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Abstract

This MA-thesis examines the importance of coordination between selected inter-governmental and supranational groups in the United Nations General Assembly in the period from 2000 to 2020. The focus is on how these groups organize themselves (i.e. in terms of group size and group type) and how intensely they cooperate in terms of sponsoring draft resolutions and in terms of coordinating their voting behavior to influence decision-making processes in the UNGA. The study uses a mixed-methods approach that combines visual analysis and indicators techniques to evaluate group coherence. By analyzing the stated indicators, the research aims to gain a better understanding of group interactions within the UNGA and their impact on global governance. The results highlight the importance of structured and strategic group collaboration in shaping international policies and the evolving dynamics of multilateral diplomacy in the UNGA over two decades.

Zusammenfassung

Diese Masterarbeit untersucht die Bedeutung der Koordination ausgewählter zwischenstaatlicher und supranationaler Gruppen in der Generalversammlung der Vereinten Nationen im Zeitraum von 2000 bis 2020. Im Zentrum steht, wie diese Gruppen organisiert sind, etwa hinsichtlich ihrer Größe und ihres Typs und wie intensiv sie in zweierlei Hinsicht zusammenarbeiten: erstens bei der gemeinsamen Einbringung von Resolutionsentwürfen und zweitens bei der Abstimmungskoordination, um Entscheidungsprozesse in der UNGA zu beeinflussen. Die Studie bedient sich eines Mixed-Methods-Ansatzes, der visuelle Analysen mit Clusterverfahren kombiniert, um die Kohärenz der Gruppenzusammenschlüsse zu evaluieren. Anhand dieser Indikatoren soll ein tieferes Verständnis für die Interaktionen zwischen den Gruppen innerhalb der Generalversammlung und deren Einfluss auf die globale Governance gewonnen werden. Die Ergebnisse verdeutlichen die Relevanz strategisch strukturierter Gruppenkooperation für die Gestaltung internationaler Politik und zeigen, wie sich die Dynamiken multilateraler Diplomatie in der UNGA über zwei Jahrzehnte gewandelt haben.

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List of abbreviations

ADB	African Development Bank
AU	African Union
APNWLAC	Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
AC	Andean Community
ADC	Andean Development Corporation
ASEAN3MRO	ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office
AsDB	Asian Development Bank
AfoCO	Asian Forest Cooperation Organisation
AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
AALCO	Asian-African Legal Consultative Organisation
ACS	Association of Caribbean States
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BSEC	Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organisation
DICO	Bureau of the Disarmament Commission
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CABEI	Central American Bank for Economic Integration
SICA	Central American Integration System
CAREC	Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Institute
CEI	Central European Initiative
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organisation
COPUOS	Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space UN
CFC	Common Fund for Commodities
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States

CW	Commonwealth Secretariat
CPC	Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries
CSSS	Community of Sahelo-Saharan States
CMJIAC	Conference of Ministers of Justice of the Ibero-American Countries
CICMA	Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia
CCASG	Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf
CE	Council of Europe
CCC	Customs Cooperation Council
DECOEC	Developing Eight Countries Organisation for Economic Cooperation
DR	Draft Resolution
EAC	East African Community
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECWAS	Economic Community of Western African States
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organisation
ECC	Energy Charter Conference
EDB	Eurasian Development Bank
EEC	Eurasian Economic Community
EGCMLFT	Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism
CERN	European Organisation for Nuclear Research
EPLO	European Public Law Organisation
EU	European Union
FDIPLAC	Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean
G77	G77
G77C	G77 and China

GDA	Global Dryland Alliance
GFFAIDSTM	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
GGGI	Global Green Growth Institute
GSPP	Group of Seven Plus
HCPIL	Hague Conference on Private International Law
IAC	Ibero-American Conference
IO	Indian Ocean Commission
IORA	Indian Ocean Rim Association
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
IAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IACA	International Anti-Corruption Academy
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
ICC	International Chamber of Commerce
ICDO	International Civil Defence Organisation
ICGLR	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region of Africa
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organisation
IDLO	International Development Law Organisation
IFSAS	International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea
IHFFC	International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission
IHO	International Hydrographic Organisation
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
UNIDROIT	International Institute for the Unification of Private Law
IBRO	International Network for Bamboo and Rattan
IOF	International Organisation of the Francophonie
IREA	International Renewable Energy Agency

ISA	International Solar Alliance
IDBG	Islamic Development Bank Group
ILAI	Italian-Latin American Institute
CELAC	Latin American and Caribbean States
LAIA	Latin American Integration Association
LAP	Latin American Parliament
LAS	League of Arab States
CGOP	Members of the Core Group of the Oslo Process
NDB	New Development Bank
NAM	Non Aligned Movement
OPECFID	OPEC Fund for International Development
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OACPS	Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
GUAM	Organisation for Democracy and Economic Development
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OAS	Organisation of American States
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
PC	Pacific Community
PIDF	Pacific Islands Development Forum
PIF	Pacific Islands Forum
PAIAWSA	Pan African Intergovernmental Agency for Water and Sanitation for Africa
PAM	Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean
PPD	Partners in Population and Development
PCA	Permanent Court of Arbitration
RECSASEC	Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons

RGAS	Regional group African States
RGAPS	Regional group Asia-Pacific States
RGEES	Regional group Eastern European States
RGLAC	Regional group Latin American and Caribbean States
RGWEOS	Regional group Western European and other States
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
SIDSDOCK	Small Island Development States Dock
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SC	South Centre
SANWFZBT	Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Bangkok Treaty
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UM	Union for the Mediterranean
USAN	Union of South American Nations
UP	University for Peace
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ISEA	International Seabed Authority
ITLS	International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea
SELA	Latin American and Caribbean Economic System
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly

1 Introduction

The United Nations General Assembly functions as the central forum for multilateral diplomacy, providing a venue in which states convene to address global challenges and shape international policy. Within this context, groups composed of UN Member States play a decisive role. Groups have long exercised significant influence in the UNGA. Historically the Cold War and the related process of bloc formation exemplify the importance of such groupings (e.g. the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement). In recent years cooperation among states organized in groups has gained increasing prominence in international relations, prompting a growing body of research focused on groups in the UNGA. One aspect that has not yet been explored, however, is the significance of group cooperation in the UNGA by entities holding ‘observer status’. Within the UNGA a rising number of groups have been granted observer status over time. Groups with permanent observer status enjoy expanded privileges, including improved access to information and the opportunity to participate in meetings that remain inaccessible to other actors. Their institutionalized presence thereby allows them to exert greater influence on multilateral processes. The significance of group cooperation encompasses both the extent to which states organize in groups, measured by the number of groups with permanent observer status and their membership and the degree to which these groups act as cohesive units within the UN. This study examines the importance of group organisation and coordination within the UNGA over two decades, from 2000 to 2020. The period was marked by important international events and geopolitical shifts in power, including the terror attacks of 9/11 and the ensuing “War on Terror,” global climate change, the digitalization of society, the Russia-Ukraine conflict, China’s rise, and a new self-confidence among African states, all of which have profoundly affected the international order and underscore the need for intensified multilateral cooperation and coordination in the UNGA. Through an analysis that employs visual representations and indices based on factors such as voting behaviour, draft resolutions and group characteristics, this study evaluates how groups develop and coordinate in order to achieve their goals. The investigation considers organisational group criteria, i.e. group size as well as group type (regional or cross-regional, obtainment of permanent observer status) as well as behavioural indicators, including voting-cohesion, sponsorship behaviour, as well as on behalf-statements. The work begins with an overview of the literature and a description of group typologies. It then sets out the theoretical framework that serves as the foundation for the subsequent empirical analysis. The theoretical part is subdivided into “Theses and Hypotheses”, “Operationalisa-

tion”, ”Challenges”, ”Methodology” and ”Data”. In formulating the central theses and hypotheses, clear definitions are provided, followed by a presentation of the methods employed (metrics and indices). Methodological challenges and the data-collection process are likewise discussed. A “Historical mapping of different groups in the United Nations” then traces developments and structures, underscoring the historical context that must be taken into account. Building on this, the analysis of the collected data is presented, divided into distinct analytical perspectives and interpreted within the theoretical framework. Finally, the study concludes with a discussion section.

2 Literature review

The literature on the analysis of voting cohesion in the General Assembly of the United Nations provides important insights into the dynamics of group behaviour and coordination. Already in the 1960s, Lijphart (Lijphart, 1963) began examining voting constellations, thereby laying the foundation for further research into how groups enforce their interests in the UNGA and to what extent voting cohesion is influenced. Jakobsson (Jakobsson, 2009) deepened the analysis by examining how the War on Terror and the fifth EU enlargement affected cohesion within the EU. His findings demonstrated that, despite a certain loss of cohesion, the EU continued to form a strong voting constellation, particularly on matters of counter-terrorism. Birnberg (Birnberg, 2009) also analysed the voting cohesion of the EU Member States and found that the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty had a noticeable influence. Jin et al. (Jin and Hosli, 2013) provided evidence that the voting cohesion of the EU has changed compared to other regional groups such as CARICOM, the Arab League and the AU. Bouchard et al. (Bouchard and Drieskens, 2013) examined the success of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy in coordinating voting cohesion in the UNGA and pointed out that this measure is also used by the European Commission to assess coordination successes.

Research on voting cohesion is not limited solely to the EU. Works by Panke (Panke, 2013a; Panke, 2013b), Ferdinand (Ferdinand, 2014b) and Vrailas (Vrailas, 2017) have shed light on the differences in cohesion among various groups in the UNGA. For instance, Ferdinand (Ferdinand, 2014b) demonstrated that the BRICS countries tend to adopt a common stance on security matters, while divergences occur in other areas. Vrailas (Vrailas, 2017) examined the negotiation dynamics between the EU and other groups in the UNGA and illustrated how the interests of the groups are coordinated in the international context. Further studies by Ribeiro (Hoffmann, 2020), Johansson-Nogués (Johansson-Nogués, 2019), Rüländ (Rüländ, 2020) and Laatikainen (Laatikainen, 2020) addressed the role of regional groups such as GRULAC, CARICOM, ALBA, AU, OIC, the Arab League, ASEAN and SIDSDOCK, providing detailed insights into how these groups formulate common positions and represent their interests in the UNGA.

Laatikainen's (Laatikainen, 2020) analysis of SIDSDOCK exemplarily demonstrated how this group has successfully positioned itself in the UNGA to advance issues such as climate change. The negotiation dynamics within and between groups are also of central interest: Dee (Dee, 2020) examined how groups in UN disarmament forums strive to achieve consensus and how this impacts their co-

hesion. He illustrates that negotiations in the UNGA do not always proceed in a straightforward manner, but are influenced by numerous factors. Ribeiro et al. (Hoffmann and Tabak, 2020) analysed the behaviour and coordination strategies of regional organizations such as UNASUR in the UNGA, finding that UNASUR, despite internal differences, frequently acted cohesively in order to represent regional interests, particularly regarding development assistance and the protection of sovereign rights.

Smith (Smith, 2020) focussed on specific issues such as gender equality and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and demonstrated that issue-specific groups actively bring forward their positions in the UNGA. Informal groups were also intensively studied, as Farrell (Farrell, 2017) and Bellamy (Bellamy, 2017) show in their research, which clearly indicates that informal groups, although less structured, have a significant influence on negotiations and decision-making processes within the UNGA. One example of this is the "Group of Friends", which comprises informal associations such as "Friends of SDGs", "Friends of Water", "Friends of Food and Nutrition Security" and "Friends of Children", and often plays a central role in important negotiations.

Finally, Panke (Panke, 2014) raised the question of whether the UNGA should be regarded merely as a "talking shop" or whether its debates are to be taken seriously. Her investigation highlighted that despite all criticism of the UNGA, the decision-making processes and voting cohesion are considered essential indicators of global politics, a fact that is manifested in almost identical, recurring resolutions. Another significant aspect in the literature is the analysis of the "west vs. non-west cleavage", as demonstrated by Voeten (Voeten, 2000; Voeten, 2013). He identified a distinct voting pattern that emphasises the differences between Western and non-Western states, a pattern that becomes particularly evident on controversial issues, when Western democracies vote as a bloc while non-Western states adopt different positions. This analysis significantly contributes to a deeper understanding of voting cohesion in the UNGA and underscores the enduring ideological divides.

3 Group Typology

In the architecture of the UN, the reference to regionality assumes a clear significance in the UN Charter. The word “regional” appears in the UN Charter 16 times in Chapter 6 “Pacific Settlement of Disputes” (1 time in Article 33), in Chapter 7 (2 times in Article 47) and in Chapter 8 (12 times in Articles 52 to 54). (United Nations, 1945) In Chapters 6 and 7 of the UN Charter, the word "regional" (EN) is used in connection with the role of regional organizations and agreements in the settlement of disputes and the maintenance of peace. Chapter 6 “Pacific Settlement of Disputes” deals with the peaceful resolution of conflicts and encourages the use of regional mechanisms before the Security Council is engaged to resolve disputes.

„The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice.“

(UN Charter, Chapter VI, Article 33, Paragraph 1, 1945)

In Chapter 7 “Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression”, however, coercive measures for the maintenance or restoration of peace are addressed. It is stipulated here that the Security Council may authorise regional organizations to implement coercive measures, but only with its express consent. Both chapters underscore the importance of regional initiatives within the framework of the UN’s global security architecture.

„The Military Staff Committee, with the authorization of the Security Council and after consultation with appropriate regional agencies, may establish regional sub-committees.“

(UN Charter, Chapter VII, Article 47, Paragraph 4, 1945)

Chapter 8 “Regional Arrangements” of the UN Charter centrally addresses the role of regional agreements or organizations in maintaining international peace and security. It acknowledges that such regional organizations can play an important role in the settlement of disputes before these matters are brought before the Security Council.

„(2) Nothing in the present Charter precludes the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action provided that such arrangements or agencies and their activities are consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations. (1) The Members of the United Nations entering into such arrangements or constituting such agencies shall make every effort to achieve pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies before referring them to the Security Council.“

(UN Charter, Chapter VIII, Article 52, Paragraphs 1 and 2, 1945)

Finally, Article 52 emphasises that regional organizations should be utilised for the peaceful settlement of disputes, provided that this is in accordance with the objectives and principles of the UN. Article 53 permits the Security Council to authorise regional organizations to implement coercive measures, but only with its express approval. Overall, Chapter 8 underscores the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining peace.

This anchoring of regionality has left clear imprints on the practice of the United Nations, as is also evident in the regional voting groups or established groups that originate from the UN, such as the African Regional Voting Group, from which the AU also emerged. The development and establishment of regional and supra-regional groups within the UN reflect the necessity of integrating regional peculiarities and dynamics into global decision-making processes. At the same time, such groups have adapted over time to geopolitical realities, with both regional interests and supra-regional cooperation playing a central role by representing the concerns of their members within the UN and actively exerting influence on decision-making processes and political dynamics through coordinated strategies. The relevance of these structures is also demonstrated by their role in formulating common positions and strategies in the General Assembly, thereby decisively influencing the multilateral process.

According to Laatikainen, "groups" in the context of United Nations multilateralism refer to various coalitions of states that operate within the UN to coordinate and represent their collective interests (Laatikainen, 2017). They can either have formal or informal structures, with each type of group assuming different functions and mechanisms within the UN framework. There is a clear distinction between formal and informal groups.

Formal groups are regulated by official agreements, treaties or accords and have fixed structures and memberships. Examples of such groups include regional organisations such as the African Union or the European Union as well as supra-regional groups such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, which are based

on legal and institutional foundations and are active in UN bodies such as the General Assembly or the Security Council. These groups utilise their structural and legal frameworks to represent their member states at the global level and effectively promote their common positions. (Laatikainen, 2017) Informal groups, on the other hand, are often based on flexible and ad-hoc arrangements and may organise around specific issues or time-limited events. These groups do not have fixed institutional structures and operate on the basis of common interests or political objectives. The question of why a state joins a group can be answered by noting that a state wishes to avoid isolation and to gain access to more information, thereby ensuring that the state's preferences are met (Ginsberg, 1999), and to win the "Game of Numbers" in the UN. (Laatikainen and Smith, 2017)

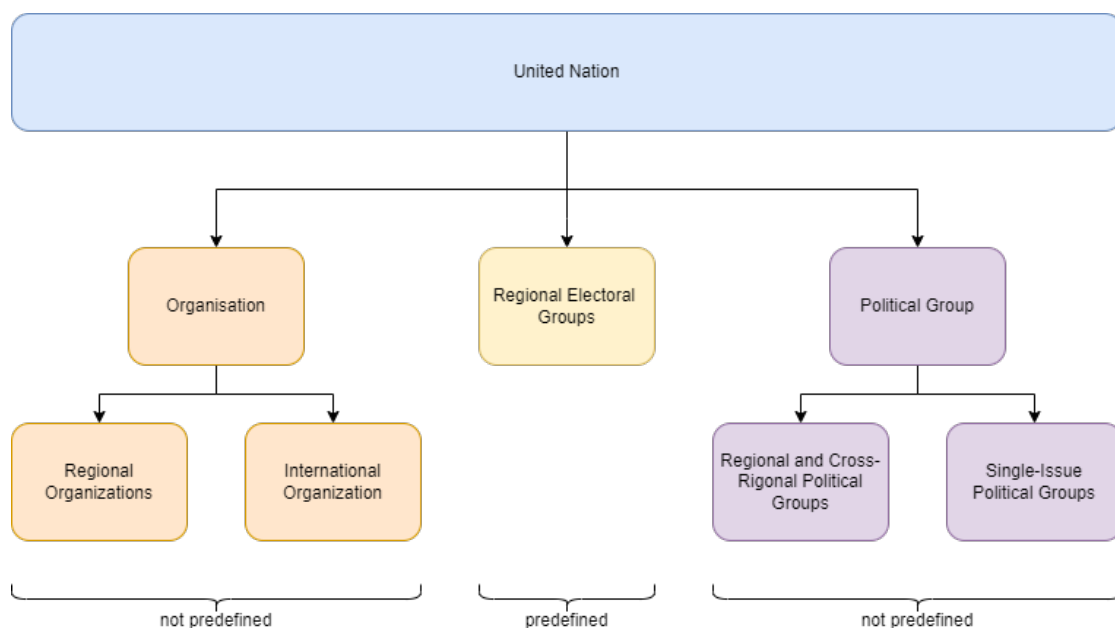


Figure 3.1: Typologies of groups / Laatikainen, 2017 / Own illustration

This graphic shows the typologies and their subdivisions and distinguishes between different types of groups: organizations, Regional Electoral Groups, and political groups. The graphic further classifies these types into specific sub-groups, such as regional and international organizations, regional and supra-regional political groups, as well as issue groups that focus on individual topics.

Regional Electoral Groups in the UN are a central component of the structure and operation of the United Nations, particularly in the context of the General Assembly. The five regional electoral groups are as follows: the African Group, the Asia-Pacific Group, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, the

Eastern European Group, and the Western Group and other States. These groups were originally established to ensure fair geographical representation in elections, especially in the election of members to key UN bodies such as the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the Human Rights Council.

*„The General Assembly shall elect ten other Members of the United Nations to be non-permanent members of the Security Council, due regard being specially paid, in the first instance to the contribution of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, and also to equitable geographical distribution.,,
(UN Charter, Chapter V, Article 23, Paragraph 1, 1945)*

In the context of group politics in the UN, it is emphasised that these regional electoral groups perform not only geographical but also political and diplomatic functions. They coordinate the positions of member states within a region, voting as a bloc to better assert common interests. This dynamic fosters multilateralism by ensuring that even smaller and medium-sized states have a voice in the major decisions of the UN, by joining together into a larger, more influential group. Each of these groups has its own mechanisms for voting and coordination, which are aimed at promoting regional interests and ensuring a unified voice within the UN. In contrast to other groups, which are often issue-based and do not possess a fixed structure, regional electoral groups have a permanent structure and play a continuous role in the decision-making process of the UN. (Laatikainen and Smith, 2017)

*„...may or may not be defined in geographic term. These political groups may include broad, institutionalized cross regional political groups such as the Group of 77 or the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation...“
(Laatikainen, 2017)*

Political Groups play a significant role in the negotiations and diplomacy of the United Nations. These groups do not merely serve geographical representation. They have formed around the UN and fulfil important political and diplomatic functions within the UN framework. These groups frequently act as blocs in the General Assembly and other UN bodies to promote common interests and strengthen their bargaining power. In doing so, they can more effectively influence decisions that affect their regions or issues. Through their collective bargaining, regional groups enable smaller states to amplify their voices in the global decision-making processes of the UN. This dynamic of regional groups reflects the growing

importance of collective, regionally anchored diplomatic approaches within the UN framework. (Laatikainen and Smith, 2017)

Single-Issue Groups in the UN are coalitions of states that focus on specific topics or issues, rather than defining themselves through geographical or political affiliation. These groups may exhibit a lower degree of institutionalisation. A well-known example is the Alliance of Small Island States (SIDSDOCK), which concentrates in particular on climate change and its impacts. These issue groups benefit from being able to form coalitions across geographical and ideological boundaries in pursuit of specific objectives. Owing to their thematic focus, Single-Issue Groups are often capable of operating more coherently and purposefully than larger, more diverse groups. This enables them to effectively advance their concerns on the global agenda by foregrounding specific issues.

*„Small groups of states from different geographic regions that share a strong common position in negotiations; Often working with non-governmental organizations and experts; Contact groups for mediation efforts“
(Laatikainen, 2017)*

Informal groups in the UN are loose coalitions of states that primarily focus on specific topics or concerns, without formal structures or long-term commitments. In the context of Laatikainen, these groups play a decisive role in the dynamics of UN diplomacy, as they enable member states to react flexibly and swiftly to new developments or specific challenges. These informal groups are often temporary and arise ad hoc when a particular issue gains urgency. They provide a platform for states that are not necessarily connected by geographical or political affiliations to collaborate and represent their interests in UN negotiations. According to Laatikainen, informal groups offer the advantage of being less rigid and bureaucratic than formal organizations, which leads to more agile and often more effective cooperation. However, informal groups also have their disadvantages. Their lack of formal structure can result in a deficiency of continuity and sustainability, especially if the interest of the members wanes or global priorities change. Furthermore, the informal nature of these groups can sometimes compromise the transparency and accountability of their decision-making processes. In the context of Laatikainen, informal groups utilise the so-called "Forum Shopping" to deliberately select various international forums where their concerns are best heard and have the best chances of success. Through this strategy, they can flexibly switch between different diplomatic arenas and operate where their positions can be most effectively represented and enforced. (Laatikainen, 2017)

The Conference on Autonomous Weapon Systems (AWS), which took place in Vienna in 2024, illustrates the central role of informal groups in addressing global challenges that are still insufficiently addressed by existing international regulations. This event offered a platform for exchange among various stakeholders, including government representatives, non-governmental organizations, scholars and industry experts. The conference was designed to initiate dialogue regarding technological advances in the field of autonomous weapon systems as well as the associated legal and ethical issues. The programme of the conference was varied in design: it included specialist lectures for a broad audience, which aimed to illuminate current developments and challenges in the area of AWS and to inform the participants. In addition, there were closed discussion sessions reserved for high-ranking representatives of states and international organizations. Furthermore, there were small-group discussion rounds with experts intended to generate knowledge exchange among the actors (diffusion of knowledge). Through this combination of open and closed formats, the conference contributed to establishing a common basis for the topic among the various actors. The author himself participated in the conference. It demonstrates how informal forums can influence the development of global norms and strengthen international cooperation in critical areas by creating a shared information base.

States collaborate in issue-specific, political and informal groups to better represent their interests. However, this group work also brings disadvantages. A primary issue is that compromises within groups often lead to a position that represents the lowest common denominator and does not satisfy all members. In addition, the coordination of positions within groups can lead to delays, such that some states prefer to engage at the national level or in other groups due to the dynamics of current issues. Another disadvantage is the loss of visibility and flexibility, as members within groups must contend with internal pressure, which can be particularly challenging for middle powers. Group affiliations can also lead to rigid positions that are difficult to change, thereby complicating the negotiation dynamics. Moreover, group dynamics can result in a polarisation of debates, with groups acting against each other instead of focusing on substantive discussion. Despite these challenges, group affiliations remain a central feature of multilateralism in the United Nations, as they shape the negotiation processes and influence the interests and identities of the states involved. (Laatikainen and Smith, 2017)

Regional und Xregional Gruppen

For the present work, the terms Regional and Supra-regional groups are redefined to create a clear operationalisation. Regional and Xregional (Pronounced: Cross-regional).

Regional groups are coalitions of states that are clearly delineated by contiguous geographical units. These organizations operate within fixed geographical boundaries and typically encompass all the countries of a specific continent or a defined region. A classic example of this is the European Union, which exclusively includes European states as members. The maximum membership of a regional group is achieved when all countries within the defined geographical area are members. In contrast, Xregional groups are defined as coalitions of states that transcend geographical boundaries and are not delineated by contiguous geographical units. These organizations may include members from various geographical regions, provided they pursue common objectives. An example of this is the G77, which, despite its geographical diversity, is united by shared interests. The Xregional grouping thus allows for more flexible membership, which is not strictly bound by geographical criteria but rather based on substantive commonalities.

A borderline case is represented by an organization that encompasses all UNGA members. Although such an organization fulfils the criteria of an Xregional group through its global orientation, it might also exhibit regional focal points due to its internal structures and operational orientations. Consequently, the classification of such organizations depends significantly on the interpretation of their composition (e.g. Interpol). It must also be taken into account that the typology of a group can change over time, for instance through internal restructurings or altered membership criteria, whereby groups originally regarded as Xregional may gradually adopt characteristics of regional organizations, or vice versa. It should be noted that the total number of members is fundamentally aligned with the number of voting members in the UNGA.

4 Theoretical framework

4.1 Expectations and Hypotheses

The UNGA is the central body of the United Nations, in which all Member States are represented and essential global political decisions are taken. Within this forum, draft resolutions and the subsequent votings are of decisive importance, as they shape the international political agendas and guide their implementation. Groups such as regional and Xregional alliances, international organizations and informal alliances play a central role, as they often coordinate intensively to represent and enforce their common positions and interests through these processes.

For the analysis of importance of group coordination in the UNGA, there are various datasets that cover different aspects of decision-making. The dataset used here covers the period from 2000 to 2020 and focuses specifically on draft resolutions and votings, in order to analyse the importance of group coordination within these two decades.

The period from 2000 to 2020 was marked by significant global challenges and geopolitical shifts (9/11, the Russia/Ukraine conflict, the rise of China, a new sense of self-confidence among African countries, etc.), which profoundly influenced the international order and highlighted the need for intensive multilateral cooperation and coordination in the UNGA. The manner in which this coordination occurs, be it through joint drafting of resolutions or coordinated voting behaviour, not only affects the outcomes of the UNGA but also the overall effectiveness of international cooperation.

This study centres on observable organisational characteristics, activities and outcomes of groups and their members (restricted here to UNGA Member States) in order to capture the significance of group cooperation and its influence on global decision-making in the General Assembly. Particular attention is devoted to evaluating the role and influence of these groups within the international system. The analysis traces how the importance of group coordination has changed over time and how the influence derived from such coordination has evolved. By examining both the challenges and achievements of this coordination, the research elucidates not only the relevance of cooperation but also the concrete effects and contributions of groups to global policy formation in the UNGA from 2000 to 2020.

To delineate the scope of the investigation, informal groups are intentionally excluded, because as previously explained, they are difficult to capture and lack both stable structures and formal rights in the UNGA. Instead, the study concentrates on groups that officially hold observer status in the Assembly, allows individual members to submit resolutions or deliver statements on the group's behalf. Observer status also grants these groups greater access to information than is available to actors without such status (for example: access to conferences as observer). These formal groups therefore provide a clearly defined foundation for analysing their coordination mechanisms and their influence on decision-making processes within the UNGA. This focused delimitation enables a more precise examination of the actual impact and behaviour of these groups in the General Assembly.

