

ENLARGEMENT AND THE 'NORMAL' EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

*Erik Voeten**

I. INTRODUCTION

How does enlargement affect politics in the European Parliament? A large body of research indicates that the European Parliament increasingly functions like a 'normal' parliament. This statement refers not only to the body's gradually expanding legislative powers but also to the observation that its politics have not become dominated by national divisions but rather by supranational partisan politics along left-right ideological lines (Alter 2004; Attina 1990; Hix 2001; Hix, Noury, and Roland 2005; Hix, Noury, and Roland 2006a; Hix, Noury, and Roland 2006b; Kreppel and Hix 2003; Kreppel 2002; Noury 2002; Raunio 2002; Thomassen and Schmitt 1997). These findings are important because competition between supranational parties in a common low-dimensional ideological space helps to establish ties between the EU policy-making process and the European public. For this reason, this development is widely viewed as an essential pre-condition for a truly European system of political representation (see Thomassen, introduction).

There are, at least, two reasons to suspect that enlargement may affect the dominance of ideology-based competition between supranational parties in EP politics. First, it is unclear to what extent the Members of European Parliament (MEPs) from the new member states fit in the existing ideological and partisan structure of the EP and thus, whether 'old' and 'new' EU members share a 'common political space' (see Marks and Steenbergen, 2002). This fear is fed primarily by the observation that the eight new Central and Eastern European countries have experienced a rather distinct trajectory of political and cultural development from the other EU members. Second, the new members may share a set of common interests that go across party-lines, which may lead to increased contestation along national lines in the EP. This latter concern arises out of the assumption that the new countries have shared economic and security concerns, which override partisan motivations.

This chapter uses evidence from the first eighteen months of roll-call votes in the sixth EP to evaluate these issues. The chapter evaluates whether there are early indications that expansion has affected the partisan nature of EP politics, the overall ideological structure of the

* Erik Voeten is assistant professor of political science and international affairs at the George Washington University. This paper was prepared for presentation at the University of Twente, June 16-17, 2006. This is a first version, please contact me at voeten@gwu.edu for a future version suitable for citation.

parliament, and whether national divisions have become a more prominent explanatory source for variation in roll-call vote choices. In addition, the chapter examines whether individual MEPs from the new member states fit as comfortably within the EP's ideological and partisan structure as their counterparts from the EU15.

In general, there is no evidence that enlargement has affected the overall ideological structure or that it has weakened partisan divisions and sharpened national divides in the EP. This is consistent with the main finding of another study of early sixth parliament voting (Hix and Noury 2006). This holds despite the use of a different, and I argue superior, method for assessing the relative importance of party- and nation-based voting. This method is based on non-parametric analysis of variance rather than cohesion scores. It leads to notably different insights from earlier studies about the overall trajectory of party and nation-based voting since the first parliament, but affirms the general preponderance of party-based voting.

Aside from the general finding of continuity, disaggregated analyses do point out some possible areas of concern. MEPs from Central and Eastern Europe appear to fit somewhat less comfortably in the EP's ideological structure. MEPs from two of the largest Eastern European new members, the Czech Republic and Poland, are much more likely than the average EU15 MEP to defect from their European party group in order to vote with their national delegations. Yet, this tendency is not noticeably larger than amongst MEPs from Sweden and the UK. Finally, there is evidence that an East-West split has occurred within the Socialist party group (PES) on "new politics" (values) issues.

This chapter proceeds as follows. The first section evaluates the various arguments for how enlargement might affect EP politics. The focus is on the two issues identified above: the extent to which new MEPs can be expected to fit in the pre-existing political structure of the EP and the possibility that enlargement may lead to increased voting along national lines. The next two sections evaluate the evidence from the sixth parliament.

II. THE EFFECTS OF ENLARGEMENT ON POLITICS IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

A. Enlargement and the Common Political Space

Enlargement increased the number of (MEPs) from 625 to 732. Moreover, these MEPs now represent 25 rather than 15 countries, many of whom only recently democratized and are among the poorest of EU members, to name but two characteristics that set these countries apart. The resulting increase in heterogeneity of membership plausibly leads to less predictable and less stable voting patterns. Moreover, it may complicate coalition formation across national lines.

The concern about fit into the pre-existing cleavage structure is most

apparent for the eight former Communist countries. The dominance of left-right conflict in most Western-European political systems is generally attributed to certain historical commonalities, in particular the industrial revolution (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). Eastern European party systems are of much more recent origins. Scholars heavily contest the nature and relevance of cleavages in these systems. Some scholars argue that national political parties in the East are not easily placed in party families based on durable ideological cleavages such as left-right conflict (e.g. Comisso 1997; Evans and Whitefield 1993; Lawson, Rommele, and Karasimeonov 1999). Instead, these parties are said to compete along ethnic lines, leadership appeal or based on their abilities to deliver patronage or public goods. Others have argued that cleavages are important but that there is considerable variation in the social and ideological bases for partisanship across Eastern Europe. Whereas in some countries, partisan divisions are dominated by conflicts over economic liberalism, in other countries religion, ethnicity, or regional conflict is most relevant (Evans and Whitefield 2000).

