issues that have been marked with increased interest from (some of) the Visegrád countries have included (1) human rights in Kosovo, and (2) the Roma minority. The former, which may be considered a subtheme of the EU neighborhood theme, has seen three V4 countries align with the EU majority in support of Kosovo—with Slovakia breaking ranks on a more Kosovo-skeptic note. If in any way, subregional cohesion might have been identified on this topic on a geographic basis: with Bulgaria, Romania, and Greece—all neighbors of the former Yugoslavia—exercising more cautious voting behavior than the EU (and V4) majority. This Subchapter takes the Western Balkan trajectory forward, exploring country interventions beyond the Kosovo issue.[143]

The Roma issue, arguably unique to Central Europe in the form discussed by the V4 countries, has also been identified as a topic of intra-V4 dissent, not cohesion—with representatives of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia 'uploading' much of their subregional politics on the issue to the discussion on the UNGA agenda item of racism and xenophobia. Slovakia, through a single intervention, has been seen as doing much the same in relation to its (Hungarian) national minority question. With the aspiration of further analyzing the issue, a targeted keyword search for 'Roma' has been conducted in UNBISnet for the present Subchapter—returning no results for the V4 countries, not even those interventions that had previously been identified on the issue incidentally.[144] Conjoining the Roma issue with that of national minorities, a 'minorities' theme is also to be included in the inquiry during this Subchapter.[145]

As the single Polish intervention on minorities would pertain to a procedural issue—notifying the chair of sponsoring a resolution (A/C.3/50/SR.52, 1996)—the only studied country to have made substantive interventions on the topic (three altogether) would have been Hungary.

[143] Targeted keyword searches returned no results for any of the studied countries for 'Balkan,' 'Balkans,' 'Yugoslav,' 'Serbia,' 'Macedonia,' 'Montenegro,' or 'Slovenia.' Keyword searches for 'Yugoslavia,' 'Bosnia,' and 'Croatia' returned positive results, which are listed in *Table 32*. 'Kosovo' has already been discussed previously (see the section on Kosovo in Subchapter 4, starting on p.130).

[144] The success rate of keyword searches has not been complete—see also the lack of hits for INSTRAW in previous Subchapters, in contrast to the debate identified later in the present Subchapter.

[145] Targeted keyword searches for 'minority' return no results for the studied countries within the study period; therefore, only the plural form 'minorities' is used, which is how the topic is typically referred to within UNGA human rights discussions.

Sporadic in nature, these interventions provide no genuine insight into Hungarian policy—let alone V4 policy—and are referred to immediately below, very briefly.

The first Hungarian reference to minorities in the study period would have been made by foreign minister László Kovács in the general debate of October 1996 (A/51/PV.21)—the usual scene for high-level but not very specific remarks. Two other short interventions on the topic would both delivered be in GA3, by Hungarian Ambassador Kőrösi, significantly more recently. Ambassador Kőrösi's first intervention would stress the importance of interfaith dialogue and respect for religious minorities (A/C.3/68/SR.24, 2013:p.13). His second speech would commend, in response to the report of the special rapporteur on minority issues (Ms. Rita Izsák, a Hungarian), the Iraqi government 'for standing firm against atrocities and violations committed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)' (A/C.3/69/SR.27, 2014:p.10).

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Further to the above, 'typical Visegrád' themes that remain (partially) unaddressed in this study include the EU's Eastern Partnership countries—particularly the Western Newly-Independent States (WNIS) of Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova; and the Western Balkans. *Table 32* below summarizes the results of targeted keyword searches in the speeches database of the United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISnet), on the geographic themes listed above. These meeting records are to be further explored in the present Subchapter, with a view to grasping subregional priorities, as well as to identifying traces of small state strategies from either of the two subregions—particularly capacity-building and shaping strategies, as outlined in Chapter *II*.

Above and beyond the specific themes, the more general hypothetical consideration that Nordic countries should focus on second- and third-generation human rights; and the V4 on civil and political, is too broad to be interrogated through targeted keyword searches in the meeting records. Instead, conclusions about the respective tendencies of the two subregional groups are to be drawn from the overall analysis of the study, and are not specifically targeted in this Subchapter. The specific themes are explored in the following.

Table 32.
Number of interventions by delegates of Nordic and V4 countries in the UNGA plenary and committees on 'typical Nordic' and 'typical V4' themes, 1994–2014

	Right to development	Refugees	Women	Western Balkans**	WNIS ***			Minor-ities
					BY	UA	MD	
SE	1	14*	13	3	0	0	0	0
FI	3	9	9	4	0	1	0	0
DK	0	9	8	2	0	0	0	0
PL	0	3	8	4	1	1	0	1
CZ	0	5	2	7	2	0	0	0
SK	0	1	5	2	0	0	0	0
HU	0	6*	0	10	0	0	0	3
Nordic total	4	32	30	10	0	1	0	0
V4 total	0	15	15	23	3	1	0	4
Total	**4**	**47**	**45**	**33**	**3**	**2**	**0**	**4**

Abbreviations: WNIS—Western Newly-Independent States; BY—Belarus; UA—Ukraine; MD—Moldova

** One Swedish and one Hungarian intervention on refugees was made on behalf of the EU (Sweden 2009, and Hungary 2011).*

*** Figures on speeches related to the Western Balkans refer to the aggregated hits of targeted keyword searches for 'Yugoslavia,' 'Bosnia,' and 'Croatia'—with double counting eliminated. See footnote 143 on p.181 for search terms that would not return any results.*

**** The two interventions on Ukraine (by Finland and Poland) pertained to administrative-procedural rather than substantive issues, and will not be further discussed in this study.*

Source of data: UNBISnet, compiled by. A.M. based on targeted keyword searches.

First and foremost, the number of interventions per country within each of the themes is noteworthy. An observation that might be drawn from *Table 32* is that, based on the frequency of interventions, both refugees and women would have been more salient topics in general, and far more popular among the Nordic countries in particular than would have been the right to development. These two topics would see, by far, the highest number of Nordic interventions (32 and 30, respectively), with Swedish delegates being the most active speakers on both (with 13 speeches delivered on both refugees and women, not counting the Swedish intervention on refugees made on behalf of the EU). The frequency of Finnish (9 and 9) and Danish interventions (9 and 8) would follow closely after. The V4 would be seen as substantially less active on these two topics, with Hungary and the Czech Republic leading on the topic of refugees as regards the number of interventions (6 and 5); and Poland and Slovakia being the most active on women (8 and 5 interventions)—a topic on which not a single speech would be delivered by Hungarian delegates.

The Western Balkans would also feature prominently among speakers—particularly among V4 country delegates. Targeted keyword searches returned 12 interventions on 'Yugoslavia,' 19 on 'Bosnia,' and 2 on Croatia.[146] As might be inferred from *Table 32*, Hungary—the only neighbor of the Balkans among the studied countries—was by far the most active in intervening on the topic (with 10 speeches); followed by the Czech Republic (7 speeches). It is largely due to these two countries that the V4 total of interventions on the topic (33) would exceed the Nordic total (10) as substantially as it did.