The central research question of this work is:

How has the importance of group cooperation at the UNGA evolved over time (2000-2020)?

This question focuses on investigating how the importance of group cooperation has changed over time, as different groups within the United Nations General Assembly seek to advance their collective interests through coordinated action. The aim is to analyse and assess the actual impact of these groups on global decision-making processes and to evaluate how effective their cooperation and strategic coordination with regard to draft resolutions and votings was during this period. From the central research question of this work, two hypotheses can be derived that aim to examine the evolution of the importance of group cooperation in the UNGA:

- H1: Increasing importance of cooperation over time:** This hypothesis posits that importance of group cooperation in the UNGA became increasingly significant between 2000 and 2020. This could be attributed to the fact that global challenges and geopolitical changes require closer alignment and strategic cooperation among Member States in order to implement their common objectives more effectively.
- H2: Divergent patterns of cooperation among different group type** The importance of groups varies systematically across different types of typologies in the United Nations General Assembly. This hypothesis assumes that the degree of cooperation within UNGA groups depends on their type. For example, regional groups such as the European Union may exhibit closer and more intensive cooperation than xregional groupings, which tend to be coherent alignment.

These hypotheses provide a basis for systematically analysing the importance of the group coordination mechanisms in the UNGA and for assessing the development of these dynamics over time. The present research aims to examine the importance of cooperation between various groups in the General Assembly of the United Nations over the period from 2000 to 2020. The central independent variable of this study is the "importance of group cooperation".

What is the importance of group cooperation?

The importance of group cooperation concerns

- the extent to which states organize themselves within groups (as measured by the number of groups with permanent observer status and the number of their group members)
- the degree to which groups within the UN act cohesively as a group

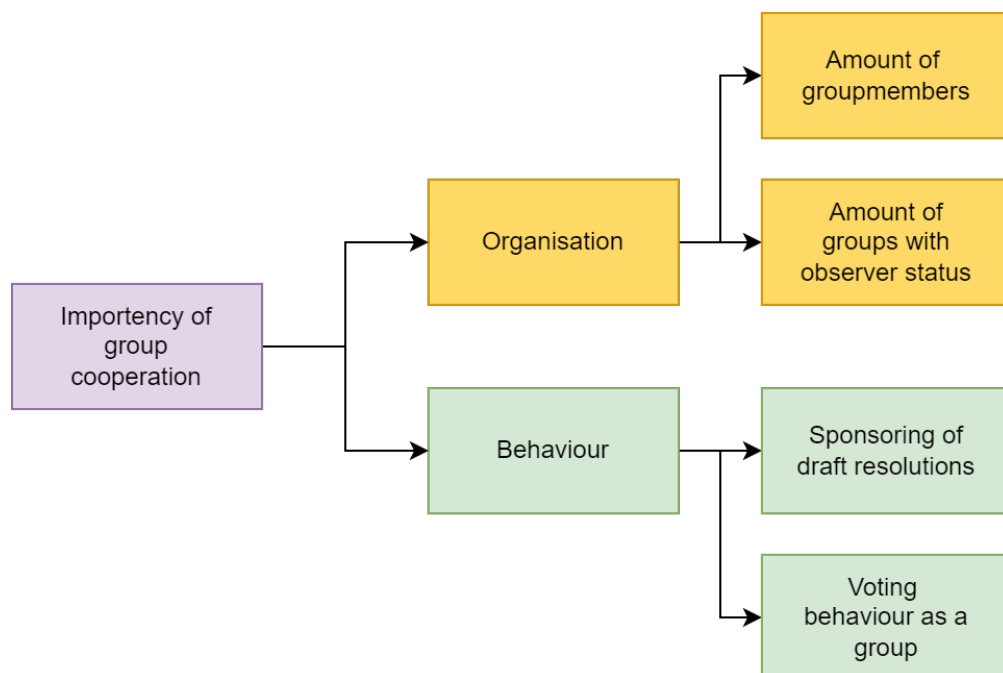


Figure 4.1: Structure of the "Importance of Group Cooperation"

The characteristics of the "importance of group cooperation" can be divided into two principal categories: **group organization** and **group behaviour**. These two dimensions constitute the basis for analysing the "importance of group cooperation" and facilitate the classification of the data. Figure 4.1 provides a clear overview of how the relevant indicators are assigned to these categories.

Group Organisation at UNGA:

- Indicator 1: Evolution of number of groups with permanent observer status at the UN.
- Indicator 2: Group size (number of member states within groups with permanent observer status)

For the **organization** category, particular emphasis is placed on the indicators *group size (number of group members)* and *number of groups holding observer status*. Recording these values at isolated points in time is insufficient, rather, their development over time must be analysed. In this context, the following aspects are of primary interest:

- the absolute number of members,
- the change in the number of members within individual groups,
- the total number of groups holding observer status,
- and the change in this number across defined periods of time.

Group Behaviour at UNGA:

- Indicator 1: Voting cohesion at UNGA
- Indicator 2: Sponsorship at UNGA (on behalf, heatmap)

In the **behaviour** category, the emphasis is on group-dynamic actions that are outwardly observable. The central indicators are:

- cohesion in voting,
- support for draft resolutions, both as an *initial sponsor* and as an *additional sponsor*,
- the submission of draft resolutions on behalf of a group (on-behalf DR).

By examining these indicators longitudinally, it is possible to draw important conclusions about how groups organise themselves and coordinate their behaviour over time. To delimit the scope of this study, only characteristics that are visible from outside the group are considered, such as voting behaviour (cohesion), draft resolutions, the number of members, and the number of groups holding "observer status".

4.2 Operationalisation

Operationalisation of the Data

The operationalisation of the variables in this study is as follows:

Y = Importance of cooperation: Describes the importance of cooperation, how it manifests, is accentuated, and is expressed.

Behavioural variables:

x_1 = Voting: Describes the alignment in the votes among the members of a group, for example by using the Agreement Index and the Index of Voting Cohesion.

x_2 = Draft Resolution: Number of resolutions submitted by groups, as a measure of activity and influence.

x_3 = On Behalf (Behavioral): The frequency with which a group acts collectively on behalf of a country, for example through joint statements or coordinated interventions, serving as an indicator of institutionalised cooperation.

Organisational variables:

x_4 = Historical Mapping: Historical development and permanence of the group composition.

x_5 = Groupsice: Indicator of resources and potential internal divergences.

x_6 = Grouptyp: Differentiation between purely regional groups, e.g., the AU, and Xregional groups such as the G77C.

x_7 = On Behalf (Organizational): The formal recognition by the UN that a group may speak on behalf of its members, reflecting organizational status rather than observable collective activity.

The relationship between the variables is modelled as follows:

$$Y = \begin{cases} f(x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4, x_5, x_6) & \text{if } x_7 = 0 \text{ (behavioral)} \\ f(x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4, x_5, x_7) & \text{if } x_6 = 0 \text{ (Organizational)} \end{cases}$$

The variable **Voting** provides insights into the dynamics of decision-making in the UNGA. It analyses how uniformly members of a group vote and reveals patterns in voting cooperation between groups. In particular, in combination with Draft Resolutions, it allows an examination of which resolutions are supported or opposed by certain groups and which groups represent common positions. Voting behaviour as a key indicator of intra-group cohesion and helps evaluate the extent to which cooperation becomes apparent in the group's positions, as evidenced by joint voting.

A central aspect of the investigation is the analysis of **Draft Resolutions**, which measure the influence of groups within the UNGA. Draft Resolutions are a key element of the decision-making process, as they reflect the priorities of the submitting states and the issues supported by the groups. Metrics such as the number, content, and supporters of the resolutions allow for a detailed analysis of a group's activity and influence. They reveal which groups successfully advance their positions and are strategically active in the UNGA.

The variable **Historical Mapping** illuminates how long a group has existed and the role it has played over time. Groups with a longer history and established structure often exhibit greater stability and deeper institutional anchorage. This enhances their ability for long-term coordination and adaptation to geopolitical changes. The analysis of this variable helps to assess the relevance and adaptability of groups in the context of the UNGA.

The variable **Group Size** is an important indicator of coordination. Larger groups possess more resources and votes, which strengthens their ability to collaborate effectively. At the same time, larger groups may face internal challenges, particularly in aligning their positions. This variable enables the analysis of the balance between a group's influence and its potential divergences.

Finally, the variable **Regional or X-Regional** examines the extent to which groups represent geographical or supra-regional interests. Regional groups such as the African Union often pursue specific regional concerns, while cross-regional groups such as the G77C are geographically broader in scope. The geographical orientation of groups helps to assess their interests and strategies and to analyse whether they are primarily focused on regional issues or engage in supra-regional cooperation in order to achieve their objectives.

The ability to submit Draft Resolutions "**On Behalf**" is a privilege that can be assumed to be granted to established groups and must be previously approved by the UNGA (e.g. the EU). This right signals that the respective group possesses a clear organizational structure as well as a recognised mandate within the UNGA. Groups such as the G77C, which regularly acts on behalf of its Member States,

and the AU, which operates as an overarching actor for the African continent, frequently engage in "On Behalf" activities. This capability demonstrates a degree of internal cohesion, fundamental institutional strength, and their central role as actors within the UNGA. Groups that can submit "On Behalf" Draft Resolutions have internal coordination mechanisms that enable them to develop and represent common positions in a united manner.

Such activities include the submission of resolutions, the delivery of statements in the plenary that reflect the position of the entire group, as well as the strategic bundling of votes and resources to achieve greater diplomatic impact. Nonetheless, only a few groups regularly engage in "On Behalf" activities. Examples such as the OIC utilise this possibility less frequently, which may indicate that they possess less formalised structures or that their Member States pursue markedly different interests. This underlines the central importance of institutional integration and internal cohesion for a group's ability to successfully act on behalf of its members. Groups that regularly operate "On Behalf" not only demonstrate a high level of internal coordination and the ability to set aside national interests in favour of common objectives, but also display diplomatic strength and strategic significance in global negotiations.

4.3 Consideration and Limitations of the Data

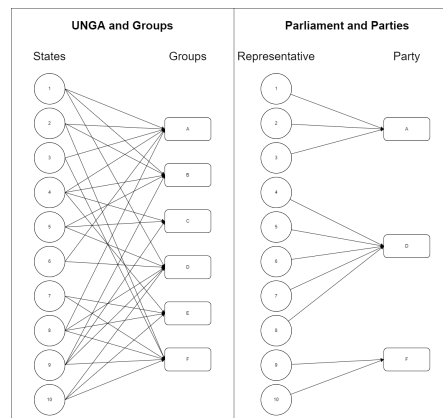


Figure 4.2: UNGA and Parliament in comparison

The analysis of the importance of group cooperation in the UN General Assembly faces specific challenges, particularly due to the multidimensionality of group affiliation. States can belong to multiple groups simultaneously, which complicates the comparability and systematic analysis of group effects. This issue is illustrated in Figure 4.2, in which the UNGA is compared with a parliament. In a parliament, which is structured by parties, there are clear lines of affiliation and interaction. In contrast, the UNGA lacks a fixed upper limit for the number of groups, and for each issue, single-issue groups could theoretically emerge. This leads to an opaque and complex structure of decision-making. One solution to this problem is to consider the groups over time and historically. Focusing on long-term developments and the genesis of groups could help in better understanding patterns and interrelationships.

A key point that is not addressed in depth in this study concerns the specific influences that individual Member States exert on the dynamics of the groups, as well as the role they play in the overall context. While it can be assumed that the respective states, with their individual interests and coalition strategies, contribute significantly to the shaping of group cooperation, this aspect remains an open question here. At the same time, the internal decision-making processes of the groups are not further examined, a deliberate delimitation is made at this point, as the internal processes, possibly characterised by hierarchies, informal networks, or different governance structures, are regarded as a "black box" and thus fall outside the focus of this investigation. The groups considered in this study are observed from the outside, with the emphasis on those interactions that are publicly visible (voting, positioning on DR, etc.). Since the internal structure and

decision pathways within the groups are not discussed, the analysis is consequently limited to measurable and observable factors.

Furthermore, there is the possibility that informal groups may develop into formal groupings. This is exemplified by GUAM, which initially functioned as an informal group and later adopted a formal structure.

4.4 Methodological Approaches

For the analysis of the importance of group cooperation in the UNGA, it is important to consider that a country may be active in multiple groups simultaneously, which complicates a clear assignment to a single group. This multiple affiliation has significant implications for the analysis: a country can flexibly decide, based on its membership in different groups, which group to utilise to amplify its influence in specific votes. For instance, a country might prefer to join a group that prioritises climate protection in environmental matters, while in other contexts it might affiliate with an economically oriented group to represent its economic interests. Moreover, this multiple affiliation can lead to potential conflicts, as different groups may have divergent expectations of a member state. If a country is active in two groups that set different priorities or represent opposing positions, it may face conflicting demands. This complicates the analysis of voting alignment, as the country may have to adjust its position depending on the group context, which can affect both the cohesion and the importance of group cooperation. These dynamic implications should be taken into account when evaluating the results, as they indicate the strategic decision-making and the priorities of the states, which can change depending on the issue area and group affiliation.

4.4.1 Indices for Measuring Voting Cooperation

In this analysis, both the Agreement Index and the Index of Voting Cohesion are used to measure the importance of group cooperation in the UNGA. The Agreement Index captures the degree of overall agreement within a group and indicates how frequently members of a group vote with the same main vote. The Index of Voting Cohesion complements this analysis by examining the consistency of the voting patterns within the group through pair comparisons. In this approach, the agreement between individual pairs of countries is calculated to provide a more precise picture of the internal cohesion and the voting dynamics within the group. In addition to the two indices, the pairwise agreement among the countries within a group is considered separately to allow for a more detailed analysis of the group structure and internal dynamics. Through the pairwise analysis, it is possible to determine how closely individual countries align in their votes, which points to specific coalitions or partnerships within the group.

a) Agreement Index

$$AI = \frac{\max(Y, N, A) + 0.5 \cdot [Y + N + A - \max(Y, N, A)]}{Y + N + A} \quad (4.1)$$

The Agreement Index (Ferdinand, 2014a) is calculated to quantify the degree of agreement within a group and to assess the extent to which the majority adheres to a voting line. The calculation is based on the voting categories "Yes" Y , "No" N and "Abstention" A and their relation to the total number of votes. The formula begins with the determination of the most frequent vote (represented by $\max(Y, N, A)$), which indicates the group's preferred position. Next, the difference to the total number of votes $[Y + N + A - \max(Y, N, A)]$ is calculated to capture the number of dissenting votes. This difference is multiplied by the factor 0.5 to reduce the weight of these non-conforming votes. In the next step, the primary vote is adjusted by the weighted share of dissenting votes to represent the degree of actual agreement.

The resulting value in the numerator is divided by the total number of votes cast, thereby normalising the Agreement Index to a value between 0 and 1. A value near 1 indicates a high level of agreement within the group, while values close to 0 signal a low level of agreement and a stronger divergence of opinions within the group. This method enables not only the primary vote to be taken into account but also adjusts for dissenting votes, in order to precisely capture the internal cohesion and agreement within the group.

b) Index of Voting Cohesion

The Index of Voting Cohesion 4.2, originally developed by Lijphart (Lijphart, 1963), is used to measure the voting agreement between two states and enables an analysis of the coherence within groups during voting. The IVC is calculated according to the following formula:

$$\text{IVC} = \frac{a + 0.5 \cdot b}{t} \quad (4.2)$$

Here, a represents the number of votes in which both states cast the same vote (i.e., "Yes" and "Yes" or "No" and "No"), b represents the cases in which one state votes either "Yes" or "No" while the other state takes a different position, and t is the total number of votes in which both states participated. The index yields a normalised value between 0 and 1, where 1 indicates complete agreement between the votes of the two states, while a value of 0 signifies complete divergence. This original IVC approach thus captures the extent to which two states vote coherently. In 2014, Burmester and Jankowski extended the IVC to depict the voting dynamics within groups with multiple voting options in greater detail. The modified formula is:

$$\text{IVC} = \frac{2 \times \left[(n_y - 1) \cdot n_y + (n_n - 1) \cdot n_n + (n_a - 1) \cdot n_a + (n_y + n_n) \cdot n_a - \frac{N^2}{2} + N \right]}{N^2} \quad (4.3)$$

In this extended formula, N represents the total sum of all votes cast, that is "Yes", "No" and "Abstentions", n_y represents the number of "Yes" votes within the group, n_n represents the number of "No" votes within the group, and n_a represents the number of abstentions. This formula takes into account the distribution of votes among the different options and captures the agreement within the group by comparing the voting behaviour of the group members relative to one another. The calculation first multiplies each voting option by the number of that same option reduced by 1, $(n_y - 1) \times n_y$, in order to represent the level of agreement between members casting the same vote. The computation is then supplemented by a weighting of the abstentions as well as a normalisation by N^2 , thereby bringing the IVC value onto a scale between 0 and 1. This detailed calculation enables a more differentiated examination of the voting agreement in groups and determines how coherent or inconsistent the group acts in specific votes.

Absence

In the analysis of voting behaviour in the UN General Assembly, besides the classic options "Yes", "No" and "Abstain", there is also the possibility that a diplomat is absent or does not choose one of the three aforementioned options. This additional variable of absence poses a challenge in the calculation and interpretation of voting behaviour, particularly for indices such as the Agreement Index, the Cohesion Index, and the Index of Voting Cohesion. A central problem is that absences can be interpreted differently depending on the context and underlying causes. For example, Hurwitz (Hurwitz, 2008) emphasises that absences in UNGA voting are often attributable to structural factors: many newly independent, underdeveloped and financially poorly equipped countries are unable to maintain a permanent representation at the United Nations, which is why their diplomats are frequently absent from votes (Hurwitz, 2008).

The absence of these countries is therefore less a conscious political decision and more a consequence of structural limitations. Hurwitz treated absences in a similar manner to abstentions and argued that absent countries, with the exception of a few wealthier states, could not participate due to financial or structural constraints. This assumption leads to a specific methodological decision: absences are counted as abstentions in his calculations, as they likewise do not express an explicit approval or disapproval. However, this methodology can result in a potential bias, as absences do not carry the same political weight as abstentions in all cases and may leave important voting dynamics unaccounted for. For the calculation of cohesion and agreement indices such as the IVC, this treatment can lead to methodological issues, since the absence does not reflect the actual position of the absent state and thus may affect the accuracy of the cohesion measure.

4.5 Observer

The status of a Permanent Observer at the United Nations is an institutional peculiarity that is not founded on the UN Charter but on a practice established in 1946. This status is granted to states and organizations that are not full UN members; however, they must be represented in a specialised UN agency in order to submit the corresponding request. Switzerland became the first state to receive this status in 1946, followed by other states such as Austria, Italy, Finland, and Japan.

Neither the UN Charter nor the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly explicitly regulate observer status. Instead, its conferment rests on resolutions and the organizational practice of the General Assembly. Decision 49/426 of 9 December 1994 stipulated that future requests for the granting of observer status are to be considered in the plenary after discussion in the Sixth Committee (United Nations, 2000). This institutional practice was further specified in subsequent resolutions:

Decides also that, in future, any request by an organization for the granting of observer status in the General Assembly will be considered in plenary session after the consideration of the issue by the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly.
(United Nations, 2000)

Requests the Secretary-General to take appropriate measures to bring to the attention of all the States Members of the General Committee and General Assembly the criteria and procedures laid down by the General Assembly whenever a request is made by an organization seeking observer status in the General Assembly.
(United Nations, 2000)

These measures enhance transparency and are intended to ensure that all applications follow a uniform procedure in which a legal review is conducted first, before the decision is taken in the plenary.

The procedure for obtaining recognition as a *Permanent Observer* is characterised by several organizational steps that have become entrenched in General Assembly practice. In this process, the Sixth Committee plays a central role:

1. Submission of the application
2. Inclusion in the provisional agenda

49/426. Question of criteria for the granting of observer status in the General Assembly

At its 84th plenary meeting, on 9 December 1994, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Sixth Committee¹⁹⁴ and taking note of the oral report presented to the Sixth Committee on 25 November 1994 by the Chairman of the working group on the question of criteria for the granting of observer status in the General Assembly,¹⁹⁵ decided that the granting of observer status in the General Assembly should in the future be confined to States and to those intergovernmental organizations whose activities cover matters of interest to the Assembly.

Figure 4.3: UNGA decision 49/426 of 9 December 1994; Question about observer status

3. Referral to the Sixth Committee
4. Preparation of the basis for deliberation
5. Deliberation in the Sixth Committee
6. Recommendation to the General Assembly
7. Decision by the General Assembly

As outlined in the Delegates Handbook (United Nations, 2024a) and the Juridical Yearbook from 2008 (United Nations, 2013), the entire procedure can span several years. The International Chamber of Commerce, already under discussion in 1946, was not officially recognised as an observer until 2016.

Since the early 1990s, a marked increase in organisations holding observer status has been observed. This trend has been accompanied by institutional decisions designed to ensure the relevance of the applicant groups and their alignment with the interests of the General Assembly.

3208 (XXIX). Status of the European Economic Community in the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Wishing to promote co-operation between the United Nations and the European Economic Community,

Requests the Secretary-General to invite the European Economic Community to participate in the sessions and work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer.

*2266th plenary meeting
11 October 1974*

Figure 4.4: EU RES 3208 (XXIX); European Economic Community in the General Assembly

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 3 May 2011

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/65/L.64/Rev.1)]

65/276. Participation of the European Union in the work of the United Nations

Figure 4.5: EU RES 65/276; Participation of the European Union in the work of the United Nations

- **EU:** Transition from the EEC to the EU, accompanied by several resolutions (RES 3208, RES 65/276).
- **AU:** RES 477(V), RES 36/24.
- **ICC:** Already referenced in 1946 in E/RES/17(III), but officially recognised as an observer only in 2016, A/INF/75/3.
- **G77 and NAM:** Not listed in the official report A/INF/75/3, yet endowed with de facto observer status, historically anchored in the first United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and in the "Spirit of Bandung".

The G77 and NAM groups are regarded as special cases: although they do not appear in the official list of permanent observers in report A/INF/75/3, (United Nations, 2020) they functionally enjoy this status. Both emerged as responses to global structural issues, within the framework of UNCTAD and, respectively, in the context of the non-aligned states. Their institutional presence at the UN is historically established and is recognised in practice.

Institutional responsibility for handling such status questions differs according to the type of organization: whereas intergovernmental organizations are processed by the Sixth Committee, the recognition of non-governmental organizations is undertaken by the Economic and Social Council and its "Committee on NGOs", E/RES/3(II) and E/RES/17(III). (United Nations, 1946a; United Nations, 1946b). This distinction is essential for analytically separating the formal pathways of status conferment.

A particularly instructive example of the duration of such a procedure is provided by the ICC. It had already been mentioned in an official document in 1946 E/RES/17(III) (United Nations, 1946b) and discussed as a potential observer. The actual recognition of the ICC as a "Permanent Observer" to the UNGA occurred only seventy years after the introduction of this status, namely in 2016. In

resolution A/RES/71/156 (United Nations, 2016), the ICC was officially admitted to the General Assembly as a *Permanent Observer*.

This case exemplifies that the process is only "roughly" standardised, lacks a fixed timeline, and can be strongly influenced by political dynamics.

Permanent observers possess limited yet significant rights:

- participation in meetings and access to documents,
- the right to speak in the plenary,
- the possibility to exercise the right of reply with the President's consent.

They have no rights to co-sponsor resolutions or to submit procedural motions. This restriction also applies to observer states such as the Holy See or Palestine, whose status is defined by special resolutions (e.g. 58/314, 52/250, A/52/1002) (United Nations, 1998).

It can be assumed that acquiring observer status is time- and resource-intensive and requires the support of member states. Consequently, the strategic benefit derived from it must extend beyond purely formal rights in order to justify the effort:

- **Informational advantage:** access to internal debates, documents, and meetings
- **Signalling effect:** visibility in delegation lists and increased diplomatic weight
- **Diplomatic network:** integration into multilateral conferences
- **Coordination and structure:** an indicator of the group's organizational maturity

These aspects render observer status an instrument of *conference diplomacy*, enabling indirect influence on decision-making processes (Wilhelm, 2017).

The fact that groups such as the G77 and NAM enjoy observer status despite not being officially listed highlights the opaque "black-box" nature of this status. Moreover, the status can evolve over many years, as the EU example shows. The analysis draws on the initial conferral resolutions and the meeting records (United Nations, 2020).

Despite formal differences in rights (e.g. EU vs. AU vs. ICC), structural commonalities emerge greater visibility, access to meetings, and support from member states. These features make observer status a salient explanatory variable for studying diplomatic influence mechanisms within the UN.

5 Data

5.1 Introduction

The empirical basis of this study was constructed through a multi-stage process drawing on voting records, draft resolutions, and plenary transcripts of the UNGA. As the central forum of all member states, the UNGA constitutes an indispensable object of inquiry for the analysis of IR. Its voting outcomes, plenary records, and draft proposals provide comprehensive insights into alliance formation, thematic developments, and decision-making processes. These sources are particularly valuable because they allow for systematic comparison across countries and over time, thereby enabling the identification of both enduring patterns and temporal shifts in international politics.

Already today, a wide range of databases based on UNGA data exists. Examples include:

Dataset name	Coverage	Authors	References
UNGDC (UN General Debate Corpus)	1970–2016	2017	A. Baturo, N. Dasandi, S. J. Mikhaylov
UNGDC (complete version)	1946–present	2025	S. Jankin, A. Baturo, N. Dasandi
UNGA Voting Data (Voeten)	1946–2018	2013	E. Voeten
Community structure in the UNGA	1946–2008	2010	K. T. Macon, P. J. Mucha, M. A. Porter
UNGA Sponsorship Dataset (ISCITE-IUL)	2009–2019	2022	P. Seabra, R. Mesquita
Extended UNGA Sponsorship Dataset (draft texts)	2009–2019	2024	R. Mesquita
UNGA Resolutions Text Corpus	1946–2019	2024	R. Mesquita, A. Pires

Table 5.1: Selection of UNGA-based datasets

With advances in analytical methods, it has become possible to generate additional datasets that address previously unresolved research questions and challenge established hypotheses. Such extensions complement existing resources by integrating methodological innovations and expanded sources of data. In the context of this study, recurring challenges had to be addressed that required careful adjustments to data preparation processes. The goal was to establish a robust and consistent empirical foundation suitable for detailed analyses of international relations. Key strengths of this dataset include:

- a multi-stage data-cleaning procedure that combines automated and manual checks

- the integration of multiple points of collection, ranging from the submission of draft resolutions to final votes, including the temporal evolution of proposals
- complete coverage of all plenary sessions within each UNGA session
- the incorporation of metadata and supplementary material (agenda items, texts, etc.)

Compared to existing UNGA databases, the present dataset offers a unique combination of substantive depth and methodological rigor. Other resources often provide only individual elements, such as voting records or draft resolutions—in isolation. By contrast, this dataset integrates plenary records, agenda items, document symbols, initial and co-sponsors, as well as subsequent vote adjustments into a continuous mapping between draft resolutions and final votes. Automated routines for extraction and harmonization were complemented by manual validation steps to correct inconsistencies in country names, document codes, and spellings, thereby ensuring high data quality. The dataset covers UNGA sessions 55 to 78. Table 5.2 shows the number of meetings in UNGA sessions 55 to 78:

Session	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78
Amount	112	112	94	95	118	101	109	122	103	122	118	131	99	109	105	118	95	117	108	66	105	103	100	109

Table 5.2: Amount of meetings per UNGA session (55–78)

This chapter is structured as follows. Section Introduction provides an introduction outlining the scope and objectives of the chapter. Section DataSources presents the primary sources used, ranging from the official UNGA website and the UN Digital Library to supplementary documents on observer-status groups. Section DataStructure explains the structure of the data, in particular the modeling of draft resolutions, voting records, and plenary transcripts, as well as their interlinkages. Section DataCollection describes the data collection and the multi-stage processing workflow in R and Python. Finally, Section AdditionalInformation provides additional information on group affiliations, session structures, and known limitations of the data source.