Given that national parties are the key vehicles that create cohesive supranational party groups (Hix, Noury, and Roland 2006b), we may expect that Eastern European MEPs fit less well into the common ideological space than their Western counterparts. Moreover, given the size of expansion, this development may have consequences for the EP as a whole. If this were so, we would expect that supranational party membership is a less successful predictor of MEP behavior in the sixth EP than it was in previous parliaments. Moreover, low-dimensional spatial models should become less successful in accounting for observed MEP vote choices.

There is, however, also some reason to believe that the match between Eastern and Western MEPs is smoother than stated above. In a seminal article, Kitschelt (1992) argued that the transition from communism to market democracy led to a dominant “liberal-authoritarian” division across post-communist countries. The location of individuals along this dimension is determined by their personal resource endowments: those who expected most gains from liberalization favored market reforms (e.g. young educated men) whereas those who benefited from state protection (e.g. the elderly) favored a continuation of redistributive policies and price controls. Evans and Wakefield (2000) found that despite the diversity in cleavages across countries, such distributional conflict was relevant in all.

Moreover, the singular dominance of left-right socio-economic conflict in Western European countries should not be exaggerated. Center-periphery and religious conflicts have long been important in European party systems (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). Most analysts argue that a “values” dimension has gained strength across Western Europe since the 1970s (e.g. Inglehart 1977; Kitschelt 1988). The content of this

dimension differs somewhat across countries (Marks et al 2006). In some countries, it takes a post-modernist flavor, centering on environmentalist concerns. Elsewhere, conflict over traditional values rooted in a secular-religious divide takes center stage. In yet other countries, nationalism and immigration motivate divisions between parties. These conflicts, especially the latter two, are also highly relevant in Eastern European countries (Evans and Whitefield 1993, 2000; Zielinski 2002). An important distinction, though, is that unlike in Western Europe, the left-wing parties in the East tend more towards the authoritarian pole of this second dimension whereas the pro-market parties lean towards more libertarian and less-traditional policies (Marks et al 2006).¹ This may well become a point of contestation inside the supranational party groups that make up the EP, given that the positions of MEPs on the “green /alternative/ libertarian -traditional/ authoritarian/ nationalism” (GAL-TAN) divide are important for vote choices in the EP (Thomassen, Noury and Voeten 2004, Voeten 2005) and are highly relevant predictors for the positions of national parties on issues of European integration (Hooghe et al. 2002; Marks et al. 2006). Thus, we may expect that within party groups, an East-West divide on GAL-TAN issues becomes apparent.

B. Expansion and National Divisions

Hix, Noury, and Roland (2006b) argue that the left-right divide supersedes national divisions in EP politics because in federalist systems conflicts between territorial units can be addressed through the devolution of powers, whereas conflicts between socio-economic groups are more difficult to tackle in this manner. As such, the observation that the EP is dominated by partisan left-right politics does not reflect the irrelevance of national divisions in EU politics but rather that such conflicts are resolved in a different manner. This theory implies that decision-making procedures are centralized in a selective manner. Precisely on those issue areas in which cleavages cross-cut national divisions is decision-making delegated to supranational institutions, such as the EP. On those issues where national divisions are more prominent, one would expect to see either decentralized (national) decision-making or decisions by unanimity voting in the Council.

Yet, the new member states had little say in the allocation of competencies within the EU system. Thus, if conflicts of interests exist between the Eastern Europeans and the EU15, then those may not have been assimilated properly by EU institutions. In addition, the stalling of the EU Constitution should impress upon new members that altering the fundamental institutional characteristics of the EU through the treaty process will be exceedingly difficult. It just might be, then, that the EP

¹ This is consistent with Kitschelt's (1992) view that liberalization dominates contestation between Eastern European parties.

will increasingly become a venue in which national divisions are on display.

All of this is premised upon the notion that new members have some national interests in common and that they can build viable coalitions with older EU members in the EP to translate those interests into policies. The most visible divide of this type has emerged in the security area; tempting U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's to divide Europe into an "Old" and a "New" part in which "the center of gravity is shifting to the east".² The tendentious nature of these remarks did not fail to irritate the leadership of those put in the "Old" category. Yet, there is some truth to the notion that security issues have proven to be divisive and that the governments of the largest Eastern European countries have diverged from the "Franco-German" axis, while building coalitions with other "old" members (see, for instance, Jones 2004). Moreover, these issues have actually appeared in the EP as the sixth Parliament held several votes on resolutions concerning the war in Iraq and other divisive foreign policy issues.

It is plausible too, that cross-national coalitions can be build on other issues, including agriculture, regional subsidies, immigration, or religious issues. The Central and Eastern European member states tend to be poorer than their counterparts and may, at some point, form alliances with Southern countries over issues of redistribution. MEPs from heavily Catholic country such as Poland may also form alliances with Catholics of the South about the role of values in the EU, as displayed by the debate on the EU Constitution.