Compared to the above three topics, the activity level on both the Eastern Partnership/WNIS countries and on the topic of minorities would range from (a) almost non-existent in the Nordic group to (b) sporadic among the V4. Among the WNIS, Belarus was the country that was most frequently mentioned (with 1 intervention from Poland and 2 from the Czech Republic), followed by Ukraine (with 1 Polish and 1 Finnish hit)—and no results were returned for Moldova. The minority issue would be referred to predominantly by representatives of Hungary (3 interventions)—with the only other speech coming from Poland.[147]

Further to the above, it should be underlined that resolutions adopted with votes contested in or across either of the subregional groups have already been analyzed at length in previous Subchapters. Consequently, in theory, the topics of spoken interventions referred to in *Table 32* that remain unaddressed are those which would either result in non-contested votes within or across the subregional groups, or to votes that would not result in resolutions being adopted in the UNGA. Therefore, the latter dimension (i.e. related to possibly failed drafts) of spoken interventions are looked at more closely in the following sections, and specific interventions are referenced only primarily as deemed relevant in terms of agenda-setting or other (small-state) strategic aspects. The overall approach and aspiration throughout the thematic sections that follow is to grasp broader, more general phenomena such as agenda-setting or small state strategies—not to concentrate on single contentious issues. The three most salient topics from *Table 32*—the 'typical Nordic' themes of refugees and women, and the possibly 'typical V4' theme of the Western Balkans—are to be discussed in further detail. Debates on substantive issues, primarily in committee, are prioritized over general remarks delivered, typically by high-level dignitaries, at the UNGA general debate.

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[146] Other relevant search terms would not return any results (see footnote 143 on p.181 for details). Interventions that were found through searches for more than one of these terms have only been counted once.

[147] These results should be considered incomplete, however, given the previously-discovered Czech and Slovak interventions on the minorities issue in Central Europe—see the section on *Racism and Xenophobia* in Subchapter 4, starting on p.132.

Refugees

The refugee issue has proven to be an abundant source of spoken interventions within the study period from countries of both subregional groups, possibly already 'foreboding' the 2015 migration crisis.[148] While the majority of interventions would be made by Nordic representatives, it should be noted that most of these would pertain to an annually recurring resolution—on the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)—sponsored each year by the Nordic countries on a rotating basis. These draft resolutions, introduced each time through a spoken intervention, are listed in *Table 33* below, together with the respective meeting records which would see them being introduced in committee.

Table 33.
The Nordic-sponsored yearly UNGA-resolution on the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1994–2014

UNGA session	Year	Draft resolution	Main sponsor	Meeting records
49	1994	A/C.3/49/L.14	Sweden	A/C.3/49/SR.32
50	1995	A/C.3/50/L.20/Rev.1	Denmark	A/C.3/50/SR.33
52	1997	A/C.3/52/L.29	Finland	A/C.3/52/SR.32
53	1998	A/C.3/53/L.55	Sweden	A/C.3/53/SR.48
54	1999	A/C.3/54/L.95	Denmark	A/C.3/54/SR.52
56	2000	A/C.3/56/L.74	Finland	A/C.3/56/SR.50
57	2001	A/C.3/57/L.79	Sweden	A/C.3/57/SR.52
59	2003	A/C.3/58/L.39	Denmark	A/C.3/58/SR.39
60	2005	A/C.3/60/L.65	Finland	A/C.3/60/SR.42
61	2006	A/C.3/61/L.52	Sweden	A/C.3/61/SR.43
62	2008	A/C.3/62/L.67	Denmark	n.a.[149]
64	2009	A/C.3/64/L.52	Finland	A/C.3/64/SR.40
65	2010	A/C.3/65/L.58	Sweden	A/C.3/65/SR.41
66	2011	A/C.3/66/L.63	Denmark	A/C.3/66/SR.41
68	2013	A/C.3/68/L.46	Finland	A/C.3/68/SR.43
69	2014	A/C.3/69/L.54	Sweden	A/C.3/69/SR.42

Data extracted by A.M. from GA3 meeting records downloaded from UNBISnet (http://unbisnet.un.org) based on targeted keyword searches by A.M.

148 It should, however, be noted that the time-frame of the present study stops before the refugee/migrant issue became a dominant and highly-divisive issue in Europe—i.e. from 2015 onward. I credit Paul Luif for underlining this point at a February 2019 consultation.

149 In 2007, the Danish representative, Mr. Staur, requested a deferral of action on draft A/C.3/62/L.67 on UNHCR at the November 15 GA3 meeting, which was granted (A/C.3/62/SR.46, p.10)—yet the eventual resolution is listed among adopted resolutions on the UNGA website. (http://research.un.org/en/docs/ga/quick/regular/62.) The absence of the meeting records that featured the eventual introduction of the draft might be due to a database error, or possibly because of its introduction by another country.

It is to be noted that an effort was made throughout these sessions to provide a standardized resolution on this topic each year, with variations across the years to reflect specifics of the work of UNHCR from the given year. The interventions made to introduce these drafts are only referred to in-text below in cases where they would be seen as yielding Nordic-specific policy insights. Each year, the respective resolution would end up being adopted without a vote, i.e. by consensus.

Occasional hits in UNBISnet leading to records of the UNGA general debates have provided little more than diplomatic niceties in the study period, or, at best, a superficial indication of countries' policy priorities regarding refugees. Interventions in GA3, on the other hand, which make up the bulk of meeting records returned by the keyword searches in this section, lend valuable insights on both Nordic and V4 country perspectives on the refugee issue.

The first refugees-related intervention within the study period was made by the Czech delegate, Mr. Slaby, at a GA3 meeting of November 9, 1994 (A/C.3/49/SR.23). In his remarks, Mr. Slaby would welcome the work of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and make a note of his country's relief efforts in the former Yugoslavia (particularly Bosnia and Herzegovina), as well as in Rwanda. He would also signal a Czech willingness 'to convert to a final destination country where any person subject to persecution in his or her country would be able to seek asylum' (p.12).

At the GA3 meeting of the next day (A/C.3/49/SR.25, 1994), the Hungarian representative, Mr. Dékány, would also commend UNHCR's work, emphasizing the importance of preventing displacement and that neutral UNHCR operations be effectively coupled with political tools, such as peacekeeping. He would also welcome ongoing voluntary repatriation efforts, noting that asylum capacities—such as those of Hungary—were constrained, as Hungary was already harboring thousands who had fled from the former Yugoslavia. Mr. Dékány would also express concern over cases where ethnic cleansing would be disguised as resettlement activity, and over the 'dramatic humanitarian situation' in Rwanda (p.5–6).

On November 16, 1994, the Swedish representative would take the floor in GA3 to introduce draft resolution A/C.3/49/L.14 on the UNHCR, on behalf of its sponsors (A/C.3/49/SR.32). Much like the Hungarian intervention above, the draft resolution would promote a 'comprehensive approach' to refugee situations by the UN, relying on political, peacekeeping, humanitarian and human rights aspects alike—and including 'continued frequent recourse to sources outside the Office [of UNHCR],' and a broad consideration for protection needs, including those of internally displaced persons—or IDPs (p.6–7).

One year later, the Hungarian GA3 delegate, Mr. Dékány, would deliver another statement, promoting the ‘mutually reinforcing role’ of ‘political, peace-keeping, human rights and humanitarian components of United Nations operations,’ as well as the use of voluntary repatriation and resettlement (A/C.3/50/SR.22, 1995:p.4). He would also emphasize Hungary’s continued role in sheltering refugees fleeing from the former Yugoslavia (p.5).