The generated data open a new perspective on the work of the UNGA. The structured collection across many sessions establishes comparability over time, while the linking of individual data points increases the depth of analysis. This makes possible a detailed and temporally comparative examination that was not feasible before. The central organizing principle is the use of agenda items, which allow the development of specific issue areas to be traced over extended periods. In this way, relevant content can be represented consistently, with both change and

continuity becoming visible. The data can be applied to a wide range of research questions. They enable the analysis of state voting behavior, support the identification of alliances and groupings within the UNGA, and allow the study of thematic developments across sessions. The entire decision-making process can be reconstructed and examined analytically. Debates and explanations of votes can be evaluated substantively. Group affiliations, such as EU membership, are recorded and tracked over time. Time-series analyses make it possible to identify long-term trends. Text mining and sentiment analysis provide additional insights from explanations and debate contributions. Forecasting models of voting behavior become feasible. Networks of coalitions and patterns of cooperation can be visualized and interpreted. The influence of individual agenda items on voting outcomes can be assessed. Taken together, this creates a coherent framework for empirical analyses of the UNGA. The combination of structured collection, temporal linkage, and consistent use of agenda items provides a reliable foundation. The approach supports both descriptive and inferential analyses, offering both overview and detail. The UNGA becomes observable as a dynamic system without distorting its institutional structure. The data provide evidence of patterns, ruptures, and developments, and are adaptable for further research and diverse methodological approaches. In this way, the work of the UNGA can be analyzed systematically, transparently, and comparatively.

5.2 Data Sources

To construct the dataset, multiple sources were consulted. The official UNGA website (<https://www.un.org/en/ga/>) served as the primary basis for the research, while the UN Digital Library (<https://digitallibrary.un.org/>) was used to obtain the necessary information and PDF documents.



Figure 5.1: UNGA landing page

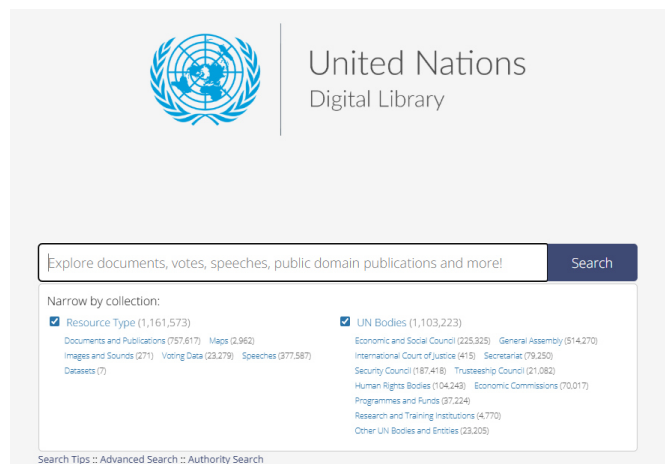


Figure 5.2: Landing page of the UN Digital Library

The **Index to Proceedings of the General Assembly** was used for the recording and classification of votes. This source provides a complete overview of all votes within a session and allows for the rapid thematic assignment of individual items.

The **Plenary meeting records (PV)** were downloaded from the UN Digital Library. They form the basis for the extraction of substantive information on votes, debate contributions, and explanations. From these documents, both structured data and relevant text segments for analysis were derived.

The **metadata** on the votes were obtained from the UN Digital Library. These include formal information such as the agenda item, resolution title, date of the

vote, and outcome. Such metadata make it possible to assign votes precisely to issue areas and session periods.

For the **draft resolutions**, a targeted query was submitted to the UN Digital Library. This search encompassed all entries that were officially introduced as drafts during the period under study. The resulting dataset includes both the formal attributes of the documents and the metadata available through the UN Digital Library. This is illustrated in Figure 5.3, which shows the entry for draft resolution A/71/L.25/Add.1. The fields of interest include symbol, title, access, resolution/decision, authors, agenda information, date, notes, and subjects (the latter not displayed). The field “Notes” indicates additional sponsors, whereas “Authors” lists the initial sponsors.

Details	
Symbol	A/71/L.25/Add.1
Title	Investigation into the conditions and circumstances resulting in the tragic death of Dag Hammarskjöld and of the members of the party accompanying him: draft resolution / addendum / Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia
Access	English: A/71/L.25/Add.1-EN-PDF ; Spanish: A/71/L.25/Add.1-ES-PDF ; Français: A/71/L.25/Add.1-FR-PDF ; Русский: A/71/L.25/Add.1-RU-PDF ; العربية: A/71/L.25/Add.1-AR-PDF ; 中文: A/71/L.25/Add.1-ZH-PDF ;
Resolution / Decision	A/RES/71/260
Authors	Andorra Bosnia and Herzegovina Costa Rica Eritrea Georgia Lesotho Monaco Mozambique Pakistan Palau Papua New Guinea Philippines Republic of Korea San Marino Serbia Sierra Leone South Africa Sudan The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Tunisia Ukraine Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Agenda information	A/71/251.130 Investigation into the conditions and circumstances resulting in the tragic death of Dag Hammarskjöld and of the members of the party accompanying him. HAMMARSJÖLD, DAG—DEATH INVESTIGATION
Date	[New York] : UN, 23 Dec. 2016
Description	[1] p.
Notes	Additional sponsors: Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Costa Rica, Eritrea, Georgia, Lesotho, Monaco, Mozambique, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, San Marino, Serbia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Ukraine and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).
Collections	Resource Type > Documents and Publications > Draft Resolutions and Decisions UN Bodies > General Assembly > General Assembly Plenary

Figure 5.3: Draft Resolution

The **observer status** information was collected on the basis of a previously identified UN source. The central reference was document A/INF/75/3 (United Nations, 2020), which lists the groups holding observer status for each session and indicates the date on which the status was granted. This information is relevant for determining the participation and procedural rights of these groups during the period of analysis. The document differs from the overview published on the UN website at the same time. In the official listing for the 75th session, groups that only

held a temporary observer status, or that obtained it at a later stage, such as the International Solar Alliance, are not included.¹

The analysis of the debates is based on the direct examination of the PV documents. In this process, both the interventions during the voting debates and the explanations following the votes were identified and prepared for substantive analysis.

¹https://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/76/int_solar_alliance.shtml (2021). See also A/76/192 + Add.1 and A/C.6/76/L.2.

5.3 Structure of the Data

Figure 5.4 illustrates in simplified form the sources from which the individual types of information are derived. The plenary records of the UNGA sessions constitute the foundation for all data related to the voting process, namely voting debates, voting explanations, and voting statements. These data are further complemented by database entries. In contrast, the information on draft resolutions is based on the entries in the UN Digital Library database.

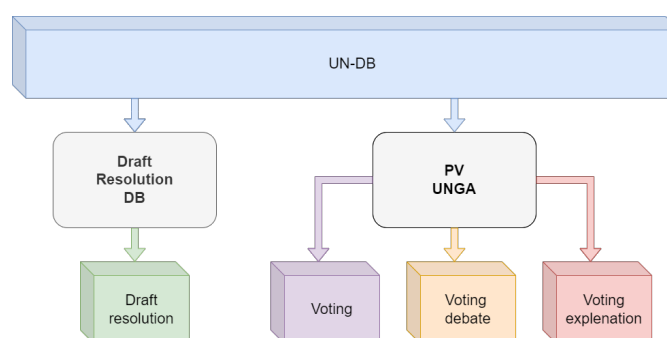


Figure 5.4: Source of data

To understand the data, it is first necessary to be familiar with the process in which they are embedded. A comprehensive overview of this procedure facilitates the interpretation of the substantive context and enables the correct analysis of the data. Particularly relevant in this respect is the timing of data collection, as the chronological sequence of events directly shapes their substantive meaning. Figure 5.5 illustrates this process in a clearly abstracted and structured form. It uses color coding to denote the four main stages of the deliberation process: green represents the draft resolution, orange the voting debate, violet the voting, and red the voting explanation. This color scheme allows the different data types to be quickly located visually. The process begins on the left side with the box **Input resolution** (green area), which provides the initial data. Directly beneath it are additional organizational fields: **Place of submission** (GA, committee, Economic and Social Council), **On behalf** (organization), and **Initial sponsor**. Together, these elements constitute the **initial process** within the draft resolution stage. They are linked by arrows that represent the logical sequence from submission to the first draft of the resolution. From there, the arrows lead to the **Finalisation of Draft Resolution** (also in green), which marks the completion of this first phase. At this stage, two options exist: additional sponsors may be added (**Additional sponsor**), or the draft itself may be revised in a further draft resolution phase, for example through textual amendments, withdrawals, or renewed sponsorship.

The process then shifts to orange, entering the **Voting Debate** stage. Here the prepared draft resolutions are discussed. The graphic depicts this transition with a horizontal arrow linking the finalised draft resolution to the debate. From the voting debate, another arrow leads rightwards to the violet-colored **Voting** stage. This stage is divided into two main variants, reflecting different voting procedures: in **Normal voting**, the draft resolution is voted upon as a whole; in the second variant, several separate votes are taken on different parts of a draft resolution. Additionally, a **No voting** option exists if a draft resolution is not put to a vote or is not introduced at all. Finally, a last arrow marks the transition to the red-colored **Voting Explanation** stage, positioned at the far right of the diagram. This stage concludes the process and records the explanations of voting behavior, which provides additional contextual information beyond the voting results themselves. In addition to arrows, the diagram uses brackets to visually group related steps. For example, all green boxes are encompassed by a brace to indicate their inclusion in the draft resolution stage. Similar brackets are applied to the other main sections. The visualization highlights not only the chronological sequence but also the pathways within the deliberation process. It thus provides a comprehensive overview of the procedure and the data collection points, showing which data are generated at which stage, how the sections are linked by arrows, and how color and bracket markers help capture the logical structure of the process.

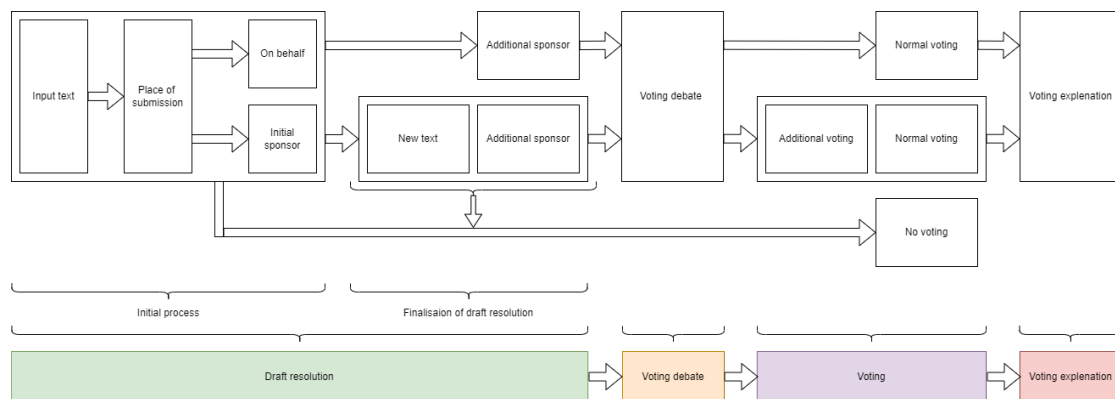


Figure 5.5: UNGA landing page

A PV generally follows consistent formatting conventions that can be systematically leveraged for analysis. These structures provide a framework for identifying and categorizing information, though variations may occur due to editorial differences, substantive particularities, or layout changes. PV documents can be divided into distinct blocks, each containing specific types of information. Figure 5.6, for example, shows a page from the 60th session (p. 68) where voting results appear in separate blocks: Abstaining, In favour, Against, and Absent. Each block lists the relevant states or numbers. Other blocks provide supplementary information, such as Subsequently notes, recorded-vote indicators, presidential statements, or contextual remarks (e.g., "Draft resolution IV was adopted (resolution 68/33)"). In the figure, red boxes highlight these blocks and indicate their position within the overall deliberation process. This illustrates how the formal course of proceedings corresponds to their structured representation in the record. Block segmentation also facilitates automated extraction. Each block contains distinctive textual or visual signals—such as standardized headings (In favour:, Abstaining:), markers like "[Subsequently,...]", or phrases like "The President:". Figure 5.7 presents a set of these keywords and symbols. Square brackets, for example, denote annotations or subsequent events. Together, these visual and textual cues form the basis for a precise and reproducible analysis of PV content. For voting-related data, the PV records were further complemented with metadata from the UN Digital Library (UNDB).

The compilation of **group memberships** was carried out manually, based on the official websites of the respective organisations. Where sufficient information was not available, alternative reliable sources were consulted. The analysis also included groups that, during the period under study, submitted draft resolutions "on behalf" of others without holding observer status themselves. Groups of particular relevance to the study were likewise considered, including UN working groups such as COPUOS, provided they appeared in the records as sponsors (i.e., submitted draft resolutions on behalf of others). The list of observer groups was refined by excluding cases such as the International Olympic Committee.

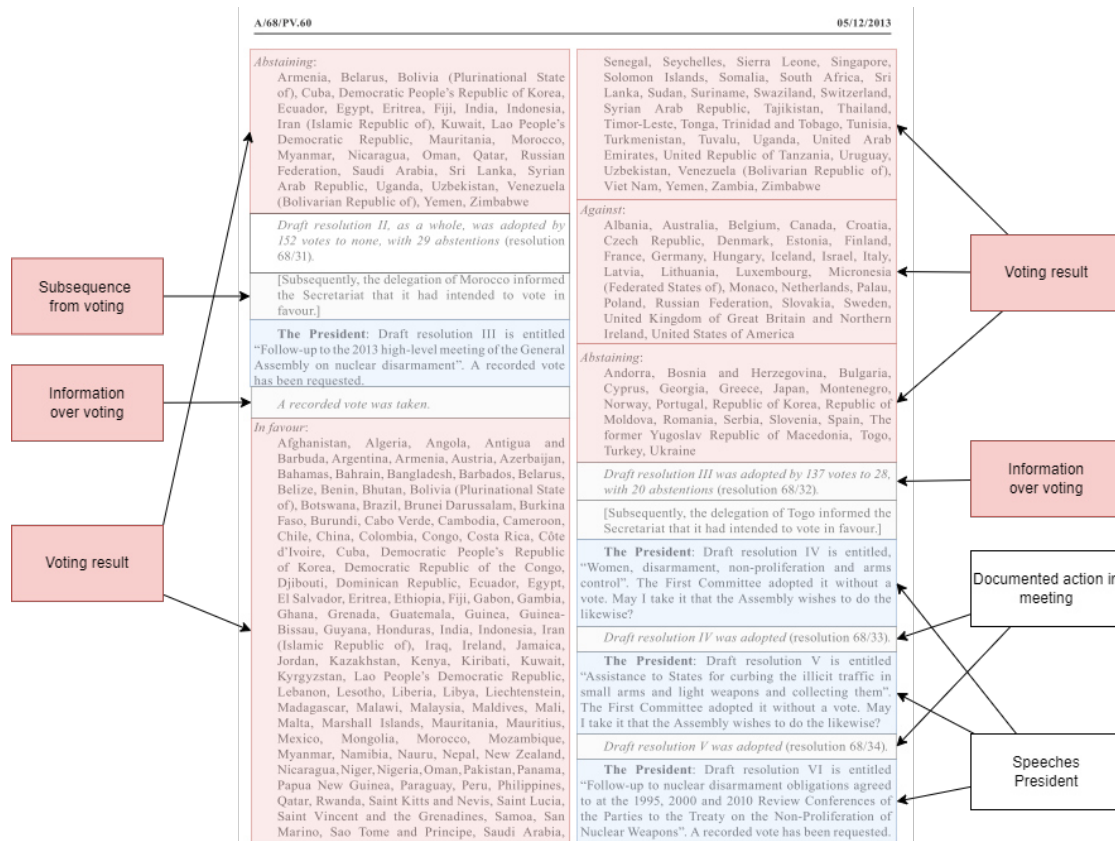


Figure 5.6: PV broken down in parts

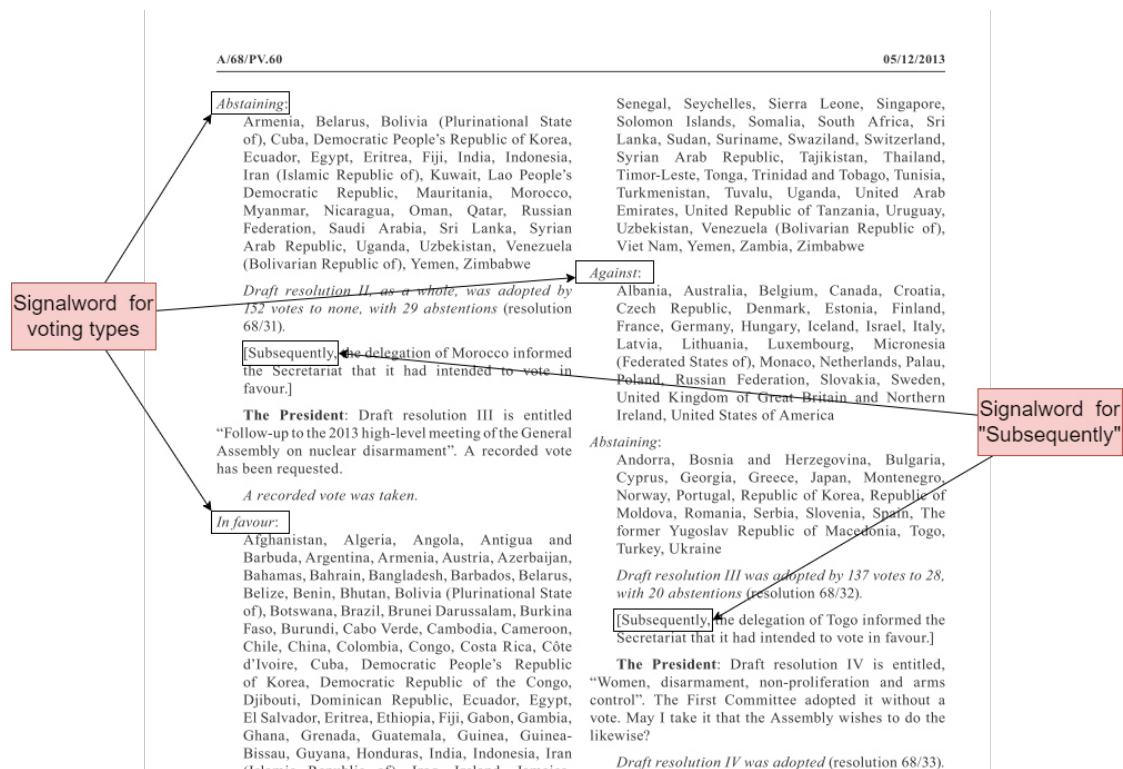


Figure 5.7: PV Signal word

5.4 Data Collection

For data generation, both R and Python were employed. Python was used to process the PV records in PDF format, extract the text, and identify the substantive blocks. R was then applied to prepare and structure the extracted data. The voting data differ from the draft resolution data in terms of their primary sources: while the voting data are derived from the PV records, the draft resolution data are based on entries in the UN Digital Library (UNDB). The process representation shown in Figure 5.8 illustrates the procedure for generating the voting data.

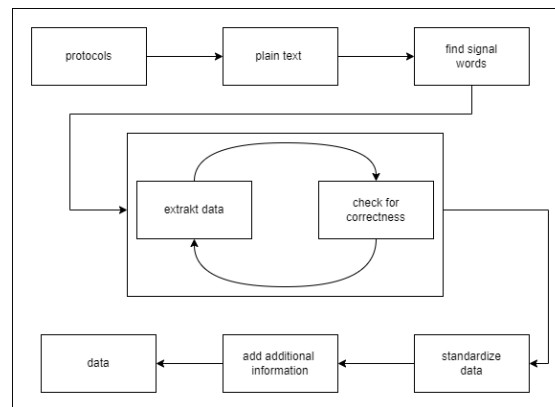


Figure 5.8: Voting data collection process

The generation of the voting data begins with reading the plenary records in PDF format. This step is carried out with a custom Python script that automatically ingests the documents, extracts the text, and segments it into logically connected blocks. The purpose of this preprocessing is to create a structured basis on which relevant content can be systematically identified. In the next step, signal words are detected that indicate substantively significant passages within the records. For this purpose, the previously segmented text is analyzed block by block. Blocks containing these signal words are flagged and extracted from the overall text. The extracted blocks then undergo an iterative validation process. Each identified phrase is checked to ensure that it indeed refers to the content of interest and that the block contains the required information. Misclassified phrases are discarded, while validated blocks are retained for further processing. This cycle continues until all filtered blocks have been either confirmed or excluded. Once validation is complete, the remaining data are standardized. This step ensures uniformity in the data structure and corrects inconsistent spellings, for example of country names or institutional designations. Standardization is essential to enable subsequent comparison and analysis without additional manual effort. Afterwards, the dataset

is enriched with supplementary information required for the full analytical context. These include, among others, additional sponsors and metadata obtained from the UNDB or derived from other processing steps. The process concludes with the provision of a final, structured, and substantively consistent dataset, which forms the foundation for the subsequent analysis.

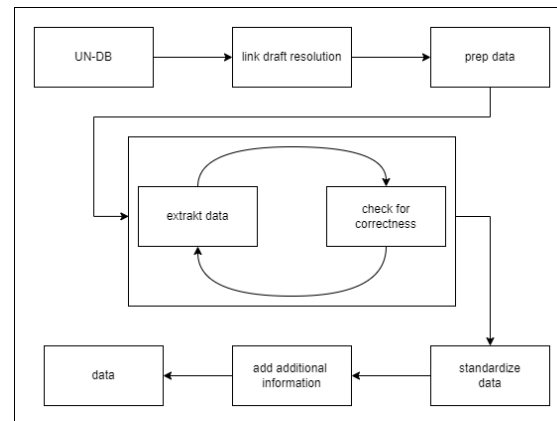


Figure 5.9: DR data collection process

The process illustrated in Figure 5.9 shows the **workflow for generating the draft resolution data**. The generation begins with extracting the relevant entries from the UN Digital Library. In the next step, individual draft resolutions are identified and thematically related documents are linked using their document symbols (e.g., A/71/L.46). Based on this, the linked draft resolutions are prepared for validation and targeted filtering of the relevant content. Subsequently, sponsor information is extracted, including *Initial Sponsors*, *Additional Sponsors*, and *On Behalf* entries. Where available, further contextual information is collected. This extraction is conducted partly automatically and partly manually to ensure that even complex or inconsistent entries are correctly recorded. The extracted information then undergoes an iterative validation process. Each entry is checked to ensure that it meets the analytical requirements. Misclassified entries are discarded, while valid information is retained for further processing. This cycle is repeated until all entries have been processed. After validation, the remaining data are standardized. Finally, the datasets are enriched with additional information relevant for the full analytical context.

Joining a group and UNGA session

Over the years, the number of members in the various groups of the UN General Assembly has frequently changed, as states have joined or left these groups, including the UNGA itself. However, it was often difficult to determine the exact time a state joined a group. When only the year of accession or founding was known, that year was assumed as the accession time and the first half of the year was taken in order to determine the session. If the month was specified, in the case of an accession in the first half of the year the same year was taken, whereas for an accession in the second half of the year the following year was assumed. In cases where no specific accession date was available for certain groups, it was assumed that the respective states were members throughout the entire study period, simplified, this is taken as mid-year (1st July), after which a new session is considered to follow the old session.

5.5 Additional information

During the process of data preparation, it became evident that the voting records in the General Assembly were not generated automatically but were instead entered manually. This is indicated in particular by recurring inconsistencies, such as incorrect or non-standardized spellings of country names, as well as designations that appear in different languages, outdated forms, or partially incomplete versions. Examples include variants such as Cote d'Ivoire, Cotê d'Ivoire, or Côte d'Ivoire, as well as non-English spellings in otherwise English-language documents (e.g., Équateur, Érythrée, Îles Marshall, Nouvelle-Zélande, Norvège, Saint Kitts-et-Nevis). In addition, there are orthographic errors and typos (e.g., Botswana appearing as Bostswana or Bostwana) as well as multiple variants of the same country, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina vs. Bosnie-Herzégovine, or Iran, Iran (Islamic Republic of), and Islamic Republic of Iran. Similar issues can be observed in the case of Lao People's Democratic Republic, which occurs in different shortened or erroneous forms, such as Lao People' Democratic Republic, Lao People's Democratic, and Lao People's Republic. Furthermore, country names also change over time, for example through official renaming, as in the case of Swaziland becoming Eswatini. These linguistic and orthographic discrepancies lead to the problem that exact search queries for country names often yield incomplete or misleading results. A systematic normalization of the data therefore proves to be a necessary prerequisite for consistent and valid analysis. In addition, it should be noted that some protocols may also contain so-called reassumptions, which further complicate the evaluation process.

Another issue arose with the provision of documents through the UN digital library. For instance, one file was published with an incorrect extension. Specifically, at <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3879352?v=pdf> (accessed on 02 January 2025), a document was made available with the extension “.bin” instead of the expected “.pdf”. However, by manually adjusting the extension to “.pdf,” the file could still be opened and processed without difficulty.

Difficulties also arose in the automated parsing of the PDF files. In particular, the technical extraction of textual content proved challenging due to faulty or missing encodings, inconsistent table structures, and partially captured text passages. In addition, structural inconsistencies between the protocols prevented uniform processing. In some cases, the protocols also contained incorrect or incomplete entries, which led to contradictions within the datasets and further impaired the reliability of the information.

During the filtering process, votes were also identified that could not be clearly assigned to a specific resolution. This resulted in additional uncertainties in the

A/76/PV.54 (Resumption 1)

24/12/2021

In favour:

Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen

Abstaining:

Algeria, Angola, Armenia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chad, Egypt, Fiji, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nepal, Oman, Paraguay, Philippines, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Suriname, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Zambia

The oral amendment to the draft resolution was rejected by 87 votes to 19, with 45 abstentions.

which, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/76/L.10, as orally amended in the Committee.

I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

Mr. Elmahs (Egypt): I am taking the floor on a point of order to seek clarification. During the adoption phase in the Fifth Committee, there were three votes related to the programme budget: an oral amendment related to the International, Impartial, and Independent Mechanism (IIIM), an oral amendment related to responsibility to protect and an oral amendment related to Human Rights Council revised estimates. For the sake of clarity, could we identify the items we are voting on in plenary one by one? We are now taking action on the three oral amendments just presented; we just voted on the oral amendment on the IIIM, and there are two other oral amendments upon which we have yet to vote. After those votes, we will proceed to a vote on the budget draft resolution as a whole.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United States, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

Mr. Kennedy (United States of America): I had the same question as the representative of Egypt. We just voted on the oral amendment on the International, Impartial, and Independent Mechanism in Syria. My notes showed that we were now voting on the oral amendment on the responsibility to protect. After that, we will vote on the oral amendment on the Gaza Commission. And then there would be a fourth vote on the draft resolution as a whole. I think there is some confusion on that. I have it in the order that we followed in the Fifth Committee: I, II, III and IV and then the vote on the whole. With the permission of the Acting President, I think following that same approach would help the Member States track what we are doing.