If there is merit to these concerns, then we expect increased voting along national lines to the detriment of supranational parties. It may also be that within the party groups, we will witness a separation between the new Eastern European members and the EU15. The empirical analyses examines whether there is evidence for such patterns in the early goings of the sixth Parliament.

C. Empirical Strategy

As should be clear from the discussion above, if and how expansion has affected and will affect EP politics is as yet unclear. This chapter uses a new collection of roll-call votes taken in the first year and a half of the sixth EP to confront the theoretical expectations with some preliminary data.³ The dataset includes votes on 1641 non-unanimous roll-calls taken before April 7 2006. To compare the sixth EP with past parliaments, I also rely on the exhaustive dataset collected by Hix, Noury, and Roland (2006b) of all roll-calls taken during the first five

² Department of Defense, Press Conference, Wednesday, January 22, 2003 http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2003/t01232003_t0122sdfpc.html (accessed May 27, 2006).

³ The data were collected by the author from the European Parliament's web-site: <http://www.europarl.eu.int/activities/expert/pv/search/go.do>.

parliaments.⁴

The empirical analyses focus both on the extent to which enlargement has affected the functioning of the parliament as a whole as well as on how MEPs from the new member states have assimilated into EP politics. The analysis proceeds in two parts. The first section examines the concerns that as a consequence of enlargement, the EP as a whole has become less dominated by partisan conflicts and more by national divisions. Moreover, this section examines whether MEPs from the new member states are more nationalistic in their vote choices than the EU15 MEPs. The second section uses empirical spatial models to examine the ideological underpinnings of vote choices in the EP.

III. PARTISAN AND NATIONAL DIVISIONS IN THE EP

A. *Formal Affiliations with Party Groups*

A first issue is to establish whether MEPs from the new member states formally affiliate themselves with the different European Party Groups (EPGs) to the same degree as their counterparts from the EU15. Table 1 shows that while MEPs from central and Eastern Europe are slightly more likely to be unaffiliated with any party group than MEPs from the original fifteen, the overwhelming majority of Eastern MEPs (94%) formally belong to a supranational group. Sixty percent of Eastern MEPs are members of the “big two” party groups that have dominated EP politics: the PES (Socialists) and the EPP/ED (Conservatives and Christian Democrats). This is slightly less than for the EP15 (66%) but not by much. In general, there is little evidence that formal affiliations are markedly different for the new members.

TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

B. *Partisan and National Divisions*

More important than evaluating formal affiliations is to evaluate what proportion of the variation in actual roll-call vote choices is accounted for by partisan affiliation and nationality respectively? An obvious starting point for answering this question would be to calculate the percentage of roll-call vote choices that are predicted correctly if we assume that each MEP votes with his or her party group/national delegation. The higher this percentage, the more informative the classification of MEPs into party/national groups is about actual parliamentary behavior. A problem with this approach, however, is that the resulting classification percentages are not easily comparable across time: classification percentages may increase because voting becomes

⁴ Data on the EP1-4 are available from: <http://personal.lse.ac.uk/HIX/HixNouryRolandEPdata.HTM>. The data for the fifth parliament were kindly shared by the Simon Hix.

more partisan/nationalist or simply because the size of majorities in the EP increases.⁵ I therefore use a fit statistic common in non-parametric statistics: the Average Proportional Reduction in Error (APRE), which is defined as follows:

$$APRE = \frac{\text{Total Variation} - \text{Variation Explained by Partisanship (or Nationality)}}{\text{Total Variation}}$$

In the context of roll-call voting, total variation can be defined as the number of MEPs in the minority categories (“no” and “abstain” if the plurality vote is “yes”). The variation explained by classifying MEPs into party groups (or national delegations) is the number of MEPs that votes against the plurality within her party/country. So, APRE becomes:

$$APRE = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^K (\text{Overall Minority Vote} - \text{Within Party(or Country) Minority Vote})_j}{\sum_{j=1}^K (\text{Overall Minority Vote})_j}$$

Figure 1 graphs the APRE for party and national groups. I have divided each of the parliaments into 12-month periods, which do not coincide with calendar years. The last two data-points are from the sixth parliament. It should be immediately obvious from the graph that membership in European party groups is much more informative about MEP vote choices than nationality.

There is no evidence that the early sessions of the sixth parliament initiated a departure in the extent to which nationality or partisanship account for variation in MEP vote choices. Nationality accounted for about one-third of the variation in the first parliament. Its impact then declined sharply throughout the first four parliaments, after which it stabilized. In the early goings of the sixth parliament, the variation explained by membership in national groups was about half what it was in the first EP. The sharpest shift away from voting along national lines came with the election of the third EP.

The importance of partisanship increased gradually in the early years, peaked in the 3rd Parliament and then appeared to decrease somewhat. This is consistent with the substantive observation that the 3rd Parliament represented the heydays of “Grand Coalition” politics, characterized by frequent deals between the EP’s two main party groups (EPP and PSE), whereas EP politics became increasingly characterized by left-right competition afterwards (Kreppel and Hix 2003).