In 1996, the Hungarian delegate in GA3, Mr. Lakatos, would once again laud UNHCR’s work, and emphasize the importance of a comprehensive approach—especially that protection and assistance efforts be coordinated with those of diplomacy. He would also use this speaking opportunity to showcase Hungary’s involvement in relief efforts in the Western Balkans, noting that ‘the peaceful return and reintegration of refugees and displaced persons [to Bosnia and Herzegovina] would be a longer process, requiring the firm commitment of the international community’ (A/C.3/51/SR.19, p.12).

A few days later, at the same GA3 session, the Czech delegate, Ms. Šuráňová, would deliver the second Czech intervention on refugees in the study period. In her remarks, she would again commend UNHCR for its relief efforts, and emphasize the importance of voluntary repatriation—noting also the Czech Republic’s recent efforts to start repatriating 400 Bosnians (A/C.3/51/SR.21, 1996:p.2). She would also explain recent changes in Czech legislation that would provide for easier access to social security and health care to refugees, as well as measures favoring people under temporary protection, primarily Bosnians (p.3).

The same GA3 session would see the first Polish intervention of the study period on refugees—on November 7, 1996 (A/C.3/51/SR.27). The Polish delegate, Mr. Navrot, would take the floor to introduce draft resolution A/C.3/51/L.14 on the enlargement of the Executive Committee of the Programme of UNHCR, which Poland would be co-sponsoring with South Africa (p.7). This draft, like the ones sponsored annually by the Nordic group on the work of UNHCR, would eventually be adopted without a vote.

In 1997, the recurring draft resolution on the Office of the UNHCR would be introduced by the Finnish representative, Mr. Mustonen, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries and the rest of its numerous sponsors (A/C.3/52/SR.32, p.8). The draft resolution would emphasize international solidarity alongside the primary protection responsibility of states, and prioritize voluntary repatriation. It would also make specific reference to ‘the particular needs and rights of refugee women and children,’ and address UNHCR’s funding shortage.

In 1998, it would be Sweden's turn to serve as the main sponsor of the recurring draft resolution on UNHCR (A/C.3/53/SR.48). At the GA3 debate of November 17, the Swedish delegate, Mr. Sjögren would be introducing the draft on behalf of the Nordic countries and other sponsors, noting that it

> focused on the protection aspect of the High Commissioner's mandate. It contained new provisions on, inter alia [...] the need to provide assistance to countries that had received large numbers of refugees, particularly developing countries; capacity-building; and the situation of elderly refugees and stateless persons (p.2).

The next refugees-related intervention of the studied countries would come as late as November 2001, when the Polish delegate, Mr. Madej would deliver a relatively lengthy speech on the issue in GA3 (A/C.3/56/SR.48, p.2). In his remarks, Mr. Madej would refer to the ongoing war in Afghanistan, and call on the international community to focus recovery efforts once the conflict was over. He would also mention, as per UNHCR's recent report, that migration in Central Europe was on the rise, and that the countries of the subregion would be strengthening their immigration and asylum legislation to address this issue. He would note that Poland's own recent legislation had been 'based on valuable suggestions put forward by UNHCR' (p.2). Even so, this approach, which would still predate the war in Syria (which would begin in 2011) and the emanating refugee crisis, already stands in contrast to that of the earlier Czech intervention from 1994. As has been noted previously in this section, that intervention had signaled an aim to become 'a final destination country where any person subject to persecution in his or her country would be able to seek asylum' (A/C.3/49/SR.23, 1994:p.12).

In fact one year later, in 2002, Polish representative Mr. Madej would take the GA3 floor again (A/C.3/57/SR.48), noting that his country had seen 'a fourfold increase in the number of applicants for refugee status since 1996,' and highlighting recent Polish efforts on refugees both in terms of new legislation, and international cooperation (p.2). At the same session, Sweden's delegate, Mr. Kebbon would introduce two draft resolutions on UNHCR—both to be adopted without a vote: (1) draft A/C.3/57/L.79 on the continuation of the work of the office by five years; and (2) the usual recurring draft on the Office of the UNHCR (A/C.3/57/SR.52, p.4–5).

The only two spoken interventions in 2003 would be those made by the Danish representative in GA3, Mr. Neustrup, who would be introducing the usual Nordic resolution on UNHCR, as well as another draft (A/C.3/58/L.41), on strengthening the capacity of UNHCR (A/C.3/58/SR.39, p.2). Both resolutions would be adopted without a vote.

2008 would see an intervention by the Hungarian delegate in GA3, Mr. Bródi (A/C.3/63/SR.36). His speech would assert that Hungary was 'gravely concerned by the increasing number of refugees and [commend] the measures undertaken by UNHCR to mitigate the dire consequences of natural disasters and armed conflicts' (p.11). Mr. Bródi would also seize this opportunity to note that the UNHCR had chosen to locate its global services center in Budapest, which the government welcomed (p.11).

In 2011, Mr. Rasmussen, the Danish delegate, would introduce the usual Nordic draft on UNHCR, noting that 'for the past 10 years the Nordic countries had coordinated the draft resolution' (A/C.3/66/SR.41, p.2).[150] The resolution would again be adopted without a vote, but three representatives—those of Jordan and Syria would be intervening with vote explanations, noting that they had joined the consensus on the draft despite the deletion of its reference to Iraqi refugees, whom their countries were hosting in large numbers (A/C.3/66/SR.42, p.2).

In 2013, draft resolution A/C.3/68/L.70 on Enlargement of the Executive Committee of the Program of the UNHCR would be introduced by a V4 country, the Czech Republic (A/C.3/68/SR.44, p.2)—and also adopted without a vote.

Concluding the list of refugees-themed interventions from countries of the two subregional groups, remarks made by the Swedish delegate, Ms. Clifford, at a 2014 November debate on the report of UNHCR are of interest. In her intervention, Ms. Clifford would voice her country's support—both political and financial—to UNHCR, noting that Sweden 'maintained one of the most generous asylum policies in Europe. Her Government would continue to call for more States to open their borders in solidarity with refugees and the host countries most affected by the current humanitarian crises' (A/C.3/69/SR.40, p.6–7). The contrast between this approach, expressed already during the Syria crisis, and the Polish assertion from 2001 which had already referred to 'strengthening [...] immigration and asylum legislation' in Central Europe, is obvious (A/C.3/56/SR.48, p.2—see earlies in this section).

Advancement of Women

The pattern of interventions from the Nordic and Visegrád countries on women's advancement would differ substantially in the 1990s and 2000s.[151] In the 1990s, representatives of Poland and Slovakia delivered three speeches each in GA3. Each of these interventions would be centered around the situation of women in the aftermath of the two countries' transition from state socialism. Speakers would argue that while women were afforded equal rights in both countries, they would be discriminated against and disproportionately badly hit by the economic transition that had taken place in the labor market—resulting also in the

[150] It is not clear why Mr. Rasmussen refers to a ten-year anniversary only, as coordination appears to have been in place for much longer—see *Table 33* on p.185.