The Acting President: Further to the requests by Egypt and the United States of America for further clarification, I will give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. Ochalik (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): For clarification purposes, the oral amendment presented by the representative of the Russian Federation pertained to

Figure 5.11: PV, vote, A/C.5/78/L.40/REV.1

Voting Started		6/28/2024		3:36:09 PM		
Item 156 (b) - Oral amendment by Israel to A/78/929 DR (A/C.5/78/L.40/Rev.1)						
Financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon						
AFGHANISTAN	✗ CAMEROON	✗ FINLAND	KUWAIT	✗ NEPAL	✗ SAUDI ARABIA	✗ UKRAINE
✗ ALBANIA	✗ CANADA	✗ FRANCE	KYRGYZSTAN	✗ NETHERLAND...	✗ SENEGAL	✗ UNITED ARA...
✗ ALGERIA	✗ CENTRAL AF...	✗ GABON	✗ LAO PDR	✗ NEW ZEALAND	✗ SERBIA	✗ UNITED KING...
✗ ANDORRA	✗ CHAD	✗ GAMBIA	✗ LATVIA	✗ NICARAGUA	✗ SEYCHELLES	✗ UNITED REP.T...
✗ ANGOLA	✗ CHILE	✗ GEORGIA	✗ LEBANON	✗ NIGER	✗ SIERRA LEONE	✗ UNITED STAT...
✗ ANTIGUA-BA...	✗ CHINA	✗ GERMANY	✗ LESOTHO	✗ NIGERIA	✗ SINGAPORE	✗ URUGUAY
✗ ARGENTINA	✗ COLOMBIA	✗ GHANA	✗ LIBERIA	✗ NORTH MAC...	✗ SLOVAKIA	✗ UZBEKISTAN
✗ ARMENIA	✗ COMOROS	✗ GREECE	✗ LIBYA	✗ NORWAY	✗ SLOVENIA	✗ VANUATU
✗ AUSTRALIA	✗ CONGO	✗ GRENADA	✗ LIECHTENSTEIN	✗ OMAN	✗ SOLOMON IS...	✗ VENEZUELA
✗ AUSTRIA	✗ COSTA RICA	✗ GUATEMALA	✗ LITHUANIA	✗ PAKISTAN	✗ SOMALIA	✗ VIET NAM
✗ AZERBAIJAN	✗ COTE D'IVOIRE	✗ GUINEA	✗ LUXEMBOURG	✗ PALAU	✗ SOUTH AFRICA	✗ YEMEN
✗ BAHAMAS	✗ CROATIA	✗ GUINEA-BISS...	✗ MADAGASCAR	✗ PANAMA	✗ SOUTH SUDAN	✗ ZAMBIA
✗ BAHRAIN	✗ CUBA	✗ GUYANA	✗ MALAWI	✗ PAPUA NEW ...	✗ SPAIN	✗ ZIMBABWE
✗ BANGLADESH	✗ CYPRUS	✗ HAITI	✗ MALAYSIA	✗ PARAGUAY	✗ SRI LANKA	
✗ BARBADOS	✗ CZECHIA	✗ HONDURAS	✗ MALDIVES	✗ PERU	✗ SUDAN	
✗ BELARUS	✗ DEM PR OF K...	✗ HUNGARY	✗ MALI	✗ PHILIPPINES	✗ SURINAME	
✗ BELGIUM	✗ DEM REP OF ...	✗ ICELAND	✗ MALTA	✗ POLAND	✗ SWEDEN	
✗ BELIZE	✗ DENMARK	✗ INDIA	✗ MARSHALL IS...	✗ PORTUGAL	✗ SWITZERLAND	
✗ BENIN	✗ DJIBOUTI	✗ INDONESIA	✗ MAURITANIA	✗ QATAR	✗ SYRIAN ARA...	
✗ BHUTAN	✗ DOMINICA	✗ IRAN (ISLAMI...	✗ MAURITIUS	✗ REP OF KOREA	✗ TAJIKISTAN	
✗ BOLIVIA	✗ DOMINICAN ...	✗ IRAQ	✗ MEXICO	✗ REP OF MOL...	✗ THAILAND	
✗ BOSNIA-HER...	✗ ECUADOR	✗ IRELAND	✗ MICRONESIA...	✗ ROMANIA	✗ TIMOR-LESTE	
✗ BOTSWANA	✗ EGYPT	✗ ISRAEL	✗ MONACO	✗ RUSSIAN FED...	✗ TOGO	
✗ BRAZIL	✗ EL SALVADOR	✗ ITALY	✗ MONGOLIA	✗ RWANDA	✗ TONGA	
✗ BRUNEI DAR...	✗ EQUATORIAL...	✗ JAMAICA	✗ MONTENEGRO	✗ SAINT KITTS...	✗ TRINIDAD-TO...	
✗ BULGARIA	✗ ERITREA	✗ JAPAN	✗ MOROCCO	✗ SAINT LUCIA	✗ TUNISIA	
✗ BURKINA FASO	✗ ESTONIA	✗ JORDAN	✗ MOZAMBIQUE	✗ SAINT VINCE...	✗ TURKMENIST...	
✗ BURUNDI	✗ ESWATINI	✗ KAZAKHSTAN	✗ MYANMAR	✗ SAMOA	✗ TUVALU	
✗ CABO VERDE	✗ ETHIOPIA	✗ KENYA	✗ NAMIBIA	✗ SAN MARINO	✗ TURKIYE	
✗ CAMBODIA	✗ FIJI	✗ KIRIBATI	✗ NAURU	✗ SAO TOME-P...	✗ UGANDA	
✗ IN FAVOUR: 4		✗ AGAINST: 75		✗ ABSTENTION: 49		

Figure 5.12: Vote in the UNGA, UN-TV screenshot, A/C.5/78/L.40/REV.1

the various groups changed frequently over the years, as states joined or withdrew. In many cases, however, the exact timing of accession was not clearly identifiable. Where only the year of accession was known, this was taken as the reference point, with the first half of the year (up to 30 June) assumed as the date of entry in order to allow assignment to a specific session. If the month of accession was available, the following rule was applied: accessions in the first half of the year were attributed to the ongoing session, while accessions in the second half of the year were assigned to the subsequent session. If no specific date was available at all, it was assumed that the respective states were members throughout the entire observation period. For consistency, 1 July was defined as the reference date, ensuring a clear demarcation between one session and the next.

Agenda item 156 (continued)**Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East****(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon****Report of the Fifth Committee (A/78/929)****Draft resolution (A/C.5/78/L.40/Rev.1)**

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Committee in paragraph 12 of its report (A/78/929). The text of the draft resolution, for the time being, is contained in document A/C.5/78/L.40/Rev.1.

I now give the floor to the representative of Israel.

Mr. Cappon (Israel): The process of approving the budget of peacekeeping operations should not be done based on an unjustified biased approach against Israel, year after year. That biased approach has no place in the Fifth Committee and certainly does not make its work here more responsible and credible. Israel's position on this issue is well known, has not changed and will completely and utterly reject the false attempt to thwart the way the Committee is operating. The fourth

A REVOTED VOTE WAS TAKEN.

In favour:

Canada, Israel, Paraguay, United States of America

Against:

Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam, United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen

24-18914

7/9

A/78/PV.95

28/06/2024

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay

The draft oral amendment was rejected by 75 votes to 4, with 49 abstentions.

Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Yemen

Against:

Israel, United States of America

Abstaining:

Paraguay

Figure 5.13: PV, vote, A/C.5/78/L.40/REV.1

6 Historical mapping of different groups in the United Nations

6.1 Mapping of different Groups

State cooperation has a long history dating back to antiquity, when alliances and coalitions between empires and city-states were forged to pursue common goals or to ward off threats. With the end of the Second World War, however, the international order underwent a fundamental reorientation. The old international architectures, which were often based on colonial and imperial power structures, disintegrated, and a new state consciousness emerged. This led to endeavours that culminated in the founding of new international institutions and alliances. In mapping the different groups within the United Nations, it is not the depth of cooperation between states be it in the form of economic alliances, political coalitions, military collaborations, or currency unions, that is examined, but rather the overall interconnection of the countries. These interconnections have become far more extensive and complex, permeating all aspects of international life.

The United Nations, founded in 1945, demonstrated early on that groups were forming within the organisation that mirrored the power relations of international politics existing outside the UN. A central mechanism in this endeavour is the system of electoral groups, which originated from informal arrangements and evolved over the decades into formalised structures. (Thakur et al., 1999)

The principle of equitable geographical representation was adopted from the League of Nations, especially in key bodies such as the General Assembly and the Security Council (Thakur et al., 1999). Originally, the allocation of seats was based on informal agreements, the so called "Gentlemen's Agreements", which were strongly shaped by the geopolitical realities of the immediate post-war period. These early arrangements were dominated by the interests of the great powers and were not formalised, leading to imbalances in representation.

The formalisation of the electoral group system began in 1957, when the UN responded to the accession of new members, particularly from Asia, Africa and Latin America, who had entered the international stage through decolonisation (Thakur et al., 1999). Initially, the electoral groups developed on the basis of geographical proximity and shared interests. The formal recognition of the electoral groups was implemented to ensure that Member States were represented in key bodies such

as the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the advisory committees. In 1961, five regional groups were officially established, which to this day form the basis for geographical representation within the UN (Daws et al., 1999).

In order to be independent of the colonial powers, the Bandung Conference took place from 18 to 24 April 1955 in Indonesia and was a crystallisation point in the historical context that brought together 29 Asian and African nations. This conference is regarded as the first major gathering of countries from the Global South, which discussed their experiences under colonial rule and deliberated on future cooperation. Important agenda items of the conference were peace, cooperation, resistance against colonialism and neocolonialism, as well as support for self-determination and national sovereignty. These topics led to a stance against imperialism and supported the global decolonisation movements in the subsequent decades. (N'Dri, 2015)

The ten guiding principles of the Bandung Conference (Asian-African Conference, 1955), adopted in 1955, form the foundation for the relations between the Asian and African countries. The conference was not only a forum to debate colonial issues, but also laid the groundwork for future international cooperation. (Assie-Lumumba, 2015)

A central aspect highlighted during the conference was the right of each nation to defend itself, either individually or collectively, in accordance with the UN Charter. This directly refers to the principles of the UN Charter, which recognise the sovereign right of every state to defend itself against aggression and to preserve its territorial integrity. This commitment was reaffirmed at the conference to ensure that the newly independent states could safeguard their sovereignty and security. In the spirit of the Bandung Conference, anti-colonial and colonial ideals received a boost, ideals that were defining themes of international politics in the 1950s and 1960s.

This conference led in 1961 to the establishment of the NAM. The spirit of this conference also inspired the formation of regional organizations such as the Organisation of African Unity in 1963, and later the African Union in 2002. In this spirit, the first UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva in 1964 saw the creation of the G77, aimed at promoting the economic interests of developing countries in international negotiations. The G77 comprised 77 Member States at its inception and has since grown to include over 130 states. The G77 differs from the NAM movement in that it focuses primarily on economic issues and the advancement of developing countries, whereas the NAM pursues a broader political agenda, centred on neutrality during the Cold War and resistance to the influences of the superpowers. (Assie-Lumumba, 2015)

The conference was not only historically significant but also continues to serve as

the foundation for ongoing cooperation among countries of the Global South. It also led to the creation of a formalised organization dealing with international law, namely AALCO. The respect for the right of every nation to act in accordance with the UN Charter was a key principle reaffirmed at the Bandung Conference and continues to play a central role in international relations today. (Assie-Lumumba, 2015)

Guiding principles from the final communiqué of the Bandung Conference (1955)

1. Respect for fundamental human rights and for the purposes and principles of the charter of the United Nations.
2. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations.
3. Recognition of the equality of all races and of the equality of all nations, large and small.
4. Abstention from intervention or interference in the internal affairs of another country.
5. Respect for the right of each nation to defend singly or collectively, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
- 6a. Abstention from the use of arrangements of collective defence to serve the particular interests of any of the big powers.
- 6b. Abstention by any country from exerting pressures on other countries.
7. Refraining from acts or threats of aggression or the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any country.
8. Settlement of all international disputes by peaceful means, such as negotiation, conciliation, arbitration or judicial settlement as well as other peaceful means of the 'parties' own choice, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
9. Promotion of mutual interests and co-operation.
10. Respect for justice and international obligations.

(Asian-African Conference, 1955)

Decolonisation between 1963 and 1965 led to significant adjustments within the United Nations, particularly through the admission of numerous new Member States from Asia and Africa. This resulted in an expansion of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The Security Council received four additional non-permanent seats, which were allocated among newly created electoral groups to accommodate the growing membership. Electoral groups became a central instrument in the allocation of non-permanent seats in the Security Council and positions in ECOSOC, ensuring that all regions are involved in the key decisions of the UN (Daws et al., 1999).

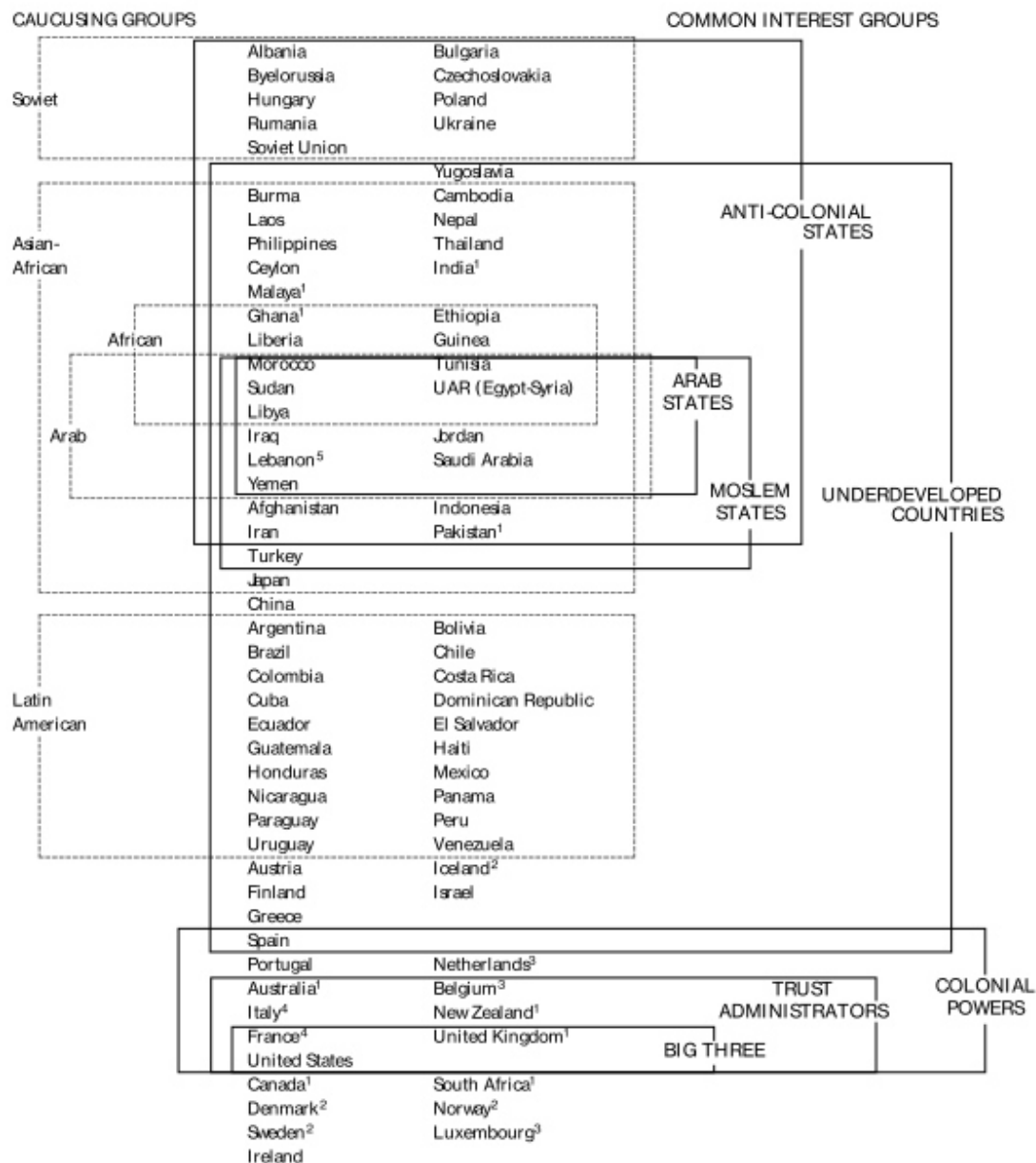
The African Group represents the African continent and, with currently 54 members, forms the largest regional group during this period. In the spirit of the Bandung Conference, its formation reflects the anti-colonial and decolonial ideals that were central themes of international politics in the 1950s and 1960s. Within the UN, the membership of the African Group is almost identical to that of the AU. The Asia-Pacific Group, originally founded as the “Asia Group”, was later expanded into the Asia-Pacific Group, a development that arose as the UN welcomed new members, particularly the island states in the Pacific.

The Asia-Pacific Group includes states from the Arabian Peninsula to the Pacific islands. The Eastern European Group emerged during the Cold War as a representation of the Eastern Bloc states or the states surrounding the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe. Its membership grew following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the independence of several Eastern European states. The Latin American and Caribbean Group formed its own group, which can be traced back to the “League of States”, in which they were already regarded as a distinct region. The Western European and Others Group includes, in addition to Western European states, extra-European members such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand. It can be seen as a coordination mechanism for the Western industrialised countries. The creation of these groups evolved over time in order to ensure the geographical distribution of positions within the UN.

It should be noted that in the analysis of group affiliations within the UNGA, the predominant geographical majority of a group is used as a criterion. This serves to enable a clear and consistent allocation to the regional groups, even if individual states, such as Cyprus, belong to both the WGEO and the WGAPS. By prioritising the majority affiliation, overlaps can be reduced and the classification of groups made clearer. However, this focus on geographical majorities also makes it evident that the UN electoral groups adhere more to historical than to current geopolitical realities. They reflect the political and geographical conditions at the time of their formation, while today’s global order is shaped by dynamic regional and Xregional cooperations. This creates a discrepancy between the formal structures of the electoral groups and the actual political and economic interdependencies of the states.

The first illustration 6.1, which depicts the UN structure and group affiliations in 1959, reflects a geopolitical order deeply influenced by the aftermath of the Second World War and the colonial past. UN membership was limited to states recognised as sovereign at that time. The focus was on Western industrialised states, the socialist countries of Eastern Europe, and a comparatively small number of independent states from Africa and Asia. Regional groupings, so called caucuses, such as the Western and Eastern European ones, mirror the ideological division of

Table 1: Caucusing and Geographic Distribution Groups at the Start of the XIVth General Assembly Session in 1959



1. Member of Commonwealth caucusing group
2. Member of Scandinavian caucusing group
3. Member of both the Benelux and Western European caucusing groups
4. Member of Western European caucusing group
5. Lebanon might not be considered a "Moslem" state because the population is about equally divided between Moslems and Christians, with a slight Christian majority.

Comparison of membership in common interest groups and caucusing groups

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Figure 6.1: Thakur et al., 1999



Figure 6.2: Mapping International Groups

the Cold War, while other geographical regions, particularly the African continent, were scarcely represented. This was mainly because many African countries were still under colonial rule. The graphic 6.1 illustrates the beginnings of an international order in which the UN served as a stage for the political and economic interests of its members. Early signs of the formation of groups some of which still exist today, become visible. These groupings were motivated both by regional considerations and power politics, reflecting the geopolitical realities of the time. The term "Caucusing groups" 6.1 is defined as groups that possess a form of formal organization.

"The term caucusing group may be applied to any group of member states in the Assembly which has some degree of formal organization, holds fairly regular meetings, and is concerned with substantive issues and related procedural matters before the sessions of the General Assembly The caucusing groups are the main political-interest groups that operate in the Assembly and are involved in behind-the-scene negotiations on most of the crucial issues.,,"
(Thomas Hovet, 1960)

There were eight caucus groups, including the Western European, Scandinavian, Latin American, Commonwealth, Benelux, African, Arab, and Asian-African Groups. In addition, there was a group of states that did not belong to any of these groupings, including Finland, Yugoslavia, China, Austria, Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Israel, and the United States. The allocation of seats was based on a so-called "Gentlemen's Agreement", with initial formal regulations for the distribution already established, such as A/RES/1192(XII) from 1957, which regulated the election of the 13th Vice-President of the UN General Assembly (United Nations, 1957). Even at that time, a tendency towards the division of geographical groups in accordance with Article 23 of the UN Charter, which stipulated a "just geographical distribution", became apparent (UN Charter, Chapter 5, Article 23, Paragraph 1, 1945). The caucus groups illustrated this division and served as a precursor to the later regional groupings.

In comparison to the graphic from 2020 6.2, clear differences are evident. Some of the regional groups that existed in the 1950s remain active today, such as the Arab League, the Council of Europe, NATO, and the Organisation of American States. Others have evolved or been reformed, such as the Organisation of Central American States, now known as SICA (Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana), and the Nordic Council (established in 1952), which continues to function as a significant regional platform. Security and defence alliances such as the Western European Union existed until 2011, before being integrated into other structures.

Moreover, interest groups like the Arab States or the South East Asian Prime Ministers, which may have served as precursors to ASEAN (founded in 1961), have also maintained their relevance to this day.

In the 1960s, the structure of the UN was still characterised by a limited membership, primarily focused on already independent states. Many former colonies, particularly in Africa and Asia, were either in the process of decolonisation or had just gained their independence. This resulted in a comparatively small number of regional groupings that reflected the geopolitical realities of that time (Thomas Hovet, 1960). In contrast, the 2020 graphic shows a vastly expanded number of groups active in the UN General Assembly, with almost universal participation by the global community. This development highlights the impact of decolonisation and the admission of numerous new members into the UN. Regions such as Africa and Asia are now much more strongly represented, leading to a fundamental reorientation of the balance of power within the electoral groups. At the same time, the originally existing caucus groups underwent significant changes to meet the new geopolitical realities. The development of electoral groups shows a clear transformation from the 1960s to 2020, shaped by geopolitical shifts and institutional advancements. In the 1960s, the electoral groups were primarily motivated by geographical and political considerations. There existed four main groups: Africa and Asia, Latin America, Western Europe, and Eastern Europe. This structure reflected the bipolar world order of the Cold War. Particularly striking was the pronounced polarisation between the Western and Eastern European groups, which represented the ideological opposition between the USA and the Soviet Union. While Western groups were dominated by the interests of the former colonial powers, many African and Asian states were just beginning their journey towards independence. UN membership at that time comprised approximately 100 states, with the influence of the colonial powers remaining disproportionately strong.

The electoral groups primarily served to allocate the non-permanent seats on the Security Council and in ECOSOC, based on the principle of "just geographical distribution" as stipulated in Article 23 of the UN Charter. To accommodate the growing number of new Member States, the Security Council was expanded by four non-permanent seats in the 1960s (A/RES/1991 (XVIII) (United Nations, 1964). These additional seats were distributed regionally, in order to particularly take into account the increasing membership from Africa and Asia. However, the function of the electoral groups was rudimentary, as their activities were largely limited to providing organizational support.

With the ongoing process of decolonisation and the admission of new independent states, the dynamics within the UN changed. The electoral groups diversified, and new regional and supranational structures emerged. Groups such as the G77 and the Non-Aligned Movement gained increasing importance by articulating the

interests of developing countries on the international stage. At the same time, regional organizations such as the European Community, which later evolved into the European Union, became established. These institutions significantly influenced the coordination within the Western group and strengthened its cohesion. By 2020, the electoral groups exhibited greater differentiation and institutionalisation. The number of UN Member States had increased to 193 (Table: 6.1), adding to the complexity and diversity of interests within the organisation. In 1971, the Asia–Africa Group was formally split, A/RES/2847(XXVI) (United Nations, 1972), resulting in Africa and Asia, as distinct geographical regions, gaining significantly stronger representation.

The EU now represents a significant proportion of the members in the UN's regional electoral groups. Within the WGEO (Western European and Others Group), 59 of the members are EU States, while in the WGEES (Western European, Eastern European, and European States) 37 of the members belong to the EU. In addition, Cyprus, as an EU member, is formally part of the AP (Asia-Pacific) Group. It should be noted that the WGEO also includes states that are not geographically located in Europe, such as the USA, Canada, New Zealand and Israel, which underscores the transregional and political orientation of this group. The EU additionally overlays several historical and contemporary political groupings. These include, among others, the Benelux States Group, the Nordic Council, and the European Communities, from which the EU eventually emerged. The European Communities, consisting of the European Coal and Steel Community, the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community, formed the institutional foundation that was further developed into the European Union by the Maastricht Treaty in 1993. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Eastern European Group experienced dynamics that brought new challenges. It became the repository for the newly formed states and expanded its influence, particularly in terms of filling key positions (Thakur et al., 1999). The table 6.1 shows the development of the composition of the Security Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations from 1945 to 2020. It illustrates that the number of permanent members of the Security Council remained constant at five, while the non-permanent members were increased from six to ten in 1965. In parallel, the total number of UNGA Member States rose from 51 in 1945 to 193 in 2020 due to decolonisation and the accession of new states, which has led to an imbalance in the Security Council and is reflected in the ongoing work of the Permanent Working Group on Security Council reforms A/RES/48/26 (United Nations, 1992).

"Some things have changed since the end of the Cold War. First, I found considerable evidence of an emerging "counterhegemonic voting bloc." Whereas the United States and its Western allies occupy one pole of the main dimension of conflict, the other pole is occupied by a group of rising powers (China and India) and some other countries (for example, Iraq, Iran, Libya, and North Korea) that challenge the neoliberal world order and have been involved in clashes with the West, particularly the United States
(Voeten, 2000)

Year	1945	1965	2020
Permanent Security Council Members	5	5	5
Non-Permanent Security Council Members	6	10	10
Number of UNGA Members	51	118	193

Table 6.1: Numbers of Security Council and UNGA Members over time

The comparison of the two graphics 6.1 and 6.2 illustrates how the UN group structure has evolved over time from a structure that was heavily defined by geographical and political constraints to a more dynamic and diverse organization. While in the 1950s, regional groupings such as the Western and Eastern European groups (Cold War) or the Latin American electoral group were primarily defined by geography and colonial power structures, the 2020 graphic shows a more institutionalised and expanded form of regionality. Groups such as the AU, which evolved from the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and the Arab League demonstrate how historical structures have been further developed to reflect the geopolitical realities and the requirements for international cooperation.

Furthermore, the graphic shows that certain structures dating back to the 1950s, such as NAM or the G77, continue to play a significant role, having adapted to the changed geopolitical circumstances. These developments are an expression of a new form of regionality that is oriented not only geographically, but also functionally and thematically. At the same time, it becomes clear that supranational actors such as the EU play a central role by overcoming geographical and political fragmentation and acting as a coordinating body for multiple Member States.

The graphic 6.2 also shows that the UN today is not only shaped by national interests, but increasingly serves as a venue where old and new regional as well as cross-regional structures overlap. This underscores that the dynamics of global politics are not solely based on bilateral relations, but are reinforced by multilateral cooperation in an institutional context such as the UN.

6.2 Short History of Selected Groups

RGLAC (Regional Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries): Founded in the 1960s within the framework of the UNGA, RGLAC represents the interests of Latin American and Caribbean states. The group acts as a regional coordination centre within the UN and pursues the goal of strengthening regional concerns in global politics.

MERCOSUR (Mercado Común del Sur): Founded in 1991 by the Treaty of Asunción, MERCOSUR includes Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay as its founding members. The organization pursues economic integration and free trade in South America, although its development has been influenced by political tensions and economic crises.

OAS (Organisation of American States): The OAS was established in 1948 in Bogotá, Colombia, and serves as a political platform for the countries of the American continent. The aim of the OAS is to promote democracy, human rights, and economic cooperation. It is an evolution of the Pan-American Union and emerged in response to the geopolitical challenges of the Cold War.

Arab League and Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC): The Arab League was established in 1945 to promote the unity and cooperation of Arab states. The OIC was founded in 1969 after the arson attack on the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem triggered a wave of Islamic solidarity. The OIC represents the interests of the Islamic world in global forums, A/73/L.45 (United Nations, 2018).