The story told by Figure 1 is rather different, however, from a similar graph created by Hix, Noury, and Roland (2006b, figure 5.2). According to that analysis, the relative cohesion of parties gradually *decreased* until 1994 and sharply *increased* after that (exactly the

⁵ Hix et al. (2006b, chapter 5) make a similar point.

opposite of figure 1). The difference is in the methodology. Hix et al. compute cohesion scores for party groups and divide these scores by the overall cohesion of the parliament.⁶ They then take the average of the party group cohesion scores as a measure for the importance of party groups in the EP. The appendix to this chapter explains why this approach renders results that are theoretically untenable and, more generally, that cohesion scores should not be used to conduct analyses of variance. Empirically, the problem with these relative cohesion scores is that they overcorrect for sizeable observed fluctuations in the overall cohesion of the parliament (see appendix).

C. National Considerations

Are national interests a more prominent concern for MEP delegations from the new Eastern European countries than for their counterparts from the EU15? Such comparisons are usually made by comparing the cohesion scores of MEPs across countries. A major problem in such exercises is that we ought to control for the previous observation that party groups tend to be very cohesive: one national delegation may look more cohesive than another simply because it is dominated by members of a single party group or by a stable coalition of party groups. I propose an imperfect but intuitive and powerful alternative indicator: the percentage of all vote choices that go against the observed plurality EPG position but with the observed plurality of the national delegation.⁷ This should serve as a useful indication of the extent to which national considerations override partisan considerations in the vote choices of MEPs.

FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE

As figure 2 shows, among the EU15, MEPs from the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Denmark depart most frequently from their EPG's position in order to vote with the main tendency within their national delegations. On the other hand, MEPs from Spain, Portugal, Germany, and the BENELUX countries relatively rarely diverge from their party groups in order to vote with their national delegations. Again, these results diverge from analyses using cohesion scores. For example, Hix and Noury (2006, table 5) find that the UK is the *least* cohesive delegation, suggesting that it exhibits little national-based voting. This result probably occurs because the British Conservatives frequently defect from the EPP-EDD positions on issues of European integration, thus lowering the number of Grand Coalition votes on which a national

⁶ The same procedure is applied in Hix, Noury and Roland 2005, and Hix and Noury 2006.

⁷ A more proper way to do this would be to estimate the marginal effects of nationality in a hierarchical probit model with EPG membership as a covariate. This is complicated somewhat by the three (not necessarily ordered) vote choices.

delegation is perceived as “cohesive,” albeit for reasons that have little to do with voting along national lines.

Figure 2 provides a mixed answer to the question that motivates this section. On the one hand, there is no evidence that the Central and Eastern European delegates are generally more concerned with national considerations than their EU15 counterparts. On the other hand, MEPs from the two largest newcomers, Poland and the Czech Republic, exhibit high rates of defections from party groups in favor of national delegations. While these defections rates are not higher, or at least not noticeably so, than for some of the more Euro-skeptic EU15 delegations, this is an indication that national-based voting is important to the largest new members.

IV. IDEOLOGICAL STRUCTURES

A. *Low-Dimensional Spatial Models*

A second aspect of the structure of party competition is its ideological underpinnings. It has long been argued that legislative decision-making is more predictable and stable when it occurs in a low-dimensional ideological space. As such, scholars of U.S. Congress have developed methods for fitting low-dimensional spatial models to observed roll-call voting matrices (Poole and Rosenthal 1986, 1997; Poole 2005). These methods have also been applied to the European Parliament (Hix 2001; Noury 2002; Hix, Noury, and Roland 2006b). These studies have revealed the existence of a fairly stable two-dimensional ideological structure. The first, and dominant, dimension divides MEPs along the familiar left-right socio-economic continuum. The second dimension separates those MEPs with relatively favourable and unfavourable opinions towards furthering European Integration.

Figure 3 plots the estimated ideal points of MEPs in a two-dimensional spatial model.⁸ The model is estimated using the non-parametric optimal classification algorithm (Poole 2000) because in parliaments with strong party discipline there are serious violations of the parametric assumptions underlying W-NOMINATE (Rosenthal and Voeten 2004).

FIGURE 3 ABOUT HERE

The results clearly reveal the continuation of the aforementioned ideological structure (see also Hix and Noury 2006). From left-to-right, the Greens, Socialists, Liberals, and Conservatives are located along the first dimension. On the left bottom are the left-wing anti-Europe parties, whereas the Independence and Democracy members are appropriately

⁸ One MEP, Irena Belohorská, is not plotted as her irregular vote choices (from an ideological perspective) made her an extreme outlier.

located towards the bottom right of the picture (albeit in a more dispersed way). The wayward group of EPP-EDD MEPs on the anti-Europe side of the rest of the party consists mostly of Conservatives from the UK, whose skepticism of intensifying the European project is well-documented. As such, it is apparent that the main ideological structure of the parliament has not changed.