[151] Hungary was the only country from those studied which would not make a single intervention on the issue.

underrepresentation of women in executive positions in both business and politics. Representatives of both countries would also use these interventions to showcase their governments' domestic measures taken to mitigate these problems, and signal their willingness to cooperate internationally on the issue of women's advancement.[152]

By the 2000s, the narrative had shifted. While the period between 2007 and 2013 would see no fewer than five Polish interventions on women, all four of these would revolve around a single aspiration: separating the issue of women's advancement from the promotion of abortion.[153] The earliest of these interventions, made by Ms. Grabianowska, the Polish delegate in GA3, summarizes the Polish approach to the issue, to remain largely unchanged throughout the rest of the study period:

> sexual and reproductive rights of women did not constitute an encouragement of the promotion of abortion as a means of achieving the advancement of women' (A/C.3/62/SR.12, 2007:p.7.)

The Slovak stance, on the other hand—as detectable from a single intervention—would be marked by conformity with the broader narrative of the decade, i.e. the promotion of women's advancement through the Millennium Development Goals—MDGs (A/C.2/64/SR.19, 2009:p.4).

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The Nordic countries, in keeping with the assumption that women's advancement should be a 'typical Nordic' theme, would show a much higher-level and more diverse activity on the subject matter of this issue. Most prominently, similarly to the case of the resolution on UNHCR,[154] the Nordic group would sponsor the annually recurring resolution on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Through an intervention made by the Danish delegate, Mr. Haakonsen, on the group's behalf, the Nordic group would already advocate as a group on the issue of the Convention as early as the GA3 session of 1995. Pushing for 'an optional protocol to the Convention that would introduce the right to individual petition in cases of gender discrimination;' and criticizing the 'deplorable' reporting of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); the Nordics would call on all countries to withdraw reservations from the Convention (A/C.3/49/SR.54, p.9–10). The intervention would also underline 'the Nordic

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[152] Poland: A/C.3/49/SR.51, 1994; A/C.3/50/SR.27, 1995; A/C.3/51/SR.18, 1997;
Slovakia: A/C.3/50/SR.27, 1995; A/C.3/51/SR.13, 1996; A/C.3/52/SR.9, 1997.

[153] A/C.3/62/SR.12 (2007); A/C.2/62/SR.24 (2007); A/C.3/64/SR.11 (2009); A/C.3/65/SR.12 (2010); A/C.3/68/SR.11 (2013).

[154] See in the previous section of the present Subchapter.

countries' wholehearted support for all efforts to eliminate gender-specific violence,' making also reference, in this context, to 'the heinous crimes committed against women in the former Yugoslavia' (p.10).

Another early Danish intervention, in the 1996 GA3 session, would exemplify both the 'gender mainstreaming' approach of the Nordics, and Denmark's liberal approach to migration which was characteristic of the 1990s. In the lengthy intervention which would cover broad topics from labor market access to violence against women and female genital mutilation—FGM (A/C.3/51/SR.15, p.3–4), the Danish delegate, Mr. Kimberg, would explained how, '[i]n order to prevent double discrimination against foreign women and women belonging to ethnic minorities, his Government addressed problems concerning those women's legal status and integration into Danish society' (p.4).

A Danish intervention of 2013, delivered by Mr. Balslev in GA1 (Disarmament)—the only intervention in this forum found in this study—could be brought as another genuine example of the mainstreaming approach. The memorable speech is worth quoting from verbatim:

> Let me limit myself to one issue, namely gender and disarmament. [...] Men and women are affected differently by weapons and armed conflict, and their contribution to disarmament efforts will be different and complementary. Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) recognizes that fact and obliges us to take it into account. There may be small pockets of opinion in the First Committee that still argue that those issues belong elsewhere and are not part of the core occupation of the United Nations committee responsible for disarmament and international security. They must be living on Mars; they could not be more wrong. It is about time that that fact is reflected in our work (A/C.1/68/PV.21, p.2-3).

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The recurring resolutions on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, submitted from 2000 onward, would habitually criticize lack of ratification for the Convention, as well as lack of funding and the reporting backlog of CEDAW. *Table 34* below lists the main sponsors of the resolution each year, as well as the pertaining records of GA3 meetings where the resolutions would have been introduced.

Table 34.
The Nordic-sponsored UNGA-resolutions on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 2000–2011

UNGA session	Year	Draft resolution	Main sponsor	Meeting records
55	2000	A/C.3/55/L.15	Denmark	A/C.3/55/SR.24
56	2001	A/C.3/56/L.26	Finland	A/C.3/56/SR.25
57	2002	A/C.3/57/L.19	Sweden	A/C.3/57/SR.22
62	2007	A/C.3/62/L.20	Denmark	A/C.3/62/SR.21
64	2009	A/C.3/64/L.17	Finland	A/C.3/64/SR.21
66	2011	A/C.3/66/L.21	Sweden	A/C.3/66/SR.41

Data extracted by A.M. from GA3 meeting records downloaded from UNBISnet (http://unbisnet.un.org) based on targeted keyword searches by A.M.

Each year but for 2007, these resolutions would be adopted in the UNGA without a vote. In the 62th session (2007), however, two paragraphs of the resolution would be put to separate votes, and both paragraphs would eventually end up included against the 'no' vote of the United States. This would appear as the reason why the U.S. representative would then also have voted against the resolution as a whole; however, the specifics of this decision remain unclarified in the meeting records (A/62/PV.79, p.7–9).

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Apart from the issue of the Convention, another recurring topic would be prevalent in the study period, which has already been mentioned in previous Subchapter on account of EU and intergroup splits—but with the dynamic left unexplained. This issue is the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). In regard to the Institute, the period between 2002 and 2005 would be characterized by recurrent (successful) efforts by developing countries to pass resolutions that would allow for INSTRAW to be funded from the regular UN budget, as opposed to voluntary contributions only. Several Western countries, such as Sweden, had previously withdrawn their voluntary funding from the Institute, arguing that INSTRAW did not constitute a competitive case for promoting gender issues effectively leading to the advancement of women.

In 2002, the debate on the proposed draft on INSTRAW, which would allocate USD 500,000 from the regular budget to the Institute, would see interventions on behalf of Denmark (made by the UK representative) and from the Sweden—both arguing against the allocation (A/C.3/57/SR.51, p.4). The Czech representative, Ms. Grollová, on the other hand, would explain that the Czech Republic would support the draft 'despite lingering concerns over the usefulness of the activities of INSTRAW at the global level,' arguing that 'much of the inefficiency previously associated with the Institute had been caused by factors beyond its control' (p.4). The vote on this draft would see the Nordic countries and Hungary abstaining, and the Czech Republic and Slovakia voting in favor.

The respective draft of 2003, which would again endow INSTRAW with a batch of regular-budget funding, would create similar dynamics in GA3, but this time the Czech Republic would also be withdrawing its support. As an explanation, Ms. Grollová would be intervening to note that 'the Czech Republic was willing to consider voluntary contributions in the future' if INSTRAW became 'more viable' (A/C.3/58/SR.57, 2003:p.4).

After their abstentions up until 2003, the Nordic countries would vote against the subsequent 2004 draft—with Sweden giving much the same reasons in a vote explanation as previously—and the Czech Republic and Hungary would abstain (A/C.3/59/SR.37, p.7–8). The same would happen in 2005, this time with the Swedish representative being able to speak also on behalf of the other two Nordic EU countries, as well (A/C.3/60/SR.43, p.2).