Andean Community (AC): The Andean Community was established in 1969 through the Agreement of Cartagena. The organization comprises Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, and aims at economic integration and cooperation. Chile was initially a member but withdrew in 1976.

CARICOM and SICA: CARICOM was established in 1973 to promote regional integration and economic cooperation in the Caribbean. SICA (Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana) evolved from the Organization of Central American States (ODECA) and was officially founded in 1991 to foster political and economic stability in Central America.

OAU and AU: The Organization of African Unity (OAU) was founded in 1963 in Addis Ababa to promote African solidarity and the liberation from colonialism. In 2002, it was transformed into the African Union with an expanded mandate for economic integration and conflict resolution. Within the AU, sub-organizations such as ECOWAS (1975), ECCAS (1983), EAC (2000) and SADC (1992) operate as regional blocs.

Bandung Group, NAM and G77: The Bandung Conference of 1955 in Indonesia brought together 29 Asian and African states to promote decolonisation and anti-imperialism. From this, in 1961, the Non-Aligned Movement emerged, founded in Belgrade and adopting a neutral stance towards the superpowers during the Cold War. In 1964, the G77 was established in Geneva, focusing on the economic advancement of developing countries.

European Union: Launched as a peace project after the Second World War, European integration began with the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1951 and the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1957. The EU in its current form emerged in 1993 with the entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty. It has developed into one of the most influential supranational alliances and pursues economic integration, political stability, and a common foreign and security policy. With its expansion to 27 Member States, the EU reflects the overcoming of the bipolar world order and the integration of former Eastern Bloc countries.

*"...Pacific Asian states have shown a consistently high level of cohesion throughout the whole period 1974–2008, which the EU has only begun to emulate in recent years. This does indeed suggest a coherent regional identity on the global stage and it adds a new dimension to the existing general literature on the extent of regional integration within and across the region.,,
(Ferdinand, 2014a)*

7 Analysis of group behavior in the UNGA

7.1 Group Size

The figure 7.1 shows a heatmap that depicts the development of the membership numbers of the groups during the sessions (Sessions 55 to 75). The X-axis is labelled with the individual sessions, while the Y-axis represents the different groups. Alongside the group names, three numbers are indicated in parentheses:

- First number: Number of members in the first session (Session 55)
- Middle number: Average number of members over all sessions
- Last number: Number of members in the last session (Session 75)

According to the membership numbers, the typology of the group is indicated with an X or R. "X" stands for Xregional and "R" for Regional. The groups are arranged based on the average membership number. These details provide additional context, as they illustrate the development of group size over the study period, for instance in terms of the fact that larger groups may potentially exhibit a greater internal diversity of opinions than smaller ones. The colour scale of the heatmap ranges from yellow (high values) through intermediate shades to blue-violet or dark violet (low values). White areas indicate that the respective group did not yet exist in the corresponding session. In addition, the heatmap contains further markings:

- An "O" (Observer) indicates the session in which a group has obtained permanent observer status
- An "F" (Founding) marks the founding moment of the respective session of a group
- A single asterisk "*" indicates that the group has introduced at least one "On Behalf" Draft Resolution
- Double asterisks "**" denote the UNGA as a reference group

From a global perspective, it becomes apparent that the majority of groups have fewer than 50 members, which can be seen in the Heatmap 7.1 and is also recognisable in the Boxplot 7.3 (This boxplot refers to Session 75). 75% of the groups have fewer than 54 members (Session 75). In comparison to Session 55, there was an increase of 1 member in the 75% quantile. The median likewise showed a slight increase from 22 (Session 55) to 22,5 (Session 75). Large groups with more than half of the UNGA members are rather the exception. The largest group that brings in an "On Behalf" DR is the G77C with 133 members (Session 75). The largest groups that have recently joined are called IACA and AIIB. They experienced brisk growth immediately after their founding and shortly afterwards also received the "Permanent Observer Status". AC, ICGLR, GUAM and PA-IAWSA constitute the smallest groups, while AC is the group that was founded before the study period and received the "Observer Status". It can be observed that the average group size (Darstellung 7.2) has increased over time by about 3 members throughout the study period. Based on the quantiles (Tabelle 7.1), the group sizes for all quantiles up to and including 75% remain nearly constant, whereas significant outliers can be observed among the largest groups, with an increase from 179 to 189. In Session 57, 3 new groups with observer status were

Percent	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
Session 55	3	10	22	53	179
Session 75	4.00	11.25	22.50	54.00	189.00

Table 7.1: Group size quantil, Session 55 und 75

admitted: IPU, AsDB and PPD. Especially the IPU, with its 179 members, led to a significant increase in the average number of members (Figure 7.2). A noticeable bend in the course of the average group size can be observed in Session 62. This results from the admission of six further groups with observer status: EDB, CSTO, RECSASEC, CICMA, ILAI and ECC. The groups EDB and CSTO, each with a constant number of nine members, belong to the smallest. Furthermore, it becomes apparent that organisations such as IACA or AIIB experience strong membership growth after their founding, which continues even beyond receiving observer status. It can be seen that the group size does not change markedly during the study period, but rather individual groups influence the average. It should be noted that Laatikainen explains that with an increasing number of members, the group's strength grows, yet simultaneously finding common positions becomes more difficult. (Laatikainen, 2020)

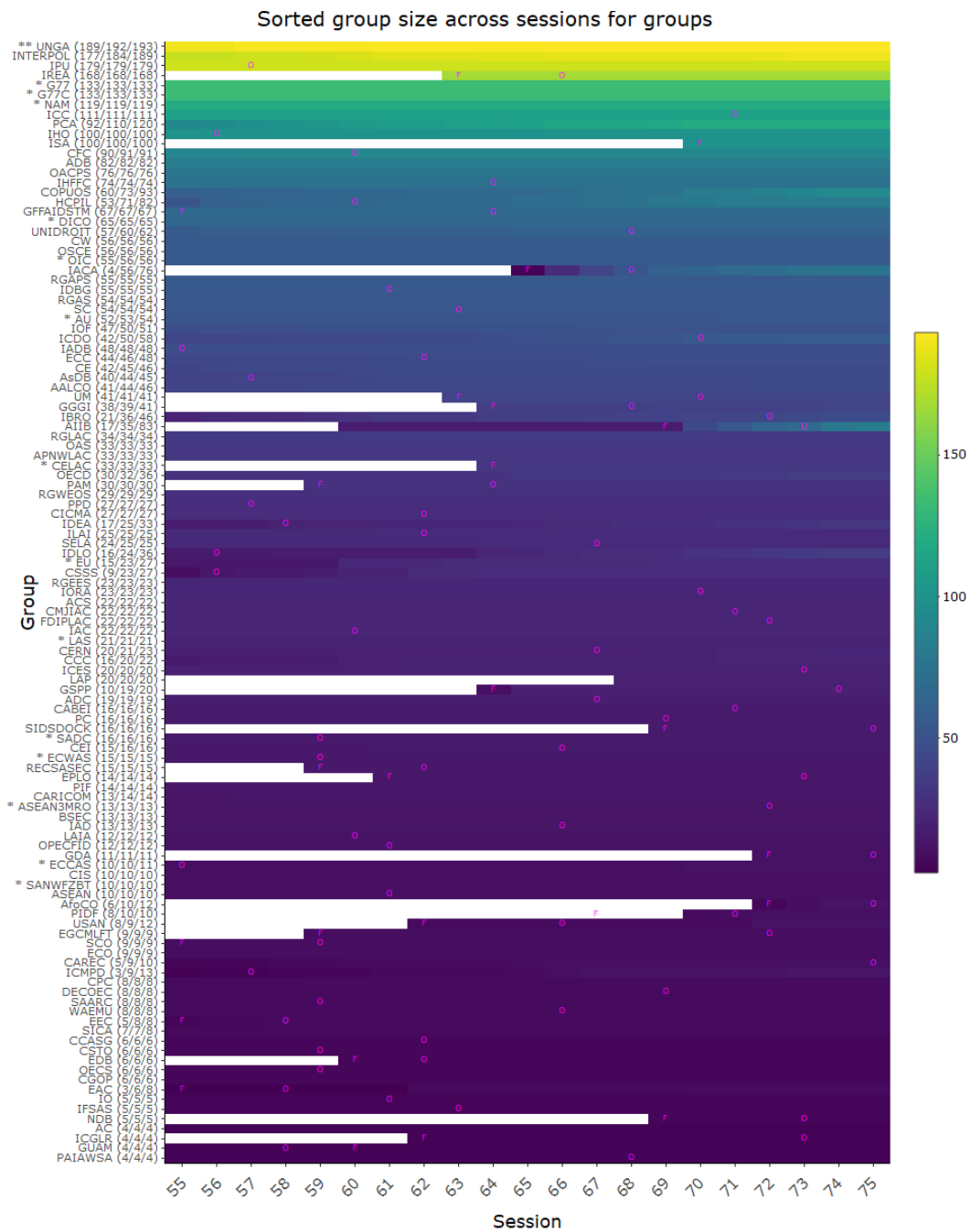


Figure 7.1: Groupe size over time

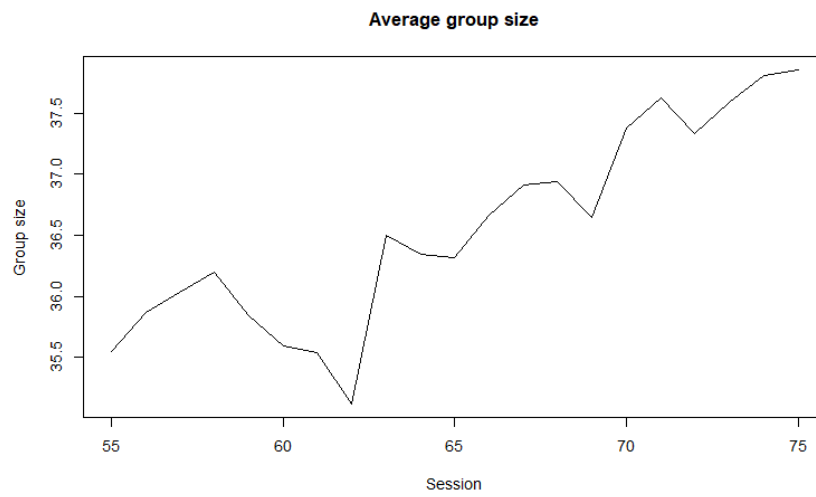


Figure 7.2: Average group size over time

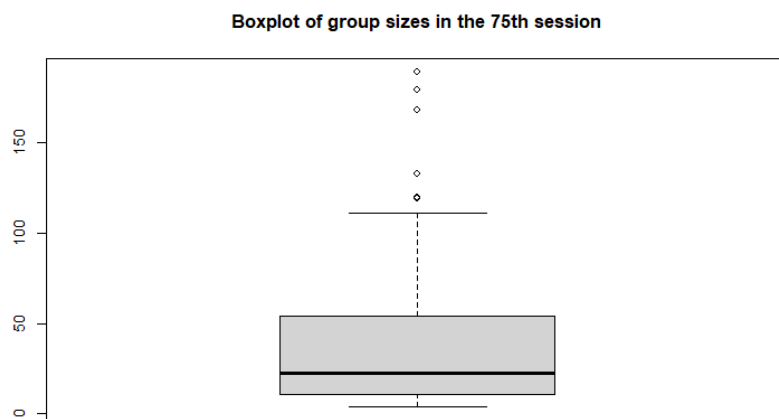


Figure 7.3: Distribution of group size in the 75 session

7.2 Darft Reslution

For the investigation of the variable, the number of submitted DR by place of submission is first considered (Table 7.2). Subsequently, the number of initial DR contributions (Figure 7.4) and additional sponsors (Figure 7.6) per group are analysed. This is followed by examining the values normalised by group size (Figures 7.5 and 7.7). Finally, the average share of members per DR per group is presented as a heatmap (Heatmap 7.8 and 7.8). To enhance interpretative clarity, a threshold of three was established. A draft resolution is attributed to a group only when at least three of its members comprising initial sponsors and additional sponsors are involved (7.4, 7.5, 7.6 and 7.7). Not all DR are introduced directly in the UNGA (Table 7.2). The majority are dealt with in the various committees: C1 (Disarmament & International Security), C2 (Economic & Financial), C3 (Social, Humanitarian & Cultural), C4 (Special Political & Decolonization), C5 (Administrative & Budgetary) and C6 (Legal). Over time, the smallest number of resolutions was introduced in C4 and C6. While C3 and C2 recorded rising numbers during the study period, C1 remained largely constant. C5, however, showed a decline. Overall, no significant change in the total number of DR per session over time can be identified. The number of submitted DR fluctuated between 380 and 484, with a tendency towards more submitted DR. A challenge lies in attributing a DR to a group. In this context, one can distinguish between DR submitted directly by UNGA members and those drafted "On Behalf" of a group. While DR with "On Behalf" status can be clearly assigned to a group, the attribution becomes more difficult for DR introduced without this status. A DR does not necessarily have to be submitted by a group. It can be assumed that on the one hand, in cases where no agreement on a joint "On Behalf" DR is reached within a group, individual states may decide to introduce a DR independently of the group or with the support of other states, and on the other hand, it can be presumed that members seek support for a DR within groups. Furthermore, it becomes apparent which groups are supported by their members. In the figures relating to the number of DR (Figure 7.4) and Additional Sponsors (Figure 7.6), a DR was only assigned to a group if at least three member of the group was involved as an introducer or Additional Sponsor. As a result, a DR can be assigned to multiple groups. The "On Behalf" DR were attributed to the respective group. Both the median and the average (purple bar) are shown. The groups are sorted by the average over the entire study period. The majority of groups with observer status did not introduce any "On Behalf" DR. In total, 15 groups were taken into account, with G77 and G77C viewed separately (4 On-Behalf DR were introduced by G77 without China). Groups without permanent observer status, such as DICO (a group based at UN level), are also included in the analysis. It becomes evident

that larger groups have more introduced DR than smaller ones, which is trivial. Because larger groups overlap smaller groups, the draft resolutions submitted by smaller groups are attributed to the larger groups, and vice versa. Due to its size, G77C exceeds the reference group UNGA in the total number of "On Behalf" DR (Figure 7.4). Moreover, G77C is the only group that surpasses the 250 mark in the number of DR during the study period. This results from including the "On Behalf" DR. The difference between G77 and G77C arises because G77C introduced over 1000 "On Behalf" DR during the study period, whereas G77 introduced only 4 DR. Adding these DR explains the discrepancy. From this, one can see that G77C has more DR than UNGA, and that INTERPOL is on a par with UNGA, while IRA and IPU, as well as ICC and PCA, draw close to UNGA. It should be noted that smaller groups are overshadowed by large ones, for instance large regional groups like the AU or cross-regional groups such as G77C. The interpretation of large groups is more challenging than that of smaller groups. The large groups can be used as a reference for the groups they overshadow.

The analysis of group size in relation to the introduced DR, shown in Figure 7.5, demonstrates that dividing by group size (depending on the respective session and the DR introduced) alters the ranking of the members. It becomes evident that members of smaller groups tend to have a higher number of DR than those of larger groups. This pattern suggests that group size could influence the individual DR. This observation indicates that the respective UNGA members, in their composition, are inclined to introduce a certain number of DR. This could imply that there is a higher importance of cooperation in these groups, leading to more frequent joint initiatives. Furthermore, it can be assumed that in large groups, a topic affecting multiple Member States is often introduced only once as a DR. In smaller groups, on the other hand, individual DR are introduced more frequently, since the number of members is smaller and thus more individual initiatives arise, contributing to group efficiency. The quantile range decreases with increasing group size, particularly in the normalised representation in Figures 7.5 and 7.7. The graphic "Sorted count sponsoring across sessions for groups" 7.8 shows how high the proportion of group members was that jointly introduced a DR if at least one member of the group introduced a DR; the same applies to additional sponsoring 7.9. It becomes apparent that CCASG, with its 6 members, has the highest average value for DR over the study period. The EU and congruent groups such as CERN, CEI, CE and EPLO exhibit a very strong mutual overlap both in terms of DR and AS. The groups around the EU and RGWEOS are almost congruent and form a distinct bloc in the DR heatmap. Group size does not appear to be a relevant factor for the heatmap values. With regard to South American groups, it becomes apparent, in broad terms, that as group size increases, the average value declines, listed here in ascending order: AC, USAN, FDIPLAC, ADC,

IAC, CMJIAC, LAP, ILAI, RGLAC, APNWLAC, CELAC. Although the Central American and Caribbean groups are connected to South America (especially concerning RGLAC), they form their own cluster with OECS, SICA and CAREC, while CARICOM and ACS lag behind in this context. It can be assumed that when the value for DR is high, the value for AD is lower. However, this does not apply to the groups associated with Europe. It emerges that the EU and related groups, given their size, support each other significantly in terms of DR (high cooperation). This can also be inferred for Eastern European groups such as ICMPD or GUAM when it comes to DR and AD. Regarding the Central Asian region, IFSAS is an outlier. CW exhibits very little accord, which can be traced back to its origin in the Commonwealth (Great Britain). Historical developments have meant that no greater cooperation has emerged, underscoring the low level of coordination and the lack of interaction within this group, and indicating that the historical perspective is a relevant factor for importance of cooperation. Another aspect concerns the AU and its subgroups that have acquired observer status. One might initially assume that the AU operates more efficiently in introducing DR. However, the data show that regional groups (regional groupings with observer status in the UNGA) prefer to introduce their own DR. This tendency could suggest that regional groups display a higher importance of cooperation than the AU, an observation that is reflected in the DR and AS heatmaps. The analysis of regional UN groupings makes it evident that RGAPS, as the largest regional group, exhibits comparatively the lowest importance of cooperation values. In contrast, RGEES and RGWEOS show very favourable values together, pointing to structural and functional differences among the various regional associations.

The heatmap, the DR Heatmap 7.8 compared with the AS Heatmap 7.9, shows that there has been a change in initial sponsoring and additional sponsoring. From around the 70/71 session onwards, the number of members per group who jointly introduced a DR has decreased, whereas the number of members per group involved in AD has increased. DR do not provide any information about content-related quality; this would need to be examined separately.

Place of Introduction	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
General Assembly	113	94	97	81	84	67	79	63	112	83	102	71	95	67	100	70	95	76	124	99	148
First Committee (1C)	71	62	71	70	78	77	63	60	61	63	70	58	61	60	70	67	77	66	76	73	69
Second Committee (2C)	60	74	86	79	78	79	76	66	63	78	78	87	72	78	72	82	70	79	89	99	73
Third Committee (3C)	76	98	90	91	89	88	69	101	94	85	95	105	96	126	99	138	87	98	91	99	103
Fourth Committee (4C)	21	18	21	26	24	22	24	17	18	20	18	15	21	22	20	23	18	26	21	17	15
Fifth Committee (C5)	88	90	93	87	75	62	68	53	62	54	50	56	53	59	61	52	49	53	50	52	48
Sixth Committee (6C)	18	23	26	19	25	14	18	20	16	19	19	25	18	25	19	17	30	23	26	21	20
Sum	447	459	484	453	453	409	397	380	426	402	432	417	416	437	441	449	426	421	477	460	476

Table 7.2: Number of draft resolutions and place of introduction across all sessions

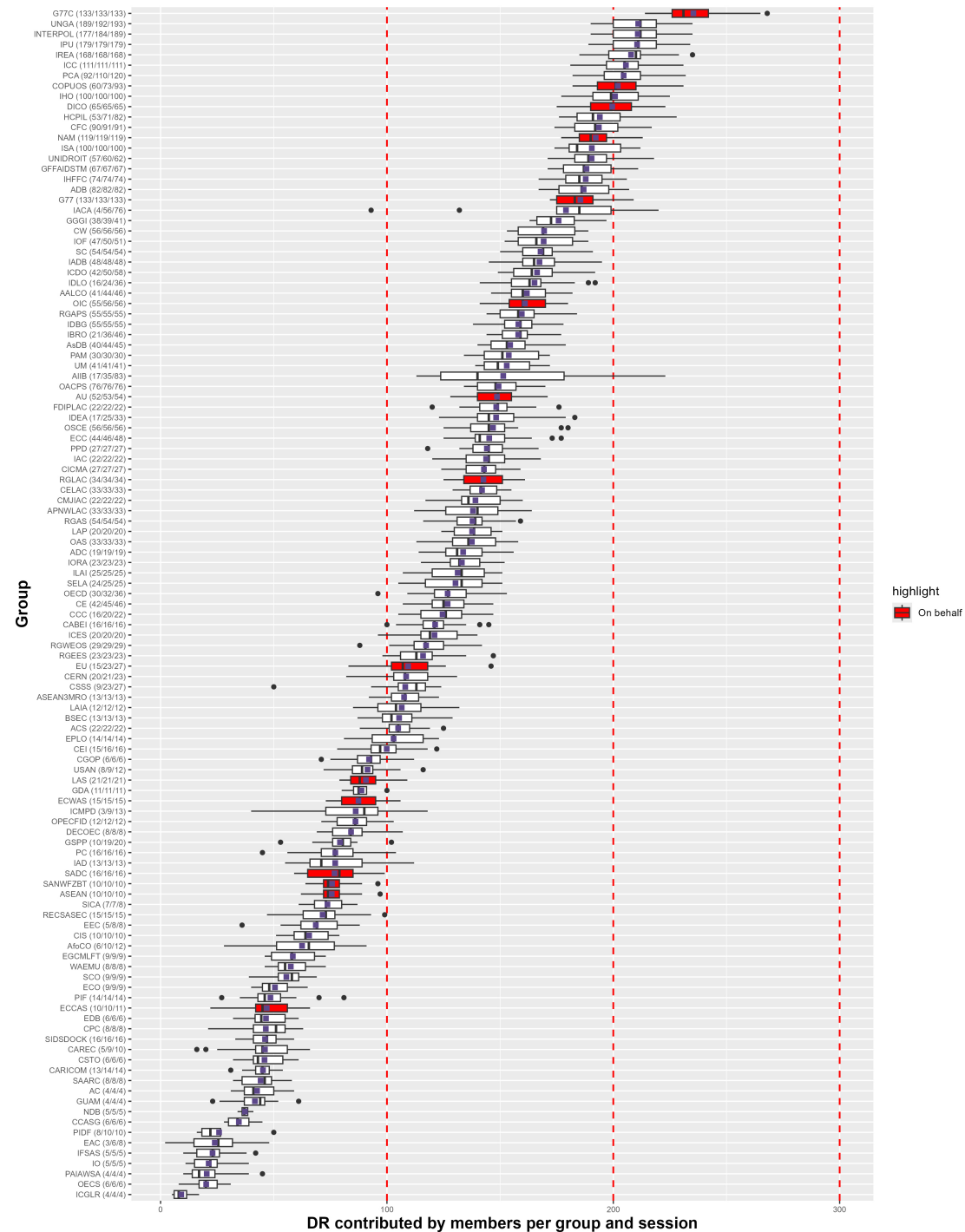


Figure 7.4: DR contributed by members per group and session

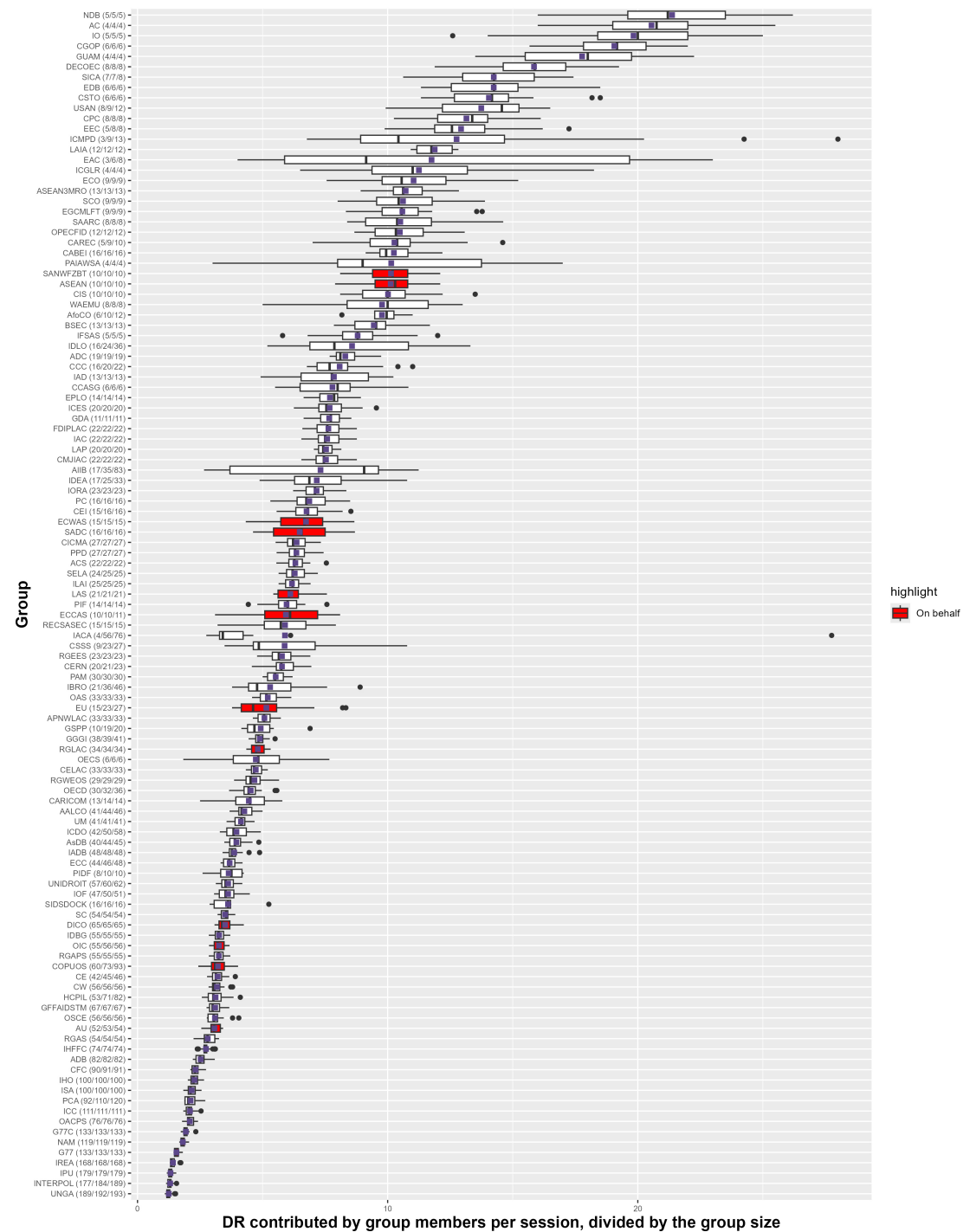


Figure 7.5: DR contributed by group members per session, divided by the group size