Figure 4 shows that the fit of the low-dimensional spatial models to the observed data has also not decreased in the sixth parliament. The figure plots the APREs for one, two, and three dimensional models. The basic intuition behind the APRE is similar to that discussed before: the APRE for a one-dimensional model indicates the proportion of the variance in RCV behavior that can be explained by ordering MEPs along a single dimension, where variance is defined by the number of choices that are unexplained by the baseline model that “everyone votes with the plurality.”

Most importantly: there is no evidence that expansion has made the parliament less structured from an ideological perspective. Quite to the contrary, a one-dimensional model fits the data better for the sixth parliament than for any other parliament! Instead, from an ideological perspective, the fifth parliament is the least cohesive (perhaps due to the issue of enlargement). Thus, at least from an evaluation of the early voting, fears that enlargement undermines the low-dimensional ideological nature of the EP appear unwarranted.

FIGURE 4 ABOUT HERE

B. Fit of Eastern MEPs into the Ideological Structure

To say that enlargement has not altered the overall ideological structure of EP politics is not the same as to claim that Eastern and Central European MEPs fit in the same way into the ideological space as MEPs from the EU15. A first indication is that the vote choices of Eastern MEPs are not explained as well by the two-dimensional spatial model as the vote choices of other MEPs. On average, the two-dimensional model from figure 3 explains 91.6% of the vote choices of Eastern MEPs, against 93.4% of vote choices made by the MEPs from the EU15, and 94.5% of choices by the non-East European new members. An ANOVA analysis determines that this difference is statistically significant.⁹ Moreover, this effect remains significant and substantively important after controlling for the most obvious alternative explanation. In general, legislators with extremist preferences fit the spatial model less well (see Poole and Rosenthal 1997). In a multiple regression analysis with MEP classification as the dependent variable and the squared MEP ideal points as independent variables, Eastern MEPs are estimated to have 1.8% lower classification percentage than

⁹ F=8.477, p=.000.

their counterparts ($p=.000$).

Thus, MEPs from Central and Eastern Europe fit less comfortably in the EP's ideological structure. Closer analysis reveals that this result is primarily due to the poor fit of Polish MEPs: On average, the two-dimensional model explains 89.4% of their vote choices correctly, whereas 95.6% of the vote choices of German MEPs are accounted for by the two-dimensional model. These differences are quite large in the context of empirical spatial models. We should note, however, that Polish MEPs are not noticeably less predictable (from an ideological perspective) in their vote choices than Danish and Swedish MEPs, who also exhibit a poor fit to the model.

A second concern may be that the ideal points of Eastern MEPs are not motivated by ideology to the same extent as those of EU15 MEPs. Table 2 reports the results from a regression analysis that explains MEP ideal points on the two dimensions from figure 3 using data on the ideological positions of their national parties (see also Hix, Noury and Roland 2006a). These data are based on expert surveys conducted in 2002 among all EU members (see Marks et al. 2006). The survey includes expert judgments about the extent to which a party supports European integration, a party's position on the economic left-right dimension, and a party's position on the GAL/TAN new politics dimension discussed earlier.¹⁰

TABLE TWO ABOUT HERE

Panel A shows that, for the EU15, an MEP's position on the first dimension is primarily a function of its national parties' economic left-right and GAL/TAN positions and to a lesser, but significant, degree of its stands towards European integration. For Eastern European MEPs, economic left-right is by far the most important¹¹ and positions on EU integration are insignificant.

Panel B shows that, in accordance with the casual interpretation discussed before, pro-anti Europe positions of national parties are by far the most important variables explaining variation along the second dimension of contestation.¹² There is one striking difference between the regression coefficients for Eastern and EU15 MEPs: among the EU 15, parties on the economic right appear more favorably disposed towards European Integration whereas among eastern Europeans, this relation appears to be the opposite. As a whole, however, it appears that the perceived policy stances of Eastern European national parties explain

¹⁰ For more details, see:

<http://www.unc.edu/~gwmaks/data/2002%20dataset/chapel%20hill%202002%20Codebook.doc>

¹¹ Standardized coefficient is 1.1 for economic left-right and .61 for GAL/TAN.

¹² For the EU 15, the standardized coefficient on the EU variable is .75, .23 for left-right. For Eastern/Central Europe, these figures are 1.1 and -.30.

the RCV behavior of Eastern European MEPs rather well. Moreover, the structure of these policy divides is reasonably similar to that in the West, with some small but notable differences.

C. Within Party-Group Divisions

A final hypothesis that warrants attention is that East-West cleavages have emerged within party groups. As speculated earlier, these may arise because Eastern national parties appear to align differently on the GAL-TAN dimension (Marks et al), because there is increased heterogeneity in income differences, because of divides over security issues, or because the new members want to alter the structure of the European project, which was largely negotiated without their input.

In order to investigate this, I applied the empirical spatial model to the two main party groups individually: the EPP-EDD and the PES. Figure 5 shows the resulting scatter plot. Eastern European members are denoted with black two-letter country codes, EU15 MEPs are identified by grey two-letter country-codes (MEPs from the remaining two new member states are omitted). 52.7% of the observed variation within the EPP is explained by ordering MEPs along a single dimension (and 39% of the variation among PSE MEPs).¹³ The second dimensions add little explanatory value.