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Moving away from the INSTRAW issue, it can be noted that the better part of interventions on women's advancement would have been made in the 2000s' 'spirit' of the MDGs, with Nordic interventions taking place in 11 different UNGA meetings between 2007 and 2014. High-level political highlights would include (1) Danish Ambassador Staur's advocacy of gender equality in his speech at the 2007 general debate (A/62/PV.15, p.42); and, even more prominently, (2) an enthusiastic opening statement by Swedish prime minister Fredrik Reinfeldt at the same plenary, featuring the following passage:

> Let me just fill members in on the situation we have today. Women perform 66 per cent of the world's work and produce 50 per cent of its food, but they earn only 10 per cent of its income and own one per cent of its property. Seventy per cent of the world's poor population are women or girls. Every day, approximately 1,000 women die from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. That adds up to about 350,000 deaths each year. (A/66/PV.19, p.41)

At the GA3 session that year, both the Swedish and Finnish delegates would intervene with original remarks.

The Finnish representative, Ms. Nordström, would welcome 'the expanded political mobilization of women that had taken place during the Arab Spring', and Ms. Burgstaller, the Swedish representative, would be intervening with a call to

> eliminate stereotypes, including stereotypes regarding a woman's sexual and reproductive life. Women had a right to control over their own bodies, which comprised a right to be free from violence, threat and abuse. (A/C.3/66/SR.13, p.4)

Finnish delegates, intervening once in each of the GA3 debates between 2012 and 2014 with original and rich remarks, would, inter alia, voice support for newly-established UN-Women,[155] as well as advocate sexual and reproductive health (A/C.3/67/SR.9, 2012:p.12). They would also aim to focus international attention on gender equality and women's issues for the post-2015 development agenda (A/C.3/68/SR.11, 2013:p.2 and A/C.3/69/SR.10, 2014:p.6).

The 'right to sexual and reproductive health' approach, characteristic of the Nordic countries, and widely present in their remarks, might be substantiated by another example of an intervention. The intervention would be made by the Norwegian delegate in GA3 in 2014, Ms. Larsen, on behalf of the Nordic countries and a handful of other Western countries, primarily non-EU (Estonia, New Zealand, Liechtenstein and Switzerland). Delivered as a vote explanation on a draft resolution on FGM, the intervention would expound that

> [t]he practice [of FGM] was often motivated by beliefs about what was considered proper sexual behaviour. One of the fundamental principles in the fight against female genital mutilation was the right of women and girls to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free from coercion, discrimination and violence (A/C.3/69/SR.53, p.5).

Wars in Former Yugoslavia

The topic of the wars in former Yugoslavia, to be described in this section, has already been touched upon previously as another case of gender mainstreaming—i.e. through the 1995 joint Nordic intervention which referred to 'the heinous crimes committed against women' there (A/C.3/49/SR.54).

While the search terms used to identify meeting records with reference to the Western Balkans were exclusively geographic (rather than war-focused),[156] the hits in UNBISnet, all of which

[155] The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, which works for gender equality and the advancement of women—see http://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/about-un-women (accessed February 5, 2019).

[156] See footnote 143 on p.181 for a list of search terms used to explore this theme for the purposes of the present Subchapter.

would be speeches from the 1990s, would exclusively refer to human rights issues related to the armed conflicts following the dissolution of Yugoslavia. These wars would be an issue on which the EU countries would mostly act united—but spoken interventions would still afford valuable opportunities to identify the 'expertise' and special agendas of some of the studied countries.

Hungarian and Czech speakers, while typically associating themselves with the EU representative's remarks, would distinguish the Western Balkans issue (Bosnia, Croatia) as a priority by delivering lengthy remarks on their own behalf, as well—often in addition to the EU statement. Under various related agenda items, Hungarian delegates would deliver original interventions five times in the UNGA plenaries, and Czech delegates three times—all at the sessions of 1994, 1997 and 1998. In addition to these, high-level Hungarian and Czech dignitaries would make reference to the wars in the former Yugoslavia in their addresses in three different UNGA general debates. High-ranking Slovak speakers would do so twice, and a Polish foreign minister once.[157]

Such interventions, coupled with broader efforts to assist the peace-building process in the Western Balkans, can easily be construed as elements of complex small state strategies—shaping and capacity-building alike. This phenomenon is well-captured by a statement delivered by Hungarian ambassador Erdős in the 1994 UNGA plenary, on a draft resolution about Bosnia:

> It is well known that due to its immediate proximity and traditional links with its southern neighbours, Hungary is especially affected by the crisis in the former Yugoslavia. Hungary in this case is much more than one other State Member of the United Nations, or a simple observer of the events, because the implications of this tragedy affect us very closely — the breaking of thriving economic relations, the closing of navigation on the Danube, the presence on our territory of refugees fleeing from the former Yugoslavia, the uncertainty felt among a large Hungarian minority beyond our southern borders, the psychological effects of the crisis in a region bearing a heavy burden of history. That is what determines Hungary's position on this very complex question, and that is what gives us a unique vision and very special perspective with regard to these events. (A/49/PV.50, 1994:p.22).

In addition to their above efforts, it was notable how Hungarian and Czech speakers would also intervene passionately in a GA4 (Special Political and Decolonization) debate on a draft resolution about the occupied territories of Croatia (A/C.4/49/SR.9, 1994:p.4 and p.11–12, respectively). This draft would later end up being adopted in the UNGA by consensus, becoming resolution A/RES/49/43 (1995), in which the UNGA would reject 'the odious policies of ethnic cleansing' and call on Serbia to respect Croatia's territorial integrity (p.1). The

[157] Hungary: 1994, 1995 and 1996 / Czech Republic: 1994, 1995 and 1999 / Slovakia: 1996 and 1999 / Poland: 1995

same year, the Hungarian delegate in GA3 would voice, under a general agenda item of human rights issues, Hungary's concern over 'the abhorrent practices of ethnic cleansing, killing, rape and other physical abuse' in Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as 'gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), particularly in Kosovo, Sandjak and Vojvodina' (A/C.3/49/SR.47, p.8–9).

Compared to the activity level of the V4 countries—particularly Hungary and the Czech Republic—the Nordic countries would follow a relatively hands-off, but at the same time more uniform approach to the Western Balkans issue. This approach would be exemplified early on in the study period, by a statement delivered at the 1994 UNGA plenary by the Swedish delegate, Mr. Osvald.

In his remarks to the assembly, Mr. Osvald, speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, would outline the joint Nordic views on the peaceful settlement of the crisis (A/49/PV.51, p.10–11). Apart from this joint intervention, the Swedish foreign minister, Ms. Hjelm-Wallén, would make a separate reference to the war and 'ethnic cleansing' in the 1994 general debate (A/49/PV.27, p.2); and the Danish foreign minister, Mr. Petersen, would reflect on the ongoing peacekeeping operation at the general debate a year later (A/50/PV.7, 1995: p.20). The third high-level Nordic contribution on the topic would be made in 1997, by the Finnish foreign minister, Ms. Halonen—a reflection on the Dayton peace process in Bosnia, which she would make within her remarks on the topic of UN reform (A/52/PV.8, p.8–9).

Human Rights in Belarus

While Ukraine and Moldova would yield no results as topics of substantive debates in the study period, a relatively recent debate surrounding the human rights situation in Belarus would trigger ample remarks, including from the Czech Republic and Poland. One GA3 session, that of October 28, 2013, is particularly noteworthy (A/C.3/68/SR.30).