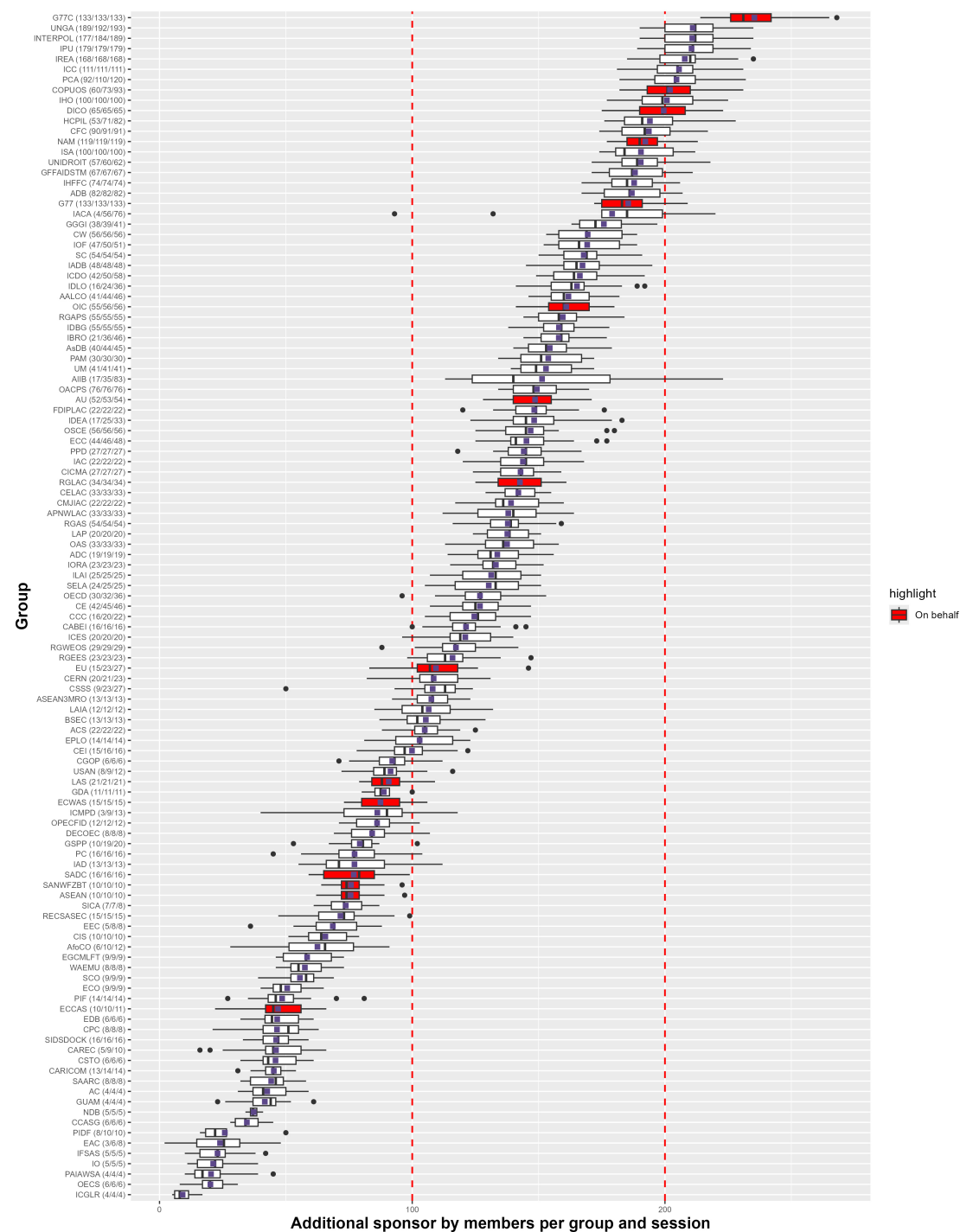


Figure 7.6: Additional sponsor by members per group and session

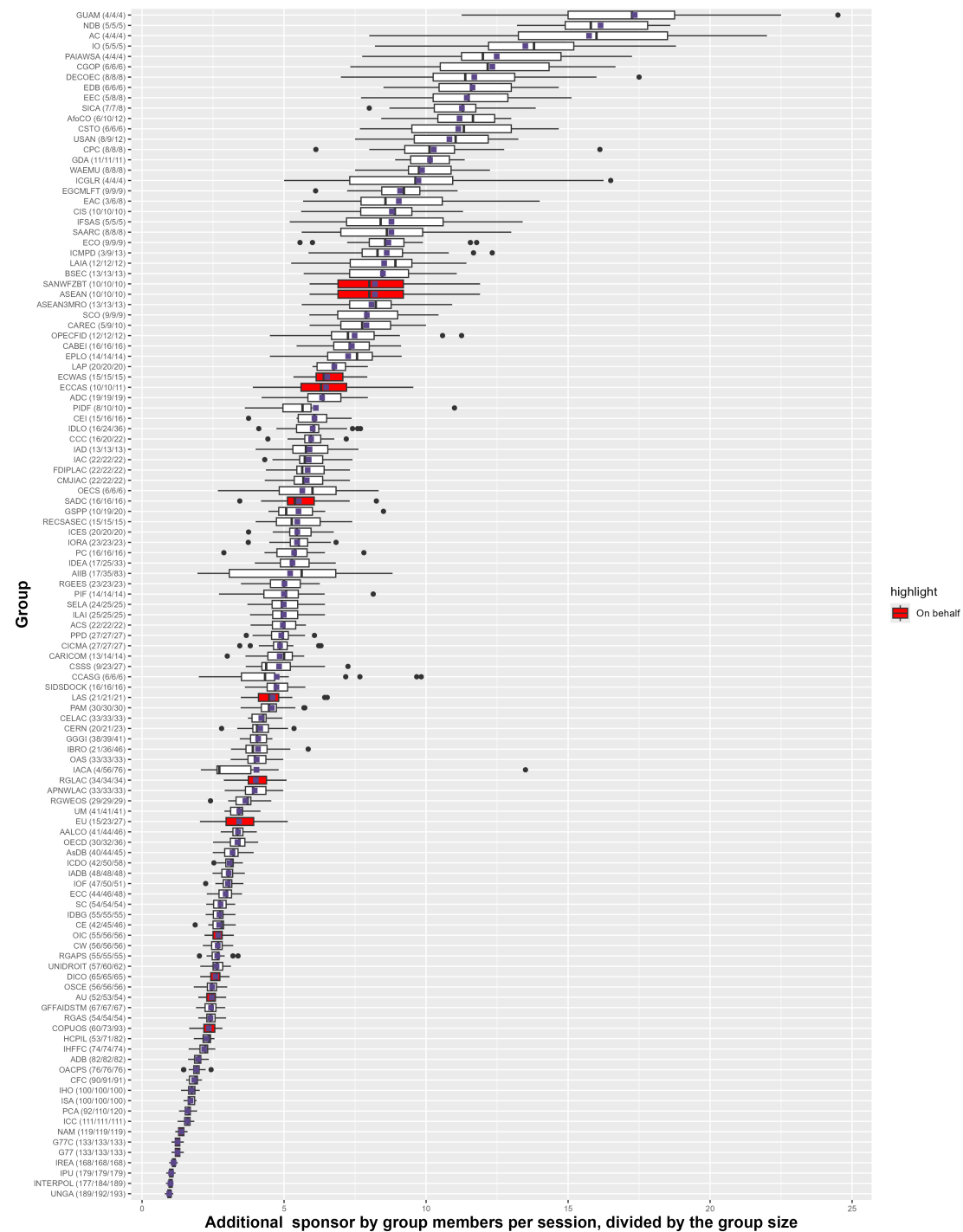


Figure 7.7: Additional sponsor by group members per session, divided by the group size

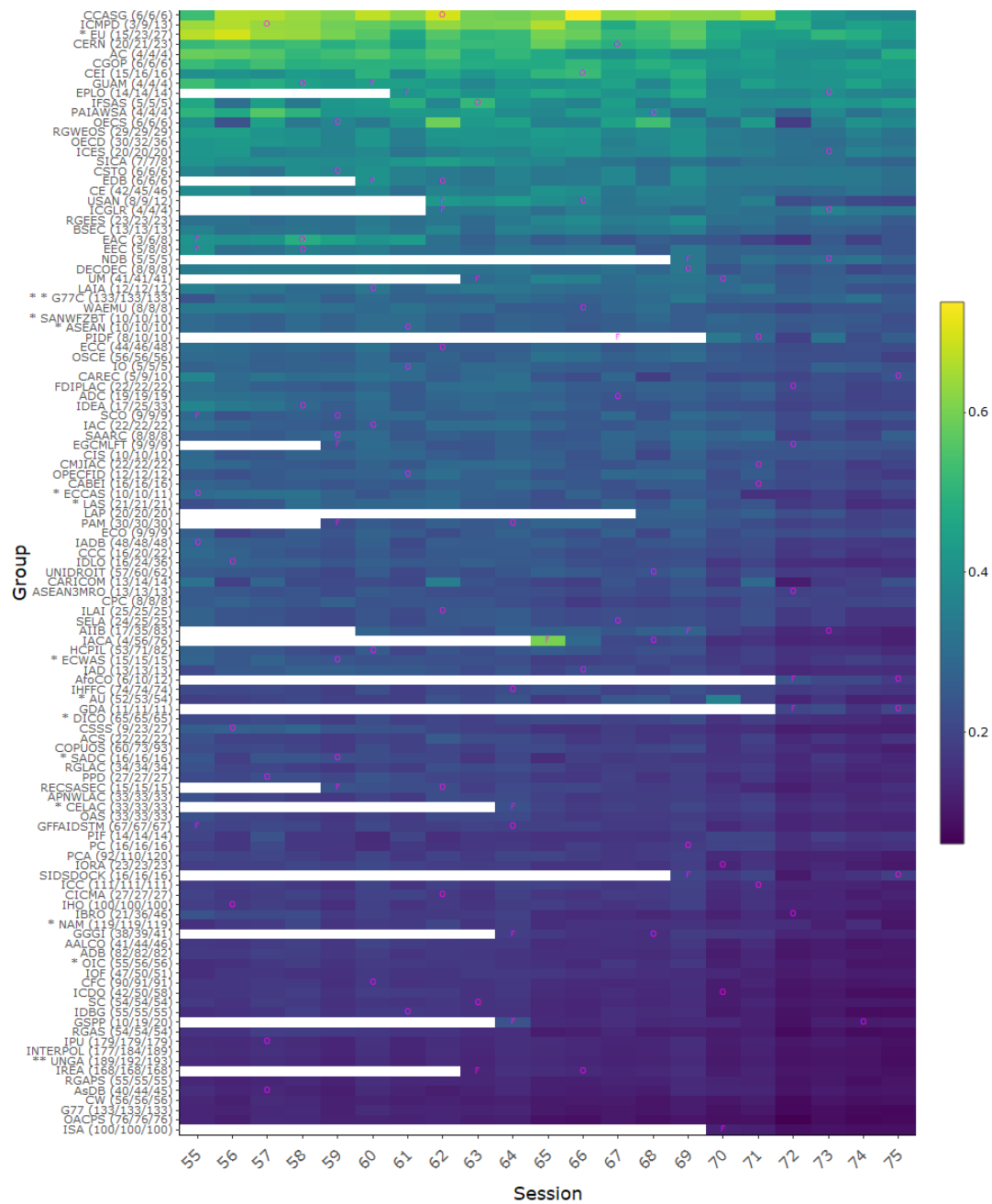


Figure 7.8: Heatmap: Sorted count draft resolution across sessions, percentage of group members

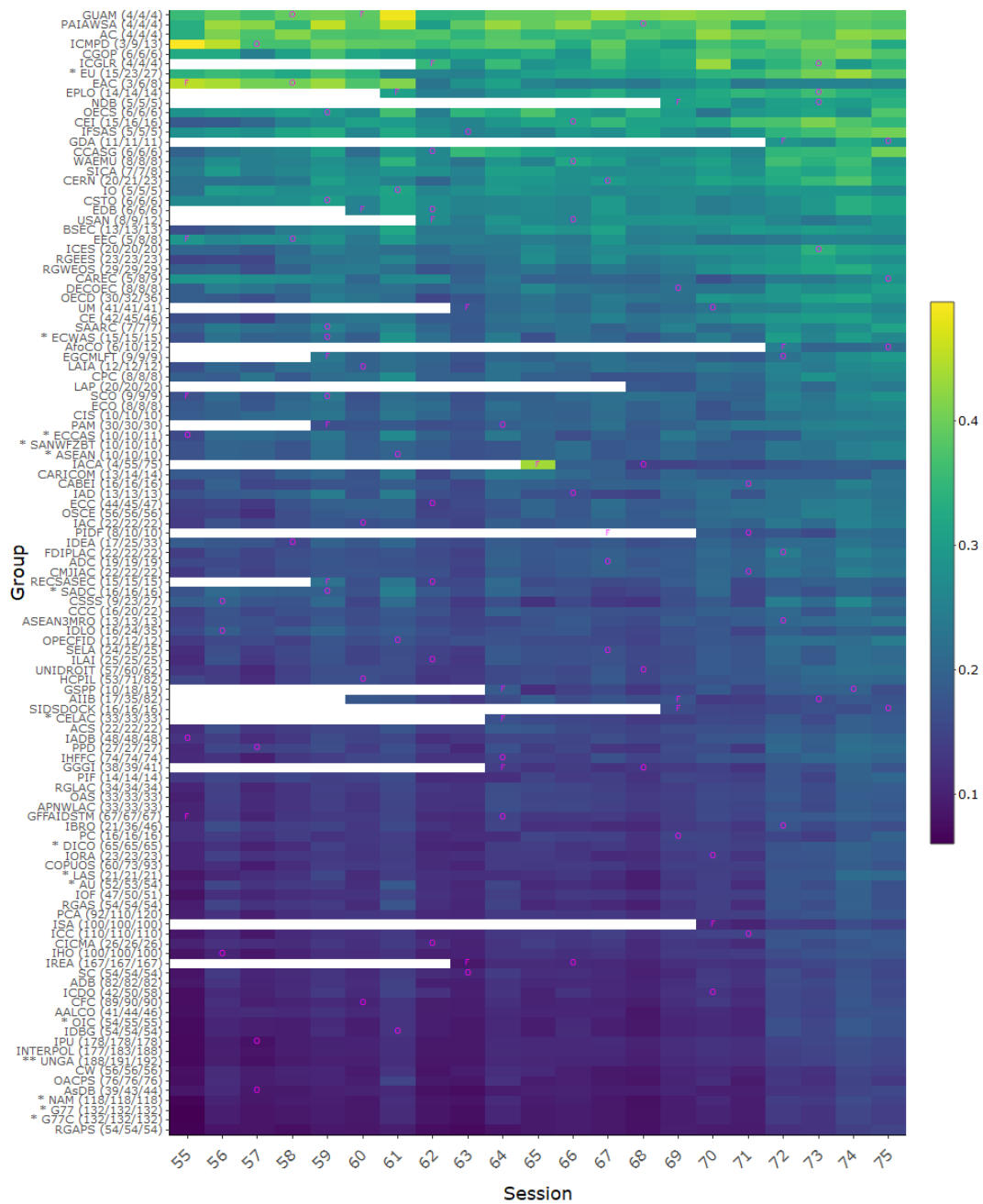


Figure 7.9: Heatmap: Sorted count additional Sponsor across sessions for groups, percentage of group members

7.3 "On Behalf" Draft Resolution

A fundamental form of collaboration among the participating members of a group is required for an "On Behalf" to take place. It is therefore assumed that a certain baseline of coordination and willingness to act collectively must be reached in order to enable an "On Behalf". This baseline presupposes that a minimum of importance of group cooperation of collaboration is exceeded so that the "On Behalf" can indeed be implemented. The following Table 7.3 provides an overview of the "On Behalf" DR submitted by various groups in the UNGA across individual sessions. The first column lists the name of the group; the second column, "RES", represents the proportion of submitted "On Behalf" DR adopted in the UNGA, relative to the total number of submitted "On Behalf" DR over the entire study period. A higher proportion in this column suggests that the respective group, in submitting "On Behalf" resolutions, not only shows a higher importance of group cooperation but also a perspective of successfully implementing shared positions. This indicator thus reflects to some extent the group's importance of cooperation in its ability to present a consistent, group-wide "On behalf" position, which especially applies to larger groups that, by virtue of their size, can influence a "Game of Numbers". (An indicator for large groups) The third column, "COUNT", shows the absolute number of "On Behalf" DR introduced by the respective group over the entire study period. This figure allows conclusions to be drawn regarding the general importance of cooperation within the group. A high number of resolutions indicates that the group actively sought to represent its positions as a united group in the various sessions, suggesting a high level of cooperation and strong internal alignment. The columns "55" to "75" show the number of "On Behalf" DR introduced by each group in the respective sessions. The group G77C, with over 1000 submitted DR during the study period, clearly exhibits the highest number of DR. A steady increase in DR introduced by this group can also be observed. In contrast, G77 without China only introduced 4 DR. What becomes apparent is that, despite its size, G77C has a very small share of adopted DR, at around 31%, indicating a very low importance of cooperation. With 133 members, G77C comprises more than half of the UNGA members (193, Session 75). It can be assumed that, despite its large membership, G77C has a low level of importance of cooperation within the group. In contrast to G77C, NAM with 118 members shows a higher RES rate of around 82%, but with a smaller COUNT of 242, reflecting a higher importance of cooperation. A rising number of submitted DR can also be observed in the case of NAM, albeit on a very moderate scale. Interestingly, South American countries do not submit "On Behalf" proposals through a regional group, but rather through the UN Regional Group. This suggests that RGLAC serves as a connecting link among the countries in South America, given that no other group

introduces a "On Behalf" DR, in contrast to the AU, which is congruent with the UN Regional Group Africa. RGLAC has consistently submitted DR proposals and has an RES rate of 85%. The AU encompasses ECCAS, ECWAS, and SADC, which are also part of the AU. The analysis indicates that the AU has been introducing more and more DR, although a significant upward outlier can be seen in Session 70. At the same time, the AU's subgroups ECCAS, ECWAS and SADC exhibit a markedly higher importance of cooperation, which is also reflected in an increased RES rate. During the study period, several groups obtained observer status, namely ECCAS, ECWAS, SADC and ASEAN. The number of sessions between receiving this status and introducing an "On Behalf" DR for the first time differs markedly: for ECCAS it was 14 sessions, for ECWAS 1 session, for SADC 3 sessions, and for ASEAN also 3 sessions. Based on the observations thus far, it can be concluded that certain groups indeed introduce DR after obtaining observer status, which provides an additional perspective on importance of cooperation. These findings suggest that lower importance of cooperation within the AU leads to differentiated importance of cooperation levels. At the beginning of the study period, "On Behalf" DR were introduced, which subsequently appeared only sporadically over time. In addition, an outlier occurred in Session 71. The analysis shows that ASEAN, alongside DICO, is the only grouping to exhibit a 100% RES rate. Tables 7.4 and 7.4 present the values from Figures 7.5 and 7.7. The first rows show the global average, median, min and max for the respective session. The values for OIC and NAM as well as for G77 and G77C remain largely constant over time in Table 7.4. By contrast, the EU and SADC display a marked decline, which is also apparent globally. ASEAN likewise records decreasing values, though this drop is moderate compared with global trends. Concerning Additional Sponsoring, a contrary global trend becomes evident: ASEAN, ECWAS, ECCAS and SADC show a pronounced increase. Meanwhile, the values for the EU, G77, G77C, NAM and OIC remain more or less stable, with OIC exhibiting a moderate rise.

Name	RES	COUNT	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
G77	0.75	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
G77C	0.31	1052	32	49	42	46	45	47	45	39	47	47	51	48	51	53	62	52	48	56	69	67	56
NAM	0.82	242	7	11	10	15	10	10	11	14	10	11	11	13	11	13	11	14	12	16	10	15	7
EU	0.11	28	3	2	1	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	15	0	0
RGLAC	0.85	26	4	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	2	1	1	1	0	1	1
OIC	0.69	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	3	2	4	3	3	4	5	3
LAS	0.65	20	3	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	2	1	3	1
AU	0.61	253	5	6	3	6	3	5	5	13	13	16	11	11	17	22	14	50	15	10	13	7	8
ECCAS	0.73	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	1	2	0	2	1
ECWAS	0.90	20	0	0	0	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
SADC	0.50	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	1	0
ASEAN	1.00	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
SANWFZBT	0.50	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
COPUOS	0.77	26	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	2	2	1	2	3	2	2	2	3	1	1	1
DICO	1.00	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0

Table 7.3: On-Behalf groups

Label	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
Mean	8.07	7.21	8.37	7.36	7.66	7.69	6.74	6.75	7.41	7.07	7.27	6.38	6.21	6.19	6.96	6.33	6.97	5.85	7.11	5.91	6.67
Median	6.84	6.20	7.37	6.67	6.67	6.73	5.92	5.92	6.50	6.04	6.24	5.54	5.35	5.60	5.81	5.10	5.87	5.14	6.28	4.92	5.50
Min	1.38	1.23	1.34	1.25	1.39	1.24	1.17	1.09	1.25	1.14	1.21	1.12	1.17	1.14	1.15	1.28	1.29	1.20	1.45	1.21	1.52
Max	28.00	22.33	24.25	23.00	22.67	24.00	20.00	20.00	23.60	22.20	27.75	21.00	20.75	22.50	25.50	26.20	25.25	19.00	24.25	16.75	21.20
EU	8.33	7.07	8.20	6.73	6.60	5.12	4.62	4.00	4.35	4.23	4.65	4.08	4.08	4.38	4.44	4.15	5.26	3.85	5.56	3.78	4.70
AU	3.37	3.13	3.42	3.42	3.31	3.31	3.00	3.04	3.15	3.02	3.13	2.66	2.55	2.79	2.74	3.38	3.06	2.94	3.33	2.83	3.00
G77	1.68	1.48	1.71	1.53	1.66	1.56	1.44	1.44	1.50	1.46	1.59	1.50	1.50	1.48	1.46	1.63	1.62	1.56	1.81	1.46	1.65
G77C	1.92	1.85	2.02	1.88	1.99	1.91	1.77	1.73	1.86	1.81	1.97	1.86	1.87	1.88	1.92	2.02	1.98	1.98	2.33	1.96	2.08
NAM	1.95	1.75	1.97	1.83	1.92	1.82	1.69	1.67	1.76	1.68	1.87	1.76	1.70	1.74	1.74	1.92	1.87	1.78	2.06	1.73	1.87
OIC	3.62	3.18	3.68	3.20	3.57	3.52	3.07	3.09	3.32	3.11	3.25	3.04	2.86	2.93	3.14	3.43	3.25	3.04	3.46	3.02	3.61
LAS	6.90	6.38	7.57	6.43	6.43	6.81	5.86	6.05	6.48	6.29	6.24	5.57	5.43	5.90	5.48	5.62	5.71	5.67	6.38	5.52	5.57
RGLAC	5.15	4.56	5.32	4.91	5.18	5.03	4.62	4.47	4.91	4.71	5.09	4.91	4.65	4.38	4.74	4.50	5.06	4.35	5.26	4.53	4.68
ECWAS	7.20	7.20	7.80	8.27	8.67	8.67	7.80	7.40	7.07	6.27	5.67	5.73	5.60	6.33	5.67	6.33	5.40	6.67	4.33	6.00	
ECCAS	6.80	7.20	7.30	7.60	8.10	7.20	6.10	5.50	5.70	5.70	6.40	3.10	4.30	3.80	4.40	4.45	6.27	5.91	6.27	7.36	5.09
DICO	3.82	3.34	3.82	3.52	3.91	3.49	3.22	3.08	3.55	3.23	3.37	3.20	3.15	3.26	3.29	3.69	3.54	3.35	4.09	3.38	4.25

Table 7.4: Submitted draft resolutions per member per group, divided by group size, per session.

Label	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
Mean	4.24	5.04	5.21	5.60	5.39	5.63	5.03	4.19	4.71	5.60	5.86	5.51	6.02	5.68	6.22	5.50	5.62	5.96	6.87	5.78	7.06
Median	3.81	4.51	4.70	4.86	4.63	4.96	4.36	3.75	4.50	4.92	5.23	4.88	5.23	5.00	5.29	4.83	5.03	5.00	5.80	5.00	5.84
Min	0.90	0.90	1.02	1.02	0.99	0.99	0.81	0.80	0.91	0.95	1.02	0.95	1.02	1.02	1.05	0.94	0.97	0.91	1.05	0.83	1.10
Max	12.33	15.50	14.00	18.00	15.00	16.75	17.25	12.00	14.50	17.25	20.75	18.75	22.00	18.75	22.50	18.75	18.25	20.75	22.25	19.00	24.50
EU	3.93	4.07	3.93	4.67	5.13	3.33	3.08	2.04	2.69	2.77	3.50	2.58	3.38	3.23	3.37	3.07	3.48	2.96	3.78	2.85	3.96
AU	1.98	2.27	2.67	2.65	2.48	2.67	2.04	2.19	2.19	2.58	2.48	2.53	2.42	2.58	2.30	2.51	2.28	2.50	2.89	2.33	2.96
G77	1.13	1.14	1.33	1.30	1.20	1.26	1.04	1.04	1.17	1.25	1.34	1.29	1.32	1.35	1.37	1.26	1.26	1.23	1.41	1.11	1.47
G77C	1.13	1.14	1.33	1.30	1.20	1.26	1.04	1.04	1.17	1.25	1.34	1.29	1.32	1.35	1.37	1.26	1.26	1.23	1.41	1.11	1.47
NAM	1.24	1.29	1.47	1.39	1.35	1.42	1.19	1.17	1.25	1.38	1.47	1.43	1.47	1.50	1.53	1.37	1.40	1.36	1.53	1.20	1.60
OIC	2.40	2.52	2.95	2.70	2.50	2.64	2.20	2.25	2.34	2.73	2.84	2.64	2.80	2.82	2.95	2.79	2.70	2.64	3.23	2.46	3.20
LAS	3.67	4.10	4.38	4.29	4.10	4.48	3.81	3.81	3.48	4.52	4.43	4.52	4.81	5.10	5.10	4.29	4.76	5.29	6.43	4.67	6.52
RGLAC	2.88	3.53	4.03	3.82	3.47	3.82	3.38	3.24	3.74	4.21	4.38	4.03	4.44	4.47	5.09	4.09	4.38	4.00	4.74	3.76	4.62
ECWAS	5.33	6.33	7.33	7.07	6.13	7.20	5.33	5.80	5.80	6.73	6.40	6.73	5.80	6.40	6.40	6.73	6.33	7.07	7.93	6.47	7.60
ECCAS	3.90	6.30	5.60	6.50	5.40	7.20	6.60	5.60	5.10	7.90	6.20	6.60	5.20	5.60	5.80	6.55	6.18	7.91	8.64	7.73	9.55
DICO	2.09	2.28	2.72	2.71	2.52	2.68	2.18	2.05	2.45	2.42	2.69	2.63	2.85	2.88	2.82	2.58	2.74	2.57	3.05	2.35	3.08
SADC	3.44	5.81	5.38	6.25	5.69	6.19	5.12	4.19	4.56	6.00	5.50	5.12	5.25	5.19	4.56	5.38	4.50	6.06	7.31	6.25	8.25
COPUOS	2.18	2.44	2.83	2.71	2.58	2.46	2.20	2.00	2.40	2.45	2.66	2.36	2.56	2.53	2.59	2.14	2.18	1.99	2.22	1.66	2.25
SANWFZBT	6.10	6.50	8.60	7.90	6.90	8.00	7.20	5.90	6.90	6.40	8.10	7.60	9.20	7.70	8.40	9.60	9.60	9.20	11.90	9.20	11.30
ASEAN	6.10	6.50	8.60	7.90	6.90	8.00	7.20	5.90	6.90	6.40	8.10	7.60	9.20	7.70	8.40	9.60	9.60	9.20	11.90	9.20	11.30

Table 7.5: Additional sponsors per member per group, divided by group size, per session.