FIGURE 5 ABOUT HERE

The first dimension within the EPP-ED is very strongly correlated with variation in national party positions on European integration (Pearson $R=.83$).¹⁴ As is evident from the graph, it is mostly the British MEPs that distinguish themselves in terms of their Euro-skepticism. To a lesser extent, Swedish and Czech EPP-ED members also tend to be more on the anti-integration side. There is, however, no evidence of an East-West divide on this issue within the EPP-ED. The second dimension is correlated most strongly with national party positions on the enlargement issue ($R=.53$).¹⁵ On this dimension, there is a significant East-West divide: the mean position of MEPs from Eastern countries is $-.06$ versus $.02$ for the EP 15 ($F=16.51$, $p=.000$). Thus, there is some evidence that issues related to enlargement divide the conservative European party group, although this dimension accounts for little variation in actual roll-call votes.

The substantive content of the dimension of contestation within the PES is different: the first dimension is most strongly correlated with GAL-TAN or libertarian-authoritarian positions of national parties (Pearson R of $.400$). On this issue, there is a very clear East-West divide,

¹³ These are APREs.

¹⁴ National party positions derived from expert survey, as in table 2.

¹⁵ This is Question 11 in the aforementioned survey.

with Eastern European members more towards the TAN (authoritarian) side of the spectrum. This confirms the finding that the national party programs of the Eastern European left are more towards the TAN side of the spectrum than of their Western counterparts (Marks et al. 2006). This finding, however, shows that the observed ideological conflict indeed materializes in actual legislative behavior. The second dimension again mostly captures conflict over enlargement issues ($R=.382$). In all, East-West conflict is extremely important in accounting for internal divisions within the Socialist Party group.

CONCLUSION [WILL BE EXTENDED]

This chapter has compared roll-call voting behavior in the sixth parliament to the preceding parliaments in an effort to evaluate the extent to which enlargement affects politics in the EP, and thereby the prospects for supranational democratic representation in the EU. The early voting patterns reveal little cause for concern about the overall extent to which national-based or partisan and ideology-based voting characterize the EP. There are some noticeable East-West divides within parties over enlargement issues and values issues (within the PES), but as a whole East-West conflict has far from dominated EP politics, at least as revealed by roll-call voting.

One may question whether the first few years of voting records provide an accurate picture of the effects of enlargement. The answer will depend upon one's favored theoretical perspective. Those who put great stock in socialization theories would expect that the assimilation of Eastern MEPs into European party groups will only get stronger. As such, we should expect that Eastern MEPs will fit the EPs ideological structure increasingly well and that East-West divides within party groups should gradually disappear.

Those who see politics as dominated by more fundamental clashes of interest will have a different perspective. Inequalities in income, divergent security interests and interests over the direction of the EU are not going to disappear overnight. As the EP grows stronger and the position of the new members gets further entrenched, these new members may well seek to alter the current bases of contestation within the EP. In all, the current chapter offers no more than a preliminary look at this important issue.

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Methodological Appendix

Hix et al calculate the following Cohesion Index, where Y, N, and A stand for the number of Yes, No, and Abstain choices on a given roll-call within a party:

$$\text{Absolute Cohesion (ACI)} = \frac{\max\{Y, N, A\} - \frac{1}{2}[(Y + N + A) - \max\{Y, N, A\}]}{(Y + N + A)}$$

In order to make the index comparable across time and issues, they then divide the index for each party by the cohesion index for the parliament as a whole, resulting in a Relative Cohesion Index (RCI). They then take the average RCI across parties as an indicator for overall cohesion.

	Issue 1	Issue 2	Issue 3	Issue 4	Issue 5
Party 1	100 Y	100 Y	75 Y, 25 N	90 Y, 10 N	50Y, 50N
Party 2	100 Y	100 Y	100 Y	90 Y, 10 N	50Y, 50N
Party 3	100 N	100 Y	75 N, 25 Y	90 Y, 10 N	50Y, 50N
Party 4	100 N	100 N	100 N	90 Y, 10 N	50Y, 50N
Plurality	50%	75%	50%	90%	50%
APRE	1	1	.75	0	0
ACI	1	1	.81	.85	.25
RCI	4	1.6	3.2	1	1

It is useful to walk through a stylized example to see the problems with this index. For simplicity, let's assume that we have four equally sized parties (N=100). First, consider Issue 1, where two parties cohesively vote "yes" and the other two vote "no" (see table above). Appropriately, both APRE and RCI reach their maximum levels of cohesion. Now, suppose one party (party 3) switches uniformly to the "no" camp. As a result, RCI is cut in half. So, RCI may change dramatically due to changes in coalition formation even if party discipline stays the same. To illustrate just how sensitive the RCI is to the size of the plurality, consider Issue 3, which is identical to Issue 2 except that parties 1 and 3 have internal divisions and that the plurality size shrinks. The RCI on issue 3 is twice as high as on issue 2, even though party discipline is perfect on issue 2 and far from perfect on issue 3! Clearly, this is theoretically untenable.