At this committee meeting, Mr. Miklós Haraszti, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus (a Hungarian), would present two reports on the recent situation in the country. Mr. Haraszti would note that he had observed

> little if any progress in Belarus in the implementation of the recommendations made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in her report (A/HRC/20/8) to the Human Rights Council in 2012. Causes for grave concern included arbitrary arrests and detentions, harassment of imprisoned political opponents and human rights defenders, conditions in detention facilities, the use of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, unresolved cases of enforced disappearances, the continued use of the death penalty and violations of the rights to the freedom of expression, association and assembly.
> His second report (A/68/276) focused on concerns over electoral processes in Belarus. Requesting an invitation for a visit to Belarus, he said that his primary source of information had been meetings with local experts and victims of human rights violations, in addition to consultations with civil society. Systematic and deliberate violations of human rights in that country had undermined free and fair elections.
> (A/C.3/68/SR.30, p.10)

The Belarus delegate, Mr. Lazarev, would then intervene to reject Mr. Haraszti's remarks, asserting that Belarus 'recognized neither the Special Rapporteur's mandate nor his reports' (p.10). The EU observer, Ms. Tschampa would then express the EU's regret over the findings of the mandate-holder (p.11). The Polish delegate, Mr. Zieliński would express '[concern] at the continued violation of human rights in Belarus, in particular the ill-treatment of human rights defenders, journalists and political opponents' (A/C.3/68/SR.30, p.12). The Czech delegate, Ms. Skácelová, would particularly criticize elections in her remarks, noting that

> her Government, which maintained bilateral relations with the Government of Belarus and was in contact with civil society in the country, had noted the sharp deterioration in the human rights situation in Belarus, in particular with regard to electoral rights. Her delegation called on its Government to ensure that the 2015 presidential elections complied with international standards (A/C.3/68/SR.30, p.13).

Delegates of the United States, the United Kingdom, Norway and Germany would all express concern over the human rights situation in Belarus, and voice their support of the Special Rapporteur's work. Representatives of Iran, China and Syria would voice disgruntlement with creating country-specific human rights mechanisms in the UNGA; and the delegates of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Russia would applaud Belarus' ostensible willingness to cooperate with the UN, and criticize the Special Rapporteur for his supposedly biased view of the situation. Representatives of Venezuela, Nicaragua, Lao, Zimbabwe, and Cuba would also intervene in opposition to the Special Rapporteur's report and mandate. Criticism would also be directed at the fact that a country-specific assessment of human rights was being conducted in the UNGA, and not in the Human Rights Council, under its universal periodic review. (A/C.3/68/SR.30, p.10–14).[158]

A very similar scenario, with largely the same participants and talking points, would take place a year later, when the special rapporteur would once again present his reports to GA3, in October 2014 (A/C.3/69/SR.31, p.8). This time, the Czech delegate would be the only V4 country representative to intervene with remarks. Rather than focusing on electoral rights this time, Ms. Skácelová's concerns would be related to civil society and liberties this time:

> It was regrettable that the Belarusian Government had repeatedly refused to recognize the mandate of the Special Rapporteur and had denied him access to the country. His report showed that the State policy aimed at restricting civil society and the activism essential for democratic development, unfortunately, worked. Her delegation remained seriously concerned by systematic and systemic human rights violations and practices that clearly breached fundamental freedoms, and called on the Government of Belarus to immediately release and fully rehabilitate imprisoned human rights defenders and activists and to stop violence against, and harassment of, civil society representatives, political opposition activists and independent journalists (A/C.3/69/SR.31, p.12).

Further to these reports by the Special Rapporteur and the resulting debates, no working documents (such as draft resolutions) would be tabled on Belarus in GA3, either in 2013 or in 2014.[159]

Conclusions on Subregional Themes

Overall, the Nordic group has been observed to converge very closely in their pro-activity on the two themes dubbed as 'typical Nordic' that have been discussed in this Subchapter: refugees and the advancement of women. On both issue areas, the most remarkable instance

[158] The background of this assertion goes well beyond the subject of the present dissertation. However, it may be noted that while the HRC is a body with limited membership, the UNGA, one of the six Main Organs of the UN, is a plenary body. The HRC has been criticized by observers as running an agenda driven by countries not particularly renowned for their human rights record. Notably, the United States boycotted the work of the council between 2006 and 2009 (under the Bush administration), and has recently announced its withdrawal from its work (see https://www.bbc.com/news/44537372, accessed February 14, 2019).

[159] As evidenced by the GA3 proposals website—see http://www.un.org/en/ga/third/68/proposalstatus.shtml, and http://www.un.org/en/ga/third/69/proposalstatus.shtml (both accessed January 17, 2019).

of this 'convergent pro-activity' has been the Nordics' group sponsorship of two recurrent UNGA resolutions: (1) on the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and (2) on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

In addition to this, the Nordic group would also be observed as strong proponents of mainstreaming gender equality across the board—including on longer-term development approaches, as well as topical and security issues, such as disarmament or the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. Sexual and reproductive health as a human right would also feature prominently on the Nordic agenda, prompting Polish representatives to voice, over and over again, that this human right must not be interpreted to encompass a right to abortion.

On the issue of INSTRAW, which had been left largely unexplained by previous Subchapters of the study, it has been revealed that the Nordic group, with Sweden as the most vocal proponent, would be drawing down financial support to the Institute, which they considered unconvincing as a vehicle for women's advancement. While the Czech Republic would, along with Slovakia, initially support a resolution granting regular budget funding to the Institute, Czech support would be withdrawn during the study period, and the Czech Republic would join the club—along with the Nordics and Hungary—of those unconvinced of INSTRAW's merit.

The wars in the former Yugoslavia, seizing the attention of the United Nations as a whole at the time, would be marked by the highest levels of interest from Hungary and the Czech Republic from the countries studied. Representatives of these two countries would seize a high number of speaking opportunities to comment on the human rights situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia. This practice, paraphrased from the Nordic practice of gender mainstreaming, may even be referred to as 'former Yugoslavia mainstreaming' (for example, throughout the refugees theme), at least for a limited period. The Czech Republic, along with Poland, has also been observed as vocally criticizing the more recent human rights situation in Belarus in the UNGA—unlike any other of the studied countries.

In the end, the inquiry in this Subchapter has been able to confirm refugees and women's advancement as 'typical Nordic' topics. The frequency and subject-matter of interventions, coupled with the level of group coordination on the sponsorship of resolutions have all pointed in this direction. The V4 countries, on the other hand, have shown no comparable levels of coordination or 'convergent pro-activity' as a group. While the Western Balkans would feature as a salient topic for at least Hungary and the Czech Republic—one that would have been abundant in small-state-strategizing—the observed level of heightened interest would have been confined to the time period and topic of the wars in former Yugoslavia. That said, based on the evidence found in this Subchapter, these wars may as well be dubbed a 'Hungarian topic' or 'Czech topic'—even a 'UN topic'—but not a 'V4 topic.'

CONCLUSIONS ON HYPOTHESES

This last piece of analysis presents the results of the hypothesis-driven aspect of the inquiry. Those insights that were gained from the exploratory analysis along and around the two research questions have already been accounted for at the end of each respective Subchapter of Chapter III. Particularly fruitful exploratory accounts that are not directly relevant to the hypotheses have been included in dedicated sections on human rights and mercenaries, the right to development, human rights in Kosovo, racism and xenophobia, as well as war in Gaza and the question of Palestine—and in turn summarized in *Conclusions* at the end of the respective Subchapters.[160] The upcoming part of the text summarizes the results of the hypothesis-tests only.