The table 7.7 shows the number of "On Behalf" DR submitted by the aforementioned groups. It presents both the count of adopted and rejected DR, as well as the number and frequency of their revisions, distinguishing between RES and DEC and according to the location of submission. Overall, it can be observed that the number of submitted DR increased markedly over the observation period, from around 70 to 132 (Session 70), then fell back to about 100. The ratio of adopted to rejected DR remained roughly constant at about $\pm 50\%$. In terms of revisions, there is a clear rise in DR that were revised once, as well as, for the first time, cases of twice and even three times revised DR. The single revision increased in tandem with the overall number of DR. At the beginning, it was clearly below 50%, then aligned itself at around 50%. Double revisions, however, became the norm starting with Session 58, yet remained in the single digits. All three triple revisions took place in Session 72. The primary location for submitting "On Behalf" DR is C2, which shows the highest count in each session (apart from isolated exceptions), followed by C1 and C3. While the number of submitted DR in C2 remained relatively stable over the observation period, there was a pronounced rise to 62 DR between Sessions 72 and 74, which subsequently fell back to 36. C3 similarly experienced a one-off outlier of 62 submitted DR during this period, after which the figure returned to its previous level. In the initial sessions of the observation period, no DR were introduced for the GA or for C4. While only a small, single-digit number of DR exist in C4 overall, the number in the GA remains at a low double-digit level. In the submission venue C6, no DR were introduced by the groups under examination during the observation period. It is striking that all "On Behalf" DR revised more than once were subsequently adopted with a 100% success rate, and that the rate with one revision stands at around 80%. This could suggest that groups introducing "On Behalf" DR are especially willing to compromise to ensure their DR are adopted. Thus, the number of revisions could be interpreted as an indicator of importance of cooperation (consultation with group members) (see Table 7.6). Two "On Behalf" DR were introduced that were supported "On behalf" by two groups simultaneously.

Revised	Rejected	Adopted
1 Revised	996	797
2 Revised	0	116
3 Revised	0	3
Summe	996	916

Table 7.6: Revision of the Draft Resolutions of On behalf

Session	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
Count	54	70	60	72	63	68	67	72	72	81	79	81	88	102	100	132	85	99	119	100	81
Rejected	33	43	41	42	34	34	36	35	34	40	39	39	46	55	47	88	46	42	59	47	37
Adopted	21	27	19	30	29	34	31	37	38	41	40	42	42	47	53	44	39	57	60	53	44
1 Revised	21	27	19	27	22	30	27	30	30	35	31	36	33	41	45	39	34	47	54	49	37
2 Revised	0	0	0	3	7	4	4	7	8	6	9	6	9	6	8	5	5	7	6	4	7
3 Revised	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
RES	21	27	19	28	29	32	29	35	37	39	40	41	41	46	52	43	38	56	59	52	44
DEC	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	2	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Location GA	0	0	0	9	11	7	8	12	14	10	17	8	15	14	19	17	11	14	14	8	12
Location C1	12	12	10	16	11	12	9	15	9	14	10	13	14	17	17	18	14	17	13	15	10
Location C2	27	35	35	36	30	32	31	27	28	31	32	33	34	32	35	32	32	40	62	51	36
Location C3	13	19	12	10	9	13	13	16	18	23	17	24	22	35	24	62	25	24	24	24	17
Location C4	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	3	2	2	2	3	1	1	1
Location C5	2	4	3	1	1	4	4	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	3	1	1	1	5	1	5

Table 7.7: Information on the Draft Resolution concerning On behalf

7.4 Voting Cohision

7.4.1 Agreement Index

The AI-Heatmap 7.10 visualises the voting coherence of groups during the sessions (Sessions 55 to 75). The EU-related groups, which have extensive overlap such as CEI, CERN and CE, display similarly strong values and form their own bloc, whereas RGWEOS lags behind with its AI values. Notably, the groups associated with the EU have a very high number of members, particularly CE (46 members, Session 75). Thanks to EU expansion and the overlap of members with other large groups such as CE, CEI and CERN, the EU is one of the largest groups in terms of its AI value.

Its size is surpassed only by the AU, whose membership overlaps with RGAS. Alongside the EU, many African groups with the same or a high degree of overlap with the AU exhibit a high AI value. These include, among others, WAEMU, ECOWAS, SADC, CSSS, EAC, RECSASEC, PAIAWSA, ICGLR, ECCAS, PPD and OACPS. Compared with the AU and RGAS, WAEMU, ECWAS, SADC and CSSS have better values, while EAC, RECSASEC, PAIAWSA, ICGLR and ECCAS lag behind. Although ECCAS introduced "On Behalf" DR and initially displayed better values upon receiving observer status, it experienced a downturn in Session 60. Thereafter, there was some recovery, but not to previous levels. ECOWAS, SADC and ECCAS introduce "On Behalf" DR, which is reflected in their AI values. This points to a high level of importance of cooperation within these organizations. Moreover, numerous African organizations obtained observer status in the UNGA during the study period, in particular those groups that exhibit higher AI values. It could be assumed that African states are increasingly organising themselves in regional cooperations with stronger political and economic coordination, and that the AU no longer holds the same significance for proposals in the UNGA. This illustrates the tendency that smaller, more strongly integrated regional groups possess higher coherence than larger groups, especially as ECWAS and SADC not only actively introduced "On Behalf" DR, but also obtained observer status during the study period. Although the AU, as the overarching structure, also introduces proposals in the UNGA, its subgroups seem to display greater alignment and importance of cooperation. Another key result is the strong accord within the Global South, with African-related groups showing higher AI values. A similar pattern can be observed in Central America and the Caribbean. While CARICOM, on average, attains even higher AI values than the EU, there are also other organizations in the region with very high AI values, including SICA, ACS, CAMEI and OECS. The group SIDS DOCK, which likewise

has a high AI value, can be traced back to its largely congruent membership with CARICOM. However, it can be assumed that the overall value is lowered by those members who transferred their membership to the group PC (PC, like CARICOM, is a regional grouping). PC has the lowest AI, comprises 16 members and received observer status in the 69th session of the UNGA. Regarding PC, it should be noted that, owing to its colonial past and ownership structures, large states such as the USA, France, Australia and England are members. By contrast, SIDSDOCK was established in the 69th session and obtained observer status in the 75th session. While PC initially had lower AI values, these changed and improved over time.

The analysis reveals a clear overlap between the Caribbean and Central American region and Latin America in terms of regional groupings. Particularly striking are CELAC, SELA and APNWLAC. Although RGLAC is a UN regional voting group, it has introduced "On Behalf" DR. CELAC is often regarded as a counterbalance to the OAS, since it includes Cuba as a member but not the USA or Canada. One of the highest AI values among regional groups in Latin America is USAN, which was established in the 62nd session and shortly thereafter received observer status (again demonstrating the support of its members). Other relevant groupings related to South America in this region include AC (with the highest average values), ADC, FDIPLAC, ILAI (+Italy), CMJIAC, LAIA and LAP. Within South America, RGLAC ranks directly behind RGAS, whereas RGWEOS is significantly further behind. It appears that the concordance among Latin American groups is high, mirroring the degree of overlap. The groups LAIA, RGLAC, ILAI and SELA form a cohesive AI bloc in terms of ranking, which is consistent with their considerable overlap. The same can be said of the AU and RGAS, they form a shared bloc. While RGLAC and RGAS exhibit high coherence, RGWEOS shows a much lower AI value. Compared to the EU, RGWEOS lags well behind. At the same time, the EU and its members are distributed across at least three regional voting groups (RGWEOS, RGEES, RGAPS), which influences their AI values. Another explanatory factor arises from the addition of "OS" (Other States) in the name RGWEOS.

NAM, with its 119 members, exhibits one of the strongest AI values overall, particularly in the context of group size compared with other large groupings. Examining groups with an immediately higher AI value than NAM reveals that they generally have an average membership of around ten, including CPC, CAREEC, IFSAS, ECCAS, ICGLR and PAIAWSA. NAM in turn has higher values than RGWEOS. At the same time, NAM's AI value is only slightly above that of the G77, which at 133 members is one of the largest groups. The group SC, with its 54 members, is positioned behind G77C in terms of its AI values.

Historically, it is apparent that certain groups still exhibit forms reminiscent of

older structures (e.g. the Soviet Union). The groups IFSAS, composed of littoral states around the Aral Sea, have significant overlap with GUAM, CSTO and BSEC. However, these groups tend to display more moderate AI values. For the Southeast Asian states, ASEAN is representative alongside SANWFZBT, which, as previously indicated, coincide. These groups exhibit very high AI values, falling within the same range as the EU, ECWAS and SADC.

CCASG has the highest continuous AI values over the observation period. Looking at individual sessions, AIIB initially had very high values, but as its membership increased, its AI value declined considerably, including a steep drop from Session 59 to Session 60. Comparable to AIIB is the NDB (BRICS Development Bank), which displays one of the lowest AI values.

Certain groups fall below the reference group UNGA. These include IPU, NDB, DICO, IADB and PC, PIF (PC and PIF are groups located in the Pacific region), all of which lie below the UNGA average. PC has the lowest average value among them. Most of the groups with an AI value lower than UNGA's are large groups that only obtained observer status during the observation period. Generally, it appears that groups whose membership overlaps extensively, despite varied compositions, converge in their AI values.

One can observe that although the number of members in a group does provide a hint regarding the group's importance of cooperation, this effect remains relatively weak. Groups that fall below the UNGA average are not limited to large groups such as IPU, IREA, PCA, IHO and ICCC, but also include those with fewer than 20 members, such as IDEA, PIF, NDB and PC. Furthermore, it emerges that groups that have submitted "On Behalf" DR achieve better values than other groups. The exceptions here are groups such as CPUOSUN and DICO, which are part of the UN.

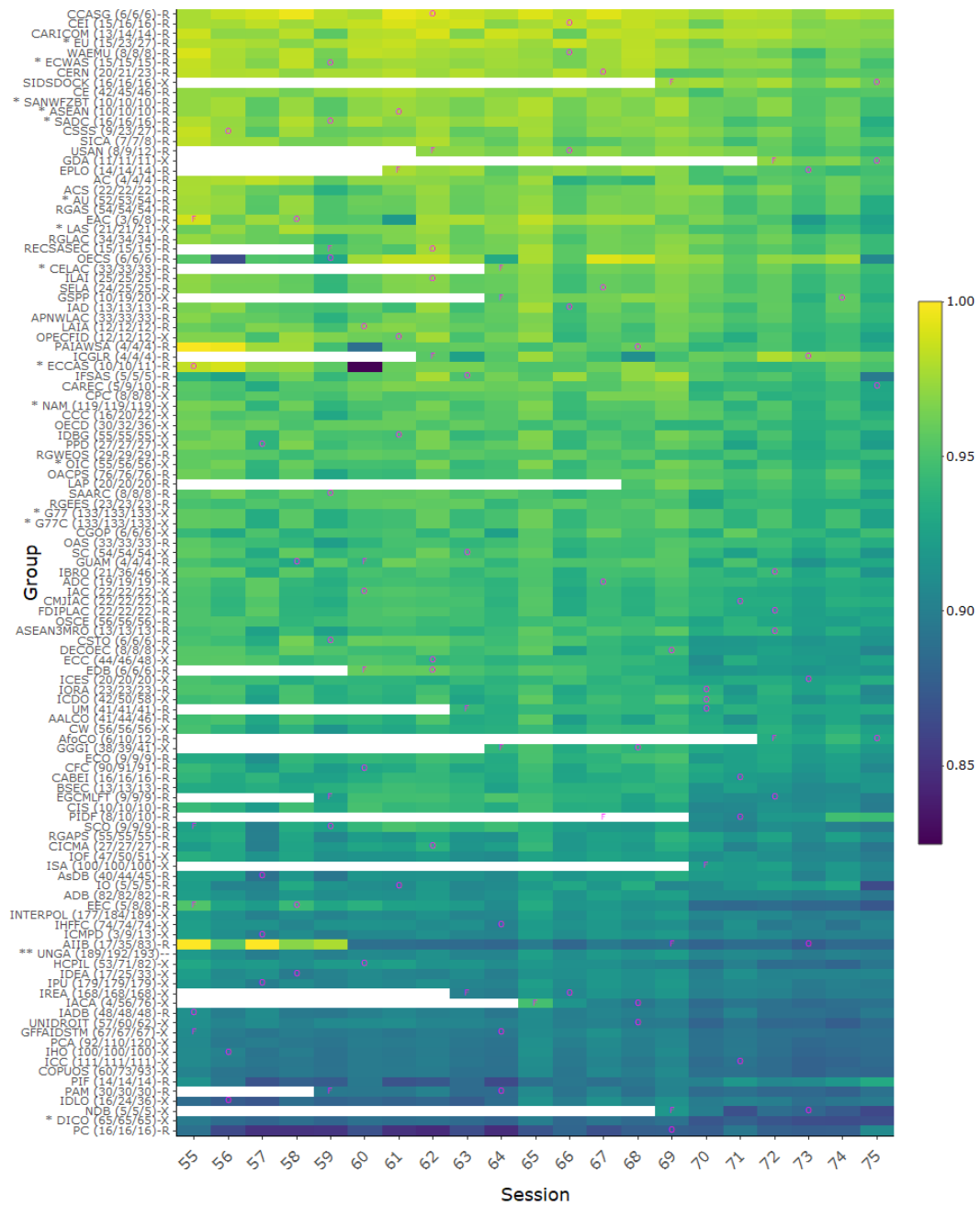


Figure 7.10: Heatmap AI

7.4.2 Index of Voting Cohesion

The IVC-Heatmap 7.11 presents a similar picture to the AI-Heatmap. As previously noted, CCASG, with its six members, exhibits values at the top, remaining consistently high throughout the observation period. In the IVC-Heatmap, extreme values evident in the AI-Heatmap are more smoothed out, for instance in the cases of ECCAS, OECS and PAIAWSA, when comparing both heatmaps.

Measured by its size, the EU counts among the most cohesive groups. Together with CEI, CERN and EPLO (partly ICMPD), it forms a bloc with the highest cohesion compared to RGWEOS. Here, one can observe that the prominent bloc previously visible in the AI-Heatmap is less pronounced in the IVC-Heatmap, indicating a wider dispersion. Moreover, CE exhibits lower IVC values compared with RGWEOS. Also, CI has a large overlap with RGEES, while the OSCE, which overlaps with both RGWEOS and RGEES, similarly shows lower IVC values, akin to CE. As has already been explained, the European region is fragmented into individual UN voting groups, highlighted by the IVC value. CEI is a group that predominantly overlaps with RGEES, while the EU has higher IVC values. OSCE, meanwhile, overlaps with RGWEOS and RGEES, yet exhibits lower IVC values than the CE group.

Those groups encompassed by the AU and RGAS—namely WAEMU, EAC, ICGLR, ECWAS, PAIAWSA, SADC, ECCAS and RECSASEC—form a cohesive bloc. These groups show close similarity in their average values, all possess higher IVC values, and obtained observer status during the observation period. In addition, the groups RECSASEC, ICGLR and EAC were founded only during this time-frame.

Groups with a South American connection likewise appear as a bloc, namely USAN, SICA, ACS, CELAC, ILAI, SELA, APNWLAC, LAP and RGLAC, which can be used as local reference groups. In this context, RGLAC largely encompasses OECA, CARICOM and SIDSDOCK, which form their own bloc with very high IVC values. It is also observed that some Caribbean-related groups are in part overlapped by other South American groups.

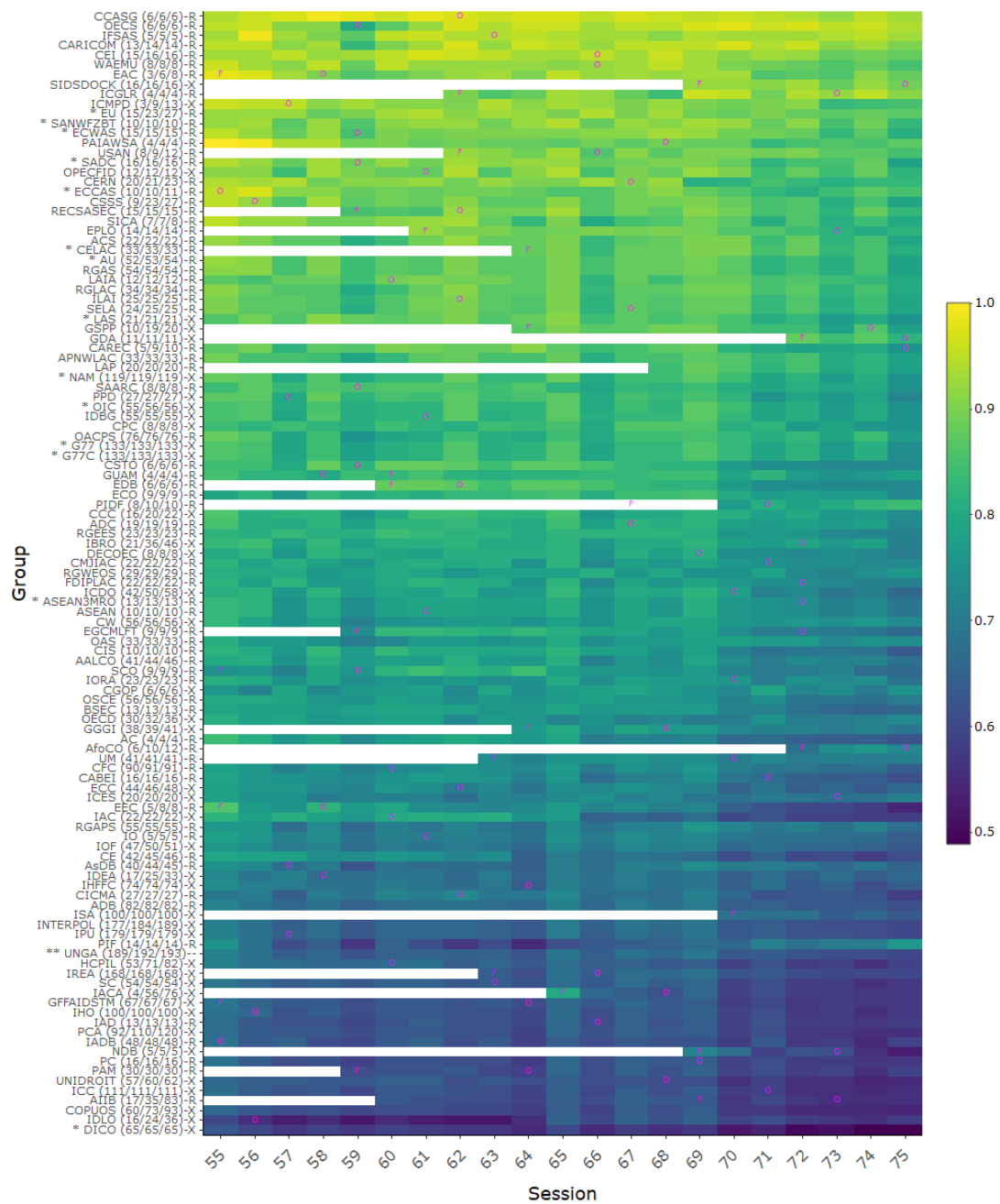
Pacific-related groups, namely PIF, PIDF and PC, each constitute their own subject. While PIDF exhibits very high IVC values, PIF and PC show lower IVC values. It emerges that PIF and PC include members that possess extraterritorial territories in the Pacific region, yet whose mainland lies elsewhere (e.g. England and the USA). Although PIDF was founded during Session 67, its full establishment only took place in Session 70, followed by its acquisition of observer status one session later. This group consists solely of local Pacific states.

In the Central Asian region, IFSAS consistently records the highest IVC values. It is followed by SANWFZBT, CAREC and SAARC, EDB and ECO, which have lower values. Next come ASEAN and ASEAN3MRO, which achieve comparatively low values, bearing in mind that ASEAN, as a group that introduces "On Behalf" DR, displays the weakest values of all non-UN-organization "On Behalf" groups. ASEAN and ASEAN3MRO are almost identical; the former received its observer status in Session 61, the latter in Session 72. RGAPS shows the weakest values among the UN regional groups. Overall, several local centres of cohesion can be identified in the Asian and Pacific region: Central Asia, the Pacific area and Southeast Asia.

The IPU and Interpol are nearly identical to the reference UNGA in terms of size, and can thus serve as additional reference groups. Apart from that, G77 and G77C remain the largest groups, revealing that, measured by their size, the Global South has a high level of internal cohesion. G77C and NAM are closer to each other than in the AI-Heatmap, while NAM, as in the AI-Heatmap, has higher values than G77C. G77 and G77C have virtually identical IVC values, which is, however, trivial. The groups OIC and IDBG are likewise largely congruent.

AIIB exhibits considerably lower IVC values than AI values and lies below the UNGA reference for IVC. Most of the groups that already lay below the UNGA reference line in the AI-Heatmap also lie below this reference line in the IVC-Heatmap.

Both in the AI-Heatmap and the IVC-Heatmap, a conspicuously positive phase can be observed between Sessions 65 and 69, in which the values across groups are significantly higher. Overall, however, a general decline in group cohesion becomes apparent, recognisable by an increasing darkening of the heatmaps. Yet there are individual exceptions showing clearly positive developments; this applies particularly to groups whose members predominantly lie in the region of the Pacific Islands, such as the PIF. A striking feature in both heatmaps is that the groups IACA and NDB initially display very high values, which then drop sharply in subsequent sessions.



7.5 Regional und Xregional

The map 7.12 from Session 55, when compared with the map 7.13 from Session 75, depicts the changes in the number of groups to which a country belongs. As previously established, the number of such memberships has risen over time. It becomes apparent that regions that were previously part of only a small number of groups also tend to remain only marginally integrated as time progresses. This particularly applies to parts of Africa, Eastern Europe and Asia. In Eastern Europe, the number of memberships in international groups is lower than in Western Europe, which can be explained by historical developments, especially the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia (formerly a member of the UNGA). By contrast, African states in a comparable situation, colonial past, exhibit a different development, with certain exceptions such as Egypt and Nigeria, which have a higher number of memberships. Also striking is the position of South America, as well as certain Asian states such as China, India, Pakistan and Indonesia, which belong to a larger number of groups compared to other countries. Conversely, the states from Myanmar to Vietnam display a different pattern, as they participate in fewer groups. In South America, it can also be observed that regional organisations periodically gain and lose importance, as seen with USAN. Particularly noteworthy is the comparison between the USA and Russia with China regarding the examined group memberships: whereas the USA and Russia are involved in fewer groups, China has a higher number of memberships. Although the total number of memberships has increased between Session 55 and Session 75, the basic patterns have largely remained constant. A striking outcome is the marked rise in the number of group memberships in South America. The maps 7.14 and 7.15 illustrate the number of memberships in Regional and Xregional groups. It appears that South and Central America display the highest number of memberships in regional groups. On the map showing the distribution of Regional and Xregional groups in Session 75 (7.16), the relationship between these two group types is clarified. A clear pattern emerges: in South America, East Africa, Central Asia, and the so-called Tiger States, memberships in regional groups outweigh those in transregional groups. Comparing the map 7.13 from Session 55 with the map 7.12 from Session 75 reveals how the number of groups in which a country is a member has changed. As previously shown, the number has increased over time. It can be seen that there is a high density of groups with observer status in the UNGA. The maps make it evident that areas which were previously not involved in a larger number of groups have remained thus over time (parts of Africa, Eastern Europe, parts of Asia).

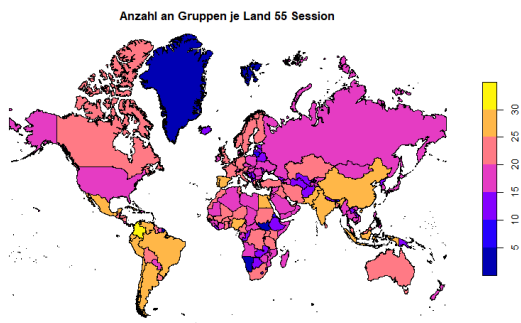


Figure 7.12: Number of groups per country, 55 sessions

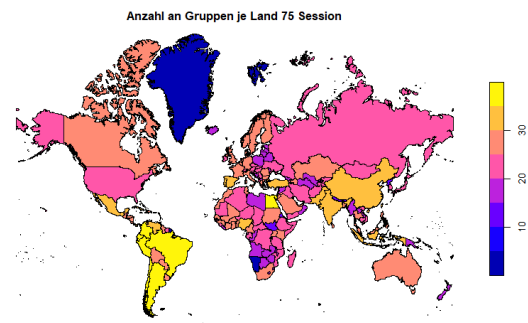


Figure 7.13: Number of groups per country, 75 sessions

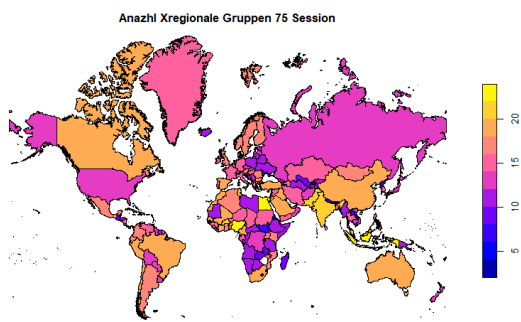


Figure 7.14: Number of Xregional groups, 75 Session

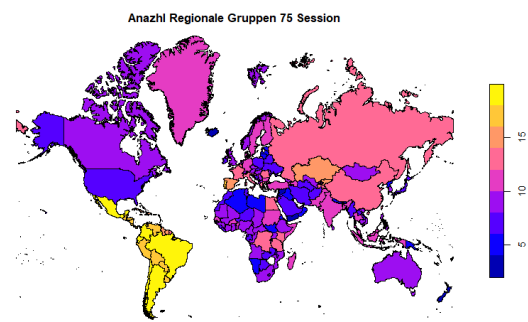


Figure 7.15: Number of Regional Groups 75 Session

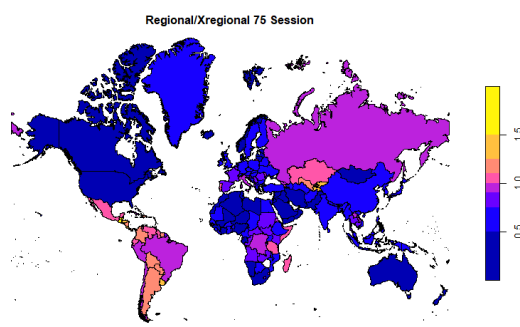


Figure 7.16: Regional/Xregional, 75 Session

7.6 History

The graphic 7.18 shows the accession dates of the Member States to the UN, omitting the former states of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia and instead considering their respective successor states. The graphic also visualises the founding dates of Regional and Xregional groups that hold recognition by the UNGA as permanent observers, based on the document A/INF/75/3 (United Nations, 2020). The groups NAM and G77 were additionally included, as they do not appear in A/INF/75/3.

A striking feature of the graphic 7.18 is the occurrence of four defined, wave-like surges in UN membership over various historical periods. These waves reflect major geopolitical shifts, such as the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the emergence of numerous independent states in the 1990s, as well as the expansion of UN membership in the wake of global democratisation processes. The graphic also shows that the number of groups is continuously increasing. Beginning in the early 1990s in particular, there was a marked rise in the founding of such groups, pointing to raising importance of cooperation and the formation of new alliances. Between 1990 and 2020, most of these groups obtained permanent observer status in the UNGA, underscoring their growing importance and integration into global decision-making processes. Another important aspect highlighted by the graphic is the progressively slowing overall growth in UNGA membership. While the total number of UN members has levelled off in recent decades, there has simultaneously been a notable increase in group memberships. This development suggests that the growth dynamic within the UNGA is shifting: instead of an increase in the number of Member States, the focus is now more strongly on the formation and recognition of groupings. In summary, graphic 7.18 illustrates that the international landscape is characterised by a combination of a slowdown in the growth of UNGA membership and a heightened uptick in the creation of groups.

The boxplot 7.17 shows the temporal difference between the founding date of a group and the date on which that group was granted observer status. The distribution of the values exhibits a significant range, indicating varying timelines for the recognition of observer status. The shortest observed difference between founding and observer status is 1 year (Group: EDB), whereas the longest stands at 116 years (IPU, ICES). The 1st quartile has a maximum value of 6.75 years, while the 4th quartile is at least 29.5 years. The median difference is 18 years, meaning that half of the groups analysed obtained observer status within this period following their founding. The average value, at 24.81 years, is somewhat higher, suggesting that a few groups with long waiting periods skew the mean upwards. These data are based on information from document A/INF/75/3 (United Nations, 2020).