This oversensitivity to plurality sizes (or more precisely the ACI of the parliament) is substantively important. Figure 5.1 in Hix et al. (2006b) shows that the absolute cohesion of the EP increased from around .6 to around .7 in EP 3 and EP 4, and back to below .6 in EPs 5 and 6. As such, RCI should increase by a factor of around 1.2 as a mere consequence of these changes in majority sizes, which could be related to electoral results, coalition formation, or other factors that are

unrelated to party discipline.

There is, of course, good reason to be concerned with the influence of majority sizes. The example Issues 4 and 5 illustrate this point. On both issues, party membership is completely uninformative about the vote choices of MEPs. Yet, ACI is much higher on Issue 4 than on Issue 5 simply because the size of the majority is larger on the former issue. RCI nicely controls for this, but so does APRE: the explained variance by partisanship is correctly calculated as 0 on issues 4 and 5.

The main lesson here is that the tools of non-parametric analyses of variance are much more useful in answering the type of questions we are interested in than are relatively ad hoc cohesion indices.

Note that even though this discussion has focused on indices that characterize a parliament as a whole, it is straightforward to extend this idea to the analysis of individual parties (or national groups). Hix et al (2005, 2006b) compute relative cohesion indices for parties to pursue an analysis across time. An index based on similar principles as APRE compares the expected minority vote based on the vote in the parliament as a whole to the observed minority vote inside a party:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{PRE}_{\text{Party}} &= \frac{(\text{Expected Minority Vote}) - (\text{Observed Minority Vote})}{(\text{Expected Minority Vote})} \\ &= \frac{\frac{(Y + N + A)_{\text{ALL}} - \max\{Y, N, A\}_{\text{ALL}}}{(Y + N + A)_{\text{ALL}}} (Y + N + A)_{\text{Party}} - [(Y + N + A) - \max\{Y, N, A\}]_{\text{Party}}}{\frac{(Y + N + A)_{\text{ALL}} - \max\{Y, N, A\}_{\text{ALL}}}{(Y + N + A)_{\text{ALL}}} (Y + N + A)_{\text{Party}}} \end{aligned}$$

We should note that this index can take negative values on individual votes (unlike the APRE for the parliament as a whole) if the party is more divided than the parliament. It is, however, a much cleaner way to correct for the problem of varying plurality sizes than RCI.

Table 1: Enlargement and EP Group Membership
(Entries are counts and column percentages)

<i>EPGroup</i>		<i>EP15</i>	<i>Central- Eastern Europe</i>	<i>Other New Members</i>	<i>Total</i>
EPP-ED (European People's Party/ European Democrats)	N	212	64	5	281
	%	35.6%	40.5%	45.5%	36.7%
PES (Party of European Socialists)	N	178	30	3	211
	%	29.9%	19.0%	27.3%	27.6%
ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe)	N	72	19	1	92
	%	12.1%	12.0%	9.1%	12.0%
Greens-EFA (European Greens-European Free Alliance)	N	41	1	0	42
	%	6.9%	.6%	.0%	5.5%
EUL/NGL (European United Left/Nordic Green Left)	N	34	6	2	42
	%	5.7%	3.8%	18.2%	5.5%
IND/DEM (Independence and Democracy)	N	25	14	0	39
	%	4.2%	8.9%	.0%	5.1%
UEN (Union for Europe of the Nations)	N	14	15	0	29
	%	2.3%	9.5%	.0%	3.8%
NI (No Affiliation)	N	20	9	0	29
	%	3.4%	5.7%	.0%	3.8%
Total	N	596	158	11	765
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Note: There are 765 rather than 732 MEPs in the dataset because several MEPs rotated out of office during the session.

Table 2: Regression of Expert Judgments of National Party Positions on
MEP ideal points
(robust standard errors clustered on national party membership)

Panel A: First Dimension Coordinates (Left-Right positions)				
	<i>EU15</i>		<i>Central/Eastern Europe</i>	
	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
(Constant)	-.914***	.027	-.664	.179
Pro-Anti Europe (1-7)	.035***	.015	-.020	.016
Economic Left-Right (0-10)	.069***	.010	.104***	.018
Gal/Tan or new politics (0-10)	.063***	.014	.056***	.012
N		483		129
R²_{adj}		.845		.656
S.E. Estimate		.100		.129

Panel B: Second Dimension Coordinates (Pro-Anti Integration)				
	<i>EU15</i>		<i>Central/Eastern Europe</i>	
	B	Std. Error	B	Std. Error
(Constant)	-.565***	.089	-.600***	.174
Pro-Anti Europe (1-7)	.106***	.013	.141***	.020
Economic Left-Right (0-10)	.026**	.012	-.033***	.010
Gal/Tan or new politics (0-10)	-.023	.014	.008	.011
N		483		129
R²_{adj}		.713		.711
S.E. Estimate		.112		.134