While the hypotheses related to the primary research question of the study (**QI**) were addressed throughout various parts of Chapter III, the hypothesis-testing related to the secondary research question (**QII**) was concentrated in the penultimate section of its Subchapter 6.[161] As the findings related to the hypotheses of **QII** ($\mathbf{H_1II_N}$ and $\mathbf{H_1II_V}$) are fewer and simpler than those related to the hypotheses of **QI** ($\mathbf{H_1I_N}$ and $\mathbf{H_1I_V}$), the former are presented first.

Hypotheses related to **QII** are repeated below, with the findings summarized in the following.

$\mathbf{H_1II_N}$**:** The Nordics are strong proponents of a progressive approach to human rights which is unlikely to be widely accepted globally.

$\mathbf{H_1II_V}$**:** The V4 have in their history a shared Soviet-style communist experience and subsequent democratic transition which makes these countries especially keen on certain civil and political rights that other members of the international community are largely unresponsive to due to their lack of such an experience.

In summary of the findings of this hypothesis-test, it has been noted that the votes that saw either Nordic or V4 countries contribute to outvoting the EU totaled three, out of the 112 resolutions in the study period on which the EU was outvoted altogether. Only one of these cases featured a subgroup majority contributing to outvoting the EU majority—the vote on the Declaration on Human Cloning, on which the V4 majority has been observed as siding with the 'rest' in the UNGA. That said, this vote also brought on the single case of 'hard' contestation in either of the subregional groups, with the Czech Republic breaking ranks with the other three

[160] See respective sections of Chapter III, Subchapters 4, 5 and 6. Pertaining *Conclusions* sections begin on p.143, p.156, and p.178.

[161] See the section on *EU and Subregional Votes*, beginning on p.172.

V4 countries—therefore the significance of the V4 'majority' opinion is questionable in this case.

All in all, the study has found no convincing evidence supporting the alternative hypotheses related to **QII**. It has observed that both the Nordic and V4 groups have tended, by and large, to support the EU majority, which would typically get outvoted *despite* this support coming from the subregions.

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As a general observation related to **QI**, it can be noted that both subregional groups have been observed as more united than the EU group in general, which itself is relatively closely united in the global perspective. Both indices of voting coherence employed in the quantitative component of the study—the Agreement Index (*AI2*) and Cohesion Ratio (*C2*)—have been found to be generally higher for both the Nordic and V4 groups than they are for the EU. Statistically significant mean differences have also confirmed this. The tests for the difference in means for subregional *C2*s have not returned significant results, however—consequently, the cohesion or contestation levels of the Nordic and V4 groups cannot be confirmed to be different.

The subregion-specific hypotheses related to **QI** are repeated below, and the results of the tests are presented under each respective hypothesis.

$H_I I_N$: The Nordic group relies on small state strategies to play a strong and pro-active role in influencing global human rights policy, acting as a proponent of progressive issues (second- and third-generation human rights)—including refugee issues, gender issues, and human rights-based development.

The Nordic group has been confirmed as a cohesive and closely coordinated subregional group on global human rights issues—which also confirms the likelihood of long-term capacity building strategies (as in Panke, 2012b), such as 'Learning from past experiences and creating institutional memory' (p.318). In fact, the average Nordic *AI2* and *C2* values have been observed to be as high as, or higher than the respective average V4 *AI2* and *C2* values for most of UNGA sessions studied. Statistically significant tests for difference in means for subregional *AI2*s have confirmed that members of the Nordic group tended to diverge less from the Nordic majority than did the V4 countries from the V4 majority. Prominently, none of the Nordic countries were absent from any of the UNGA human rights votes in the study period (1994–2014).

Nordic group voting has been found to be more coherent than V4 voting in 20 cases of resolutions contested within either of the two subregional groups, and Nordic unity would also prevail on several divisive resolutions. All nine resolutions on human rights and mercenaries would see a split of the EU and V4, but a unanimous Nordic group. One resolution on human rights in Iran would see a unanimous Nordic vote in the face of a highly-divided EU; and resolutions on human cloning, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and on the special representative for children and armed conflict, would produce similar patterns of group voting.

Human cloning has proven to be the most fruitful issue area for the purposes of this study. Both during debates over the long term, and the vote on the Declaration on Human Cloning, the Nordic group has been associated with a progressive approach to (therapeutic) cloning, including (a) an opposition to regulating the issue beyond domestic law, and (b) an affinity to adopting a more open approach to therapeutic applications. The Nordic approach to human cloning has also been confirmed as part and parcel of a broader human-rights-based approach to sexual and reproductive health.

The study has also been able to confirm refugees and a progressive approach to their rights as a 'typical Nordic' theme. The advancement of the rights of women and gender mainstreaming have also been confirmed as elements of the Nordic agenda. The study has observed a *convergent pro-activity* in both issue areas. The Nordic countries' group sponsorship of two recurrent UNGA resolutions—(1) on the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and (2) on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women—have been noted as particularly remarkable phenomena, alongside the frequency and subject matter of Nordic interventions on the advancement of women. The Nordic countries have also been observed as strong proponents of gender mainstreaming—including in international development and international security issues.

The study has not found convincing evidence to confirm the right to development as a 'typical Nordic' theme. Instead, the evidence has presented the right to development as a more general 'Western' issue, which would give way to classic 'West v. rest' division in the UN. The issue area would see relatively few Nordic interventions in the UNGA in the study period, and the V4 group would have been more cohesive than the Nordic group in six of the seven EU-contested resolutions on the topic that were passed within the study period.

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H_1I_V: The Visegrád group aspires to play a strong and pro-active role—albeit more limited than that of the Nordic group—in influencing global human rights policy; with V4 priorities including topics that are more immediately relevant to post-Soviet democratic transition (i.e. first-generation or civil and political rights), as well as a geographic focus on the Eastern Partnership countries.

Compared to the zero absences of the Nordic countries, a sporadic absence of V4 countries has been detected from a total of 10 (out of 377) votes on human rights resolutions within the study period. While the absences are likely explained by factors that are extrinsic to the votes, and do not reveal disarray within the V4 as such, there occurrence may as well speak to a comparable lack of resources to pursue the capacity building strategy of 'Learning from past experiences and creating an institutional memory' (as in Panke, 2012b:p318), especially in the early years of the study period.

In spite of the high voting cohesion and low level of contestation detected by the quantitative inquiry, the V4 countries have shown no coordination or comparable *convergent pro-activity* to that of the Nordic countries. The only case of 'hard' contestation (granted, only a single case) would manifest in the V4 group, and would be brought on by the Czech Republic in the case of the resolution on the Declaration on Human Cloning.

Issue areas hypothesized as 'typical V4' themes have also not been observed as bringing the entire V4 on a united policy platform. Despite the unique minorities landscape of Central Europe, the racism/xenophobia topic was not originally included in the list of hypothesized 'typical V4' topics, and the inquiry has confirmed this as a sound academic judgment. While salient, this topic has revealed, if anything, disarray among the V4 countries, and their uploading of domestic—and partially mutually adversarial—politics to the UN level. The Polish approach to the issue of racism and xenophobia has been seen as a case possibly underlining Poland's subregional power (non-small-state) approach: with Polish representatives shunning the Roma issue in their interventions, and focusing on the Holocaust exclusively.