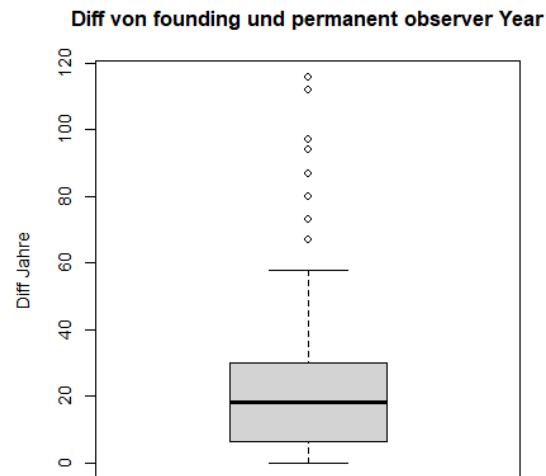


Figure 7.17: Difference between the founding of the group and the receipt of permanent observer status

An examination of the temporal progression reveals that the duration between a group's founding and the awarding of observer status has diminished over time. This trend could reflect changes in admission and recognition processes, for instance through more efficient bureaucratic procedures or heightened international acceptance of new organizations. The decline in the temporal differences may also indicate a growing willingness among international institutions to integrate groups into official roles more swiftly, in order to ensure better collaboration and representation.

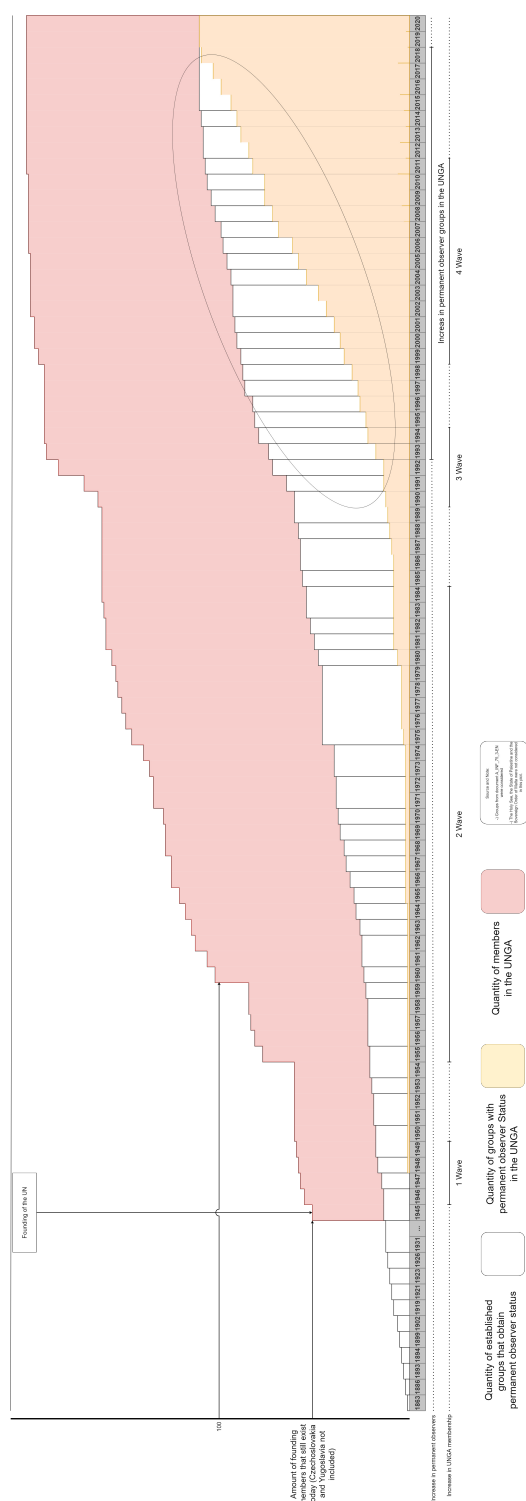


Figure 7.18: Groups' founding, permanent observer status, and membership over time

8 Discussion

Previous research on group politics in the UNGA for example, by Laatikainen, has centred on institutionalised group structures and their mechanisms of influence. The question of how the importance of group cooperation has changed over time, especially for groups with observer status, has largely been neglected. The present research question concerning the changing importance of group cooperation therefore arises from the fact that earlier studies focused on characteristics of group politics (the game of numbers, information, avoiding isolation,...) and analysed established groups such as the G77, NAM, or EU, but did not emphasise the significance of groups as an integrated whole. The research question *"How has the importance of group cooperation at the UNGA evolved over time (2000–2020)?"* addresses a period in which new dynamics emerged among UNGA groups. This chapter first summarises the research logic, including methodology, definitions of key terms, and the underlying dimensions. It then discusses the two hypotheses, relating the empirical findings to existing theories. Finally, the central research question is revisited and answered in the light of the overall results. The analysis draws on the PVs, which also record unofficial voting elements, such as amendments and procedural, whenever they are documented in the PV, thereby providing a deeper view of actual voting behaviour. Unlike earlier studies, a systematic distinction was made between initial sponsoring and additional sponsoring, an aspect that has not previously been examined over an extended period. The dataset includes information on the group membership of individual states, the founding dates of those groups, and the dates on which they were recognised as observers. Where precise accession dates were unavailable, year only data were used and classified according to predefined rules, ambiguous cases were completed to the best of knowledge.

The term "importance of group cooperation" denotes the growing institutional and political relevance of collective actors within the UN General Assembly. It covers both structural attributes such as the number and size of groups holding observer status and behavioural indicators, including voting cohesion, sponsoring behaviour, and on-behalf draft resolutions. The analysis is limited to externally observable features and understands importance not as mere presence but as the extent to which groups shape multilateral decision-making processes during the period 2000–2020. The *Group Organisation* dimension captures the structural embeddedness of groups in the UNGA. Key indicators are the number of observer

groups, their development over time, and the respective group sizes. These features reveal the degree to which groups are institutionalised and function as permanent platforms for interest representation. The *Group Behaviour* dimension concerns observable group actions, such as voting (voting cohesion) and the sponsoring of draft resolutions and shows how active and cohesive groups are in the UNGA decision making process. The hypotheses derive from the central research question and rest on the assumption that group cooperation in the UNGA is gaining importance. **H1** focuses on the temporal evolution of this importance, whereas **H2** targets systematic differences between group typologies. Both hypotheses link theoretical expectations with empirically observable developments within the study period.

H1: A central indicator of the rising importance of group cooperation, according to H1, is the marked increase in groups holding observer status in the UN General Assembly. Since the 1990s a continuous upward trend has been evident, and it persists throughout the study period (2000–2020). This development points to an increasing institutional need for states and organizations to make themselves heard through formalised group affiliation and to pool their collective capacity for action. The growing number of such groups thus signals their heightened salience in multilateral decision making. As Figure 7.18 shows, there is a clear rise both in the number of observer groups and in the overall size of their membership within the UNGA. Two distinct dynamics are evident: the membership trajectory follows a concave curve, with growth slowing as it approaches its upper limit, namely, that all states are members of the UNGA (excluding borderline cases such as Palestine or Western Sahara). By contrast, the curve for the number of observer groups becomes steeper and adopts a convex shape once the membership curve nears its maximum, it then flattens toward the end of the observation period. This pattern suggests that groups gain in importance and take on additional functions as their membership expands.

Another indication of the increasing relevance of group based cooperation is the shortened timespan between founding and recognition as an observer. While in previous decades it sometimes took several decades for an organisation to be granted observer status, this duration has significantly decreased during the period under investigation. Figure 7.17 presents a corresponding boxplot: the time differences between founding and observer recognition range from 1 year (e.g., in the case of EDB) to 116 years (such as for IPU or ICES). The median is 18 years, while the arithmetic mean is as high as 24.8 years, indicating distortion due to upward outliers. The lower quartile lies at 6.75 years, while the upper quartile is at least

29.5 years. However, the tendency toward acceleration is clearly evident: more recent groups receive formal recognition more quickly, which may point to both more efficient recognition procedures and a higher willingness for institutional integration. Organisations such as IRENA, which received observer status only three years after their founding, underscore this trend. The growing number of young groups that quickly achieve recognition demonstrates that observer status is increasingly used as a strategic instrument to gain international visibility and participation at an early stage. Taken together, these structural trends illustrate not only that more groups have become institutionalized, but also that their integration into multilateral decision-making processes has become more targeted, accelerated, and politically significant. It should be noted that the figures must be interpreted with a certain degree of caution, as some groups, such as the IPU and ICES, were founded prior to the establishment of the UNGA.

Membership figures within existing groups also indicate a structural increase in significance. Many groups with observer status are experiencing continuous growth, in some cases with a transregional or thematic focus. The average group size increased slightly over the period between the 55th and 75th sessions of the UNGA, from approximately 35.5 to around 38 members per group. The corresponding boxplot 7.3 and Table 7.1 show that the median value has remained nearly stable at 22.5 members. However, a significant shift can be observed in the upper part of the distribution: the 75th percentile rose slightly from 53 to 54, while the maximum value increased from 179 to 189 members. This upward shift is primarily due to a few, but very large groups with strong thematic orientation, such as Interpol, IPU, or IREA. The latter (IREA) was founded during the 63rd session and received observer status by the 66th session. These groups now even surpass traditional large formations such as the G77 in terms of membership. The fact that the median has remained almost unchanged (+0.5) simultaneously indicates that the typical group size within the UNGA system has not fundamentally changed. Many groups still consist of 20 to 25 members, pointing to a functional size consistency for effective coordination. The observable increase in size therefore does not reflect broad inflation, but rather a vertical shift caused by a few strongly expanding groups, and the fact that the smallest group size increased from 3 to 4.

The analysis of voting cohesion based on AI and IVC shows that voting alignment within groups developed in a differentiated manner during the period from 2000 to 2020. While both indices show a slight decline in the global average, the heatmaps 7.10 and 7.11 reveal clear regional patterns. Groups such as ECOWAS, CARICOM, CCASG, CEI, CE, CERN, and the EU consistently display high val-

ues and form coherent blocs. The EU related groups show close overlap and stand out clearly from RGWEOS, which consistently exhibits lower cohesion values. African groups related to the AU and RGAS, as well as Caribbean groups such as OECS and SIDSDOCK, remain particularly stable. Groups such as AU, ASEAN, ECOWAS, and SADC, which regularly submit On Behalf draft resolutions, consistently achieve above average values, indicating a high level of importance of group cooperation. In contrast, groups such as PC, AIIB, or NDB fall in some cases significantly below the UNGA reference value. Small, strategically integrated groups often exhibit higher voting cohesion than large groups such as the G77 or NAM.

The analysis of the relationship between initial and additional sponsoring of draft resolutions reveals a clear structural shift in the period from 2000 to 2020. While the number of initial sponsors per group tends to decline slightly, participation as additional sponsors is steadily increasing, as can be clearly seen in Figures 7.4 and 7.6. This development suggests that group cooperation is increasingly expressed through collective support of already submitted drafts rather than through formal authorship. The normalized representation of sponsoring activity in relation to group size, shown in Figures 7.5 and 7.7, indicates that members of smaller groups tend to submit more draft resolutions per capita than members of larger groups. This pattern suggests that smaller groups exhibit higher average activity among their members and may operate more efficiently in the coordination process. In larger groups, by contrast, thematically similar positions tend to be consolidated into a single resolution, which reduces the number of individual submissions, can be assumed.

The heatmaps 7.8 and 7.9 also make it clear that, starting from the 70th session, the proportion of group members jointly submitting draft resolutions has decreased, while at the same time the proportion of additional sponsors per group has increased. This shift suggests that group cooperation is increasingly manifested through coordinated co-sponsorship rather than through formal authorship. Particularly high values are observed in groups with regional or institutional cohesion, such as the EU, CCASG, or CEI, where high participation rates in both DR and AS are simultaneously evident. Within the scope of this study, additional sponsoring represents a central, observable expression of the behavioral dimension of group cooperation. It points to internal coordination, shared objectives, and coordinated external signaling, even when groups do not appear as formal submitters of a resolution. The strategic value of this form of co-sponsorship lies in the ability to make diplomatic positioning visible through group membership without appearing as the primary author.

The results also show that group cooperation in this form is not evenly distributed.

While groups such as NAM or those covered by the AU exhibit high levels of participation importance, other, less coherent alliances such as CW show comparatively lower values. Historical and geopolitical factors, as well as institutional structure, appear to play a central role in this context. The groups covered by the AU (e.g., ECCAS, ECOWAS), for instance, submit their own "on behalf" draft resolutions, indicating functional autonomy. It becomes evident that the observed shift from initial to additional sponsoring represents a structural adaptation of multilateral group practice within the UNGA. Group cooperation is increasingly used as an instrument to maintain diplomatic visibility through joint participation. This development reinforces the significance of groups as platforms for coordinated interest representation and underscores that collective action can be expressed not only through formal authorship but also through strategically deployed support.

The number of on behalf resolutions, that is, has increased noticeably between 2000 and 2020. This format represents a key observable expression of group cooperation in the context of this study, making the collective capacity to act and the coordinated presence of groups in the General Assembly directly visible and quantifiable. As shown in Table 7.3, the group G77C alone submitted over 1,000 On Behalf Resolutions between the 55th and 75th sessions. NAM 242, the AU 253, as well as groups such as ECOWAS or OIC also make regular use of this format. Not only the absolute numbers are insightful, but also the temporal development: the AU shows a clear increase beginning with the 62nd session, G77C and NAM remain consistently active over the period, while the EU submitted 15 On Behalf Resolutions in the 73rd session alone, indicating targeted, episodic use in specific diplomatic constellations.

The possibility of submitting a resolution on behalf of a group is tied to institutional prerequisites, particularly observer status. Only groups with this status, or with functionally comparable recognition (G77, NAM), can officially use this form of collective authorship. This observation reinforces the analytical link between structural anchoring (Group Organization) and observable behavior (Group Behaviour) in the cooperation concept of this study. Group cooperation is reflected not only in mere existence or membership but in concretely observable, collective action within the decision making processes of the UNGA. Although the methodological approach of this study does not allow for conclusions about internal decision making or strategic coordination, it becomes clear that the frequency, regularity, and institutional form of On Behalf Resolutions can be regarded as a reliable indicator of externally visible group cooperation. Groups that regularly act in this way signal unity, coordination, and strategic positioning to the outside world key characteristics of collective multilateral influence.

H2: To analyze H2, a differentiated examination of two group types was conducted: regional groups, whose composition is based on geographic proximity (e.g., AU, CARICOM), and xregional groups that unite members across regions (e.g., NAM, G77C). The redefinition of these two typologies serves to enable a clear assignment of groups within the study, as the analysis revealed that categorizing individual groups within existing typological models, particularly those proposed by Laatikainen, was not always straightforward or clearly distinguishable. The literature presents various classifications of group types. Laatikainen (Laatikainen, 2017) differentiates four main categories: Electoral Groups, Regional/International Organisations, Regional and Cross-Regional Political Groups, and Single-Issue Political Groups. For the purposes of this study, this typology was deliberately restricted to group members with observer status and relevant members in the UNGA. Groups such as Electoral or informal contact groups were excluded from the analysis, as they do not possess observer status (for data reason and cohesion RGLAC was included) and are therefore informal groups not institutionally comparable. It becomes evident that not only "Regional and Xross-Regional Political Groups" (Laatikainen: G77C, NAM) aim "to pursue collective interests in UN deliberations" (Laatikainen, 2017), but also "Regional/International Organisations" (Laatikainen: EU, AU, ASEAN, OIC, UNASUR). Both group types express, through their observer status, a strategic interest in actively shaping multilateral decision making processes in the UNGA. While the classification by Laatikainen forms the theoretical foundation, the practical overlaps in terms of objectives and institutional participation suggest that both categories should be considered functionally equivalent actors within the General Assembly.

With regard to the hypothesis that cooperation differs between group types, the empirical findings present a mixed picture. The analysis of AI and IVC values shows that regional groups display, on average, higher voting cohesion particularly those related to the regions of Europe and Africa with significantly higher IVC and AI values. In contrast, xregional groups such as G77C or NAM exhibit lower cohesion, which may be attributed to their heterogeneous composition. However, it is noteworthy that certain thematically focused xregional groups such as SIDS-DOCK or GDA, despite geographic dispersion, demonstrate comparatively high AI values, an indication that thematic focus can also positively influence cooperation, independent of group type. Overall, the AI and IVC heatmaps show that regional groups tend to rank higher, while xregional groups appear more frequently at the lower end of the spectrum.

A more differentiated picture emerges from the analysis of group memberships: many states in Latin America, Central America, and parts of Central Asia are predominantly members of groups classified as "regional". Meanwhile, the ma-

jority of UNGA member states hold more memberships in groups classified as "xregional". This pattern relativizes the assumption that states primarily prefer regional groupings. Instead, it suggests a strategic diversification of group affiliation, supplemented by flexible xregional memberships.

In the analysis of importance of cooperative behavior in the form of jointly submitted "On Behalf" draft resolutions, no consistent correlation between group type and cooperation success can be identified. Although the xregional group G77C is by far the most active submitter of such resolutions, it has the lowest adoption rate. The also xregional group NAM submits significantly fewer draft resolutions but achieves one of the highest adoption rates. The picture is similarly inconsistent among regional groups: while the EU has the lowest success rate among regional groups, with only 11% of its resolutions adopted, African groups such as the AU, ECOWAS, and ECCAS display significantly higher adoption rates. However, the number of submitted DRs varies considerably, so no systematic relationship between group type and cooperative effectiveness can be established. See: 7.3. This is further complicated by the fact that xregional groups are generally larger than regional groups, which methodologically affects the assignment of resolutions (see: 7.8 and 7.9). Once a group surpasses a certain membership size, a submitted DR particularly one without a clearly identifiable author is automatically attributed to a large group such as G77C, provided a group context is present. This methodological approach distorts comparability and hinders a nuanced evaluation of collective performance across group types.

Overall, it can be concluded that Hypothesis H2 is only partially supported: while a clear pattern between group types can be observed in voting behavior, no such consistent pattern emerges in the submission and success of resolutions. This suggests that other factors such as group size, thematic focus, and institutional structure play a more significant role in shaping cooperation and coordination than group typology alone.

Synthese: The empirical findings related to H1 (temporal increase in significance) and H2 (typology-based differences in cooperation) together provide a solid foundation for addressing the central research question:

How has the importance of group cooperation at the UNGA evolved over time (2000–2020)?

Both hypotheses demonstrate in different ways that group-based cooperation in the UN General Assembly has not only become more institutionally consolidated but

also more significant. The combination of structural indicators (e.g., the increase in groups with observer status, see Figure 7.18) and behavioral indicators (e.g., increased additional sponsoring and on behalf resolutions) confirms that groups increasingly serve as effective platforms for coordinating foreign policy positions within the multilateral system of the UNGA. Between 2000 and 2020, a clear macro trend emerges: groups are gaining in importance. The number of groups with permanent observer status has increased 7.18, as has their average group size 7.3. At the same time, the use of on behalf resolutions is rising 7.3. Although average global voting cohesion has slightly declined, many regional groups continue to exhibit high levels of alignment. This suggests that multilateral decision-making is now scarcely conceivable without group cooperation.

A notable development is the increasing activity of smaller, regionally embedded groups such as SADC, CARICOM, OECS, ECOWAS, or ECCAS, which often operate in the shadow of larger umbrella organisations (e.g., AU, CELAC). When a significant portion of their members co-sponsor a draft resolution, it becomes evident that the additional sponsoring originates from the groups that cover them. It is also apparent that these groups frequently submit their own draft resolutions. It can be assumed that through this is a dual strategy, regional anchoring combined with integration into overarching structures, they increase their influence disproportionately to their size. This partly contradicts the classical "game of numbers" logic, which holds that numerical strength is decisive. Here, functional regionality appears to outweigh strategic mass: clearly structured small groups act more cohesively and flexibly than large, heterogeneous alliances. Observer status can increasingly be viewed as a lever for agenda-setting. Observer groups are granted institutional access to meetings, may appoint speakers, and can deliver statements. Combined with the right to submit draft resolutions on behalf of the group, this constitutes an effective instrument for articulating shared positions. It can be assumed that groups such as the AU, NAM, and EU use the On Behalf format strategically to make politically consolidated proposals visible. Although no explicit source fully covers this practice, UNGA documents and the formal rights associated with observer status (see Chapter 4.4.2) support this assumption. The connection between institutional presence and substantive positioning grants such groups high visibility and interpretative authority in normative debates.

As the importance of groups increases, the question of their internal democratic legitimacy arises. Large, heterogeneous groups such as the G77 or the AU in particular face the challenge of presenting a unified position without suppressing the diversity of their members. Within this area of tension, it can be assumed new groupings are emerging that are characterized by stronger cohesion, a trend that simultaneously reinforces the relevance of groups but also raises questions about transparency, internal participation, and fair representation. The observation that

new smaller groups are being formed (e.g., GDA, SIDS) suggests that the balance between collective strength and internal coherence is a central motive for the formation of new groups.

Limitation: The empirical analysis in this study is based on data from the official UN database on PVs (and the UNGA website) and on group memberships within the UNGA for the period from 2000 to 2020. This twenty year observation period makes it possible to trace both structural developments and behavioral changes in group cooperation over time. Changes in group composition during this period were taken into account. The PV data contains occasional inconsistencies and minor errors, such as duplicate entries or inconsistent country names. In addition, key steps in the data preparation, such as the assignment of group status, identification of accession dates, and coding of sponsoring behavior, were manually verified for plausibility. This involved a combination of logical validation and internal consistency checks, and corrections were made where necessary. Moreover, it can be stated that due to the large volume of data and in line with the logic of a big data analysis, these individual errors are statistically negligible and do not significantly distort the overall results. A sample was drawn and checked for accuracy. It should also be noted that the composition of the analyzed groups changed over the course of the observation period: new groups with observer status were established and included in the analysis. This dynamic was incorporated into the temporal modeling of group memberships, as well as into the respective yearly group sizes factors that were reflected, for example, in the calculation of AI and IVC values.

A central methodological feature of this study is that groups were analyzed exclusively based on externally observable characteristics. Internal coordination mechanisms, decision making processes, or thematic priorities were not captured. As a result, it remains unclear how groups coordinate their positions internally, which states dominate such processes, and how decisions on specific resolutions are made. Groups were therefore methodologically treated as black boxes with clearly defined external outputs (e.g., On Behalf Resolutions), but without access to internal processes. Additionally, states can belong to multiple groups simultaneously. This has methodological implications: in the measurement of voting cohesion via IVC or AI, a single state may be counted multiple times without it being clear which group it was actually representing in a coordinated manner in a specific vote. This overlapping group membership is a structural characteristic of the UNGA group architecture that cannot be fully resolved but has been transparently addressed in the analysis. Overall, this study is based on a robust data framework that accounts for both temporal and structural changes in group composition, discloses methodological limitations, and operationalizes empirical analysis in a transparent

manner. The chosen approach allows for reliable conclusions about the external impact of group based cooperation in the UNGA without making assumptions about the internal decision-making structures of these groups.

8.1 Strength in Unity: Viewing the EU as a Cohesive Bloc

Since the initial acquisition of observer status by the European Economic Community on 11 September 1974 during the 29th session of the UN General Assembly (United Nations, 1975) and the confirmation of this status by Resolution A/RES/65/276 (United Nations, 2011) of 3 May 2011, the EU has established itself as a significant actor within the United Nations. Its position is based on its extensive membership base as well as active participation in various UNGA regional groups, including RGEES, RGWEOS and RGAPS, which, in addition to Western European states, also encompass further partners such as the USA or Israel.

In the observation period under consideration, the analysis began when the EU was still composed of 15 member states. The number of members rose on average to 23 and ultimately reached 27 in the 75th session, although the withdrawal of England did not cause any major changes in the investigation. Various comparative parameters indicate that the EU has attained a high level of activity and visibility within the UN. When one examines other Europe-related groups such as ICMPD, CERN, CEI, EPLO, OECD, ICES or CE, it becomes apparent that some of these organizations obtained their observer status during the investigation period, were newly founded or received their recognition as observers at a later stage.

The evaluation of the DR included in the Heatmap highlights a bloc-based cohesion of Europe-related groups, in which the EU assumes a leading role by virtue of its size and institutional strength. However, individual organizations, such as the CCASG, exhibit higher levels of activity in certain areas. The analysis of the AD-Heatmap reveals that the EU already demonstrated a high level of activity at the start of the observation period, specifically in Session 62. Despite a significant downturn at a later point, the level then rose continuously once again. This progression underscores the EU's sustained intensity compared with other major regional organizations.

Another aspect is the use of "On Behalf" DR. Within the European region, the EU is the only group that employs this mechanism in the DR it submits, although it is deployed less frequently overall than by other groups such as the AU. A conspicuous exception is the 73rd session, in which 15 out of 24 draft resolutions were submitted "On Behalf", a clear outlier in the overall progression. Comparing the figures for DR, AD and "On Behalf" initiatives shows that the EU primarily relies on the mutual support of its numerous member states and relatively seldom opts for the "On Behalf" DR route, whereas other regional groups, such as the AU, make much more intensive use of this mechanism.

The evaluations of the IVC- and AI-Heatmaps exhibit a similar pattern. Thus, in the AI-Heatmap, the Europe related groups form a shared bloc with high values, although certain alliances outside Europe, such as the CCASG or CARICOM, achieve comparable or even higher cohesion values in individual cases. A look at the IVC-Heatmap shows that organizations like the CEI continuously record higher values than the EU. Nevertheless, due to its numerous members, the EU proves to be a consistently strong player. Caribbean groups, for instance OECS and CARICOM, sometimes surpass the values of the Europe related groups, which are overall more widely dispersed and, in addition to the EU, are also located near CEI, CERN and EPLO.

Compared with other Europe related organizations, the EU proves to be one of the largest and most visible actors within the UN. Even though it lags behind other groups in certain areas, for example regarding the "On Behalf" procedure or in specific AI and IVC values, its institutional strength and large number of members underscore its position. The continuous rise in submitted DR and AD, despite occasional fluctuations, reflects the sustainable intensity of EU activities. In conclusion, it can be stated that the EU has steadily expanded its position within the United Nations during the observation period. The renewed observer status of 2011, the steadily growing number of members and the varied affiliations to different regional groups demonstrate its importance. Even though England's withdrawal briefly influenced the development of its membership, the EU remains a significant entity compared with other regional and international organizations. The analysis of the various indicators, DR, AD, IVC and AI, as well as the occasionally higher values of other groups shows that, despite occasional setbacks in certain areas, the EU stands out through its broad institutional presence and the high intensity of its member states. Furthermore, it becomes evident that traditional structures, such as those established in the RGEES during the Cold War, are now largely covered by the EU's more comprehensive mechanisms, to which the high activity levels in DR and AD simultaneously point.

8.2 Further Ideas

Several potential avenues for further analysis emerge to deepen the study of the concept of group cooperation in the UNGA. One promising approach would be to systematically cross-reference group cooperation with the thematic focus of draft resolutions. This could reveal in which policy areas collective action is particularly pronounced and whether certain groups pursue specific substantive profiles or regional priorities.

In addition, a renewed analysis of On Behalf Resolutions from a thematic perspective would be insightful, particularly when combined with an examination of speeches, their frequency, content, and group attribution. This could provide indications of whether group cooperation is also consistently manifested at the rhetorical level, or whether strategic patterns emerge, such as the targeted use of shared spokesperson roles.

Observer status should also be examined in a more differentiated manner, for example, in terms of its institutional effects, historical development, and concrete value for externally visible group cooperation. A comparative analysis between permanent observer groups and functionally established but not officially recognized observer groups could help to better understand the actual scope of action available to different group types.

Finally, a systematic historical reconstruction (mapping) of group structures and behavior in the UNGA over a longer period could prove valuable. This would make it possible to identify structural continuities and disruptions in the development of multilateral group cooperation and to relate them to geopolitical shifts or reform efforts within the UN.

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