Focus on civil and political rights has manifested in two distinct cases within the V4--one solely by the Czech Republic, but in a consistent and sustained fashion, related to human rights violations in Iran—a country far removed from the immediate geographic neighborhood of Central Europe. A similar exercise would take place on Belarus, a country 'closer to home,' albeit once again by only a fraction of the V4 group. The Czech Republic, along with Poland, would harshly criticize the human rights situation in Belarus—unlike any other of the studied countries (not just the V4).

The wars in the former Yugoslavia, would also be marked by a heightened level of interest from only some of the V4 countries: Hungary and the Czech Republic, in particular. Representatives of these two countries would seize the floor on multiple occasions during the time of these wars to express concern over the human rights situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia. This practice, paraphrased from the Nordic practice of gender mainstreaming, may even be referred to as 'former Yugoslavia mainstreaming' (for example, throughout the refugees theme), at least for a limited period. Wars in the former Yugoslavia would also manifest the single case of V4 country convergence on the minority issue, in relation to ethnically-motivated atrocities, which would bring Czech and Hungarian speakers on the same substantive platform in the UN.

In sum, while the high level of voting coherence is worth reiterating, the qualitative component of the present study has not been able to confirm any of the hypothesized V4 priorities (thematic or geographical) as meaningfully comprising a subregional agenda. While these topics are salient within the subregion, each of them have been observed as mobilizing only certain V4 countries, rather than the V4 as a group.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

While this dissertation has provided some insights on the subregional dimensions of EU human rights policy, as well as areas where they were lacking, the pertaining gap in the academic literature is far from being filled. Future studies might choose to challenge (or validate) findings of existing research, or to wander off into uncharted territory, of which there still remains an ample amount around the data and concepts approached by this study.

Alternative research trajectories might be pursued along similar research objects as those of the present study, but relying on different quantitative or qualitative sources. The present study has argued the case for the dyadic indices it has employed, but in some instances it would not advise strongly for one (version of) an indicator over another; therefore alternative dyadic indicators might still be used to interrogate the same data. However, given the triangulation effected in the present research design, it is unlikely that only mildly different indicators would lead to surprisingly different research outcomes.

A different methodological approach might move away from the dyadic school completely—as Bailey, Strezhnev & Voeten (2015) strongly advocate—and use spatial methods to model Nordic and V4 policies vis-à-vis the EU in different versions of a 'policy space.' The more complicated the calculation of any index of group voting, however, the more difficult it will become to explain its findings as they relate to the specifics of the policy area.[162] Therefore, when doing so, parsimony should be considered a strong priority.

Other, more markedly (or even exclusively) qualitative accounts could also be fascinating exercises, starting already from an analysis of strategic documents or deep participant interviews that were dropped from the present research design due to its shift in focus compared to the initial research proposal, and the increased availability and fruitfulness of UN voting records and meeting records. Such sources (primarily from Levels II and III of the multi-level game metaphor of the present research framework), particularly deep interviews with (former) Nordic/V4 diplomats who took part in the UNGA sessions, could, first and foremost, serve to explain vote patterns identified but not explained by the present study.

Research designs with different objectives might hypothesize about and analyze policy shifts related to specific events (such as EU accession, government shifts, armed conflict in the neighborhood, etc.). Rather than seeking to identify more stable, longer-term policy

[162] I thankfully acknowledge Paul Luif for making this observation.

preferences within the subregions and the region (as did the present dissertation), such studies could seek to identify the elasticity of policies.

The objects of the study might also be superseded by other EU subregional groups, such as Benelux (Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg) or the Baltics (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania). The Baltic countries, which share some geopolitical, transitional and other characteristics with the V4 while sharing others with the Nordic group might also be used as a 'control group' to validate some of the findings of this study.[163]

[163] I am grateful to Dr. Sándor Gallai of Corvinus University of Budapest, for coming forward with this suggestion in response to a paper I presented at the 2018 annual conference of the Central European Political Science Association in September 2018, in Banská Bystricá, Slovakia.

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APPENDIX

1. Abstract

This dissertation analyzes the foreign human rights policies of two European Union (EU) subregional groups: the Nordic and Visegrád (V4) groups, as they appear at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). Focusing on the period between 1994 and 2014, the study adopts a mixed-methods approach which includes expert and participant interviews, but which relies most heavily on (1) a quantitative analysis of UNGA voting records and (2) a qualitative account of spoken interventions at the UNGA plenary and main committees. The quantitative component finds that both the Nordic and V4 groups are highly cohesive subgroups of the EU on human rights issues. The qualitative analysis reveals a 'convergent pro-activity' on the Nordic countries' part, and their effective reliance on capacity building strategies. The inquiry confirms the following issue areas as 'typical Nordic' themes: refugees, gender and women's advancement, and the right to sexual and reproductive health. It also identifies topics (minorities, the former Yugoslavia, Belarus) that feature prominently among some V4 members, but not the V4 as a group. It is unable to confirm the existence of any 'typical V4' themes, or any convergence or pro-activity comparable to that of the Nordics. It finds no evidence to the effect that either of the two subregional groups would be playing a role in the frequent outvoting of the EU group on human rights issues in the UNGA.

2. Zusammenfassung

Diese Dissertation analysiert die internationale Menschenrechtspolitik zweier subregionaler Gruppen der Europäischen Union (EU): die der Nordischen und die der Visegrád (V4) Staaten bei der Generalversammlung der Vereinten Nationen. Die Studie konzentriert sich auf den Zeitraum zwischen 1994 und 2014 und verfolgt einen Mixed-Methods-Ansatz für ihre Forschungsziele. Neben ExpertInnen- und TeilnehmerInneninterviews, basiert sie hauptsächlich auf (1) einer quantitativen Analyse der Abstimmungsunterlagen der UN-Generalversammlung und (2) einer qualitativen Analyse von verbalen Interventionen im Plenum der UN-Generalversammlung und in den Hauptausschüssen. Die quantitative Komponente stellt fest, dass sowohl die Nordische als auch die V4-Gruppe hochkohäsive Untergruppen der EU zu Menschenrechtsfragen sind. Die qualitative Analyse findet eine „konvergente Pro-Aktivität" der Nordischen Länder, und deren effektive Benutzung von Strategien zum Kapazitätsaufbau. Die Untersuchung bestätigt die folgenden Themenbereiche als „typische Nordische" Themen: Flüchtlinge, Gender und Frauenförderung sowie das Recht auf sexuelle und reproduktive Gesundheit. Es identifiziert eine Reihe von Themen (Minderheiten, das ehemalige Jugoslawien, Weißrussland), die bei einigen V4-Mitgliedsstaaten eine herausragende Rolle spielen, nicht jedoch bei den V4 als Gruppe. Auf Basis der Forschungsergebnisse kann weder das Vorliegen eines „typischen V4-" Themas noch eine mit den Nordischen Ländern vergleichbare Konvergenz oder Pro-Aktivität bestätigen werden. Es lassen sich auch keine Anhaltspunkte finden, dass eine der beiden subregionalen Gruppen eine Rolle bei der häufigen Überstimmung der EU-Gruppe in der UN-Generalversammlung in Menschenrechtsfragen spielen würde.

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