Figure 1: Proportion of Variation in Roll-Call Voting Explained by Nationality and Party Group

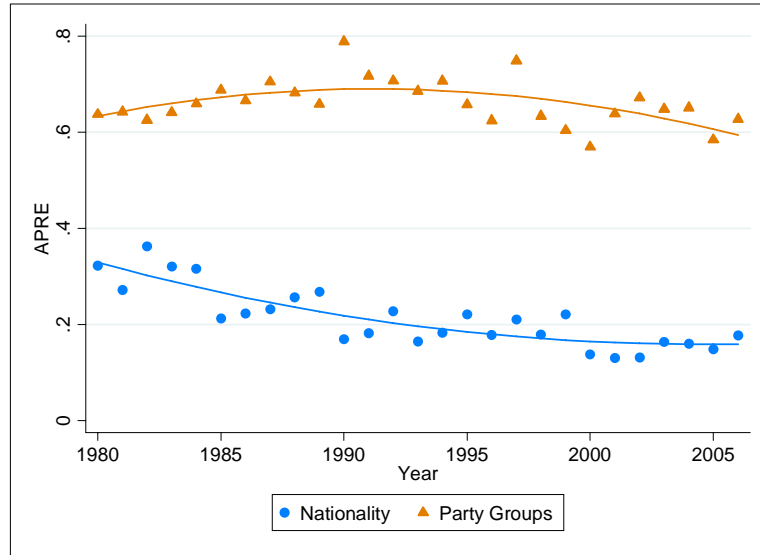


Figure 2: Percentage of RCVs on which MEPs Vote against Party Group but With National Delegation Plurality

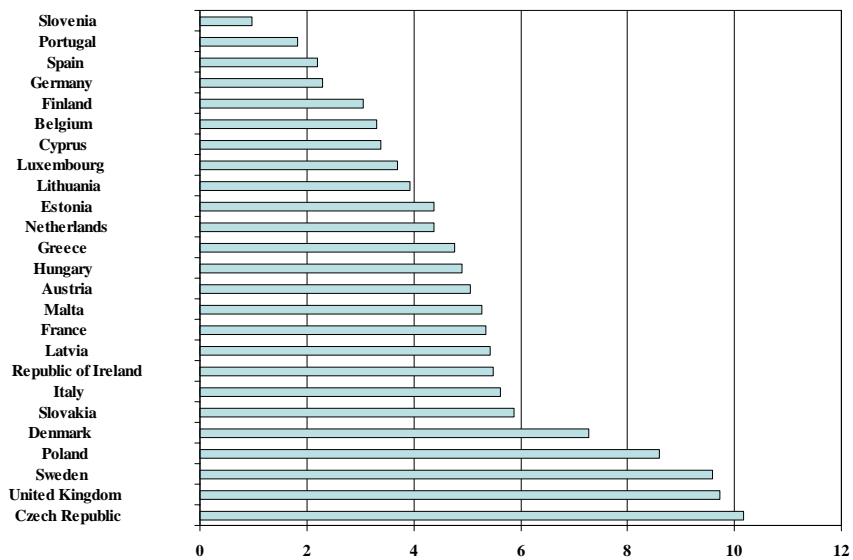


Figure 3: Distribution of MEP Ideal Points in the Sixth Parliament (based on Optimal Classification)

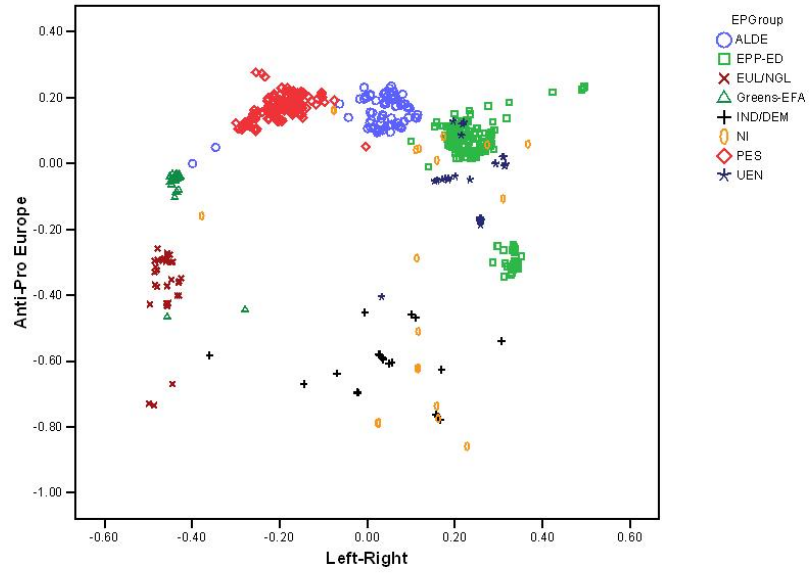


Figure 3: APRE of One, Two, and Three Dimensional Spatial Models to Roll-Call Voting in the 5 European Parliaments (based on non-parametric model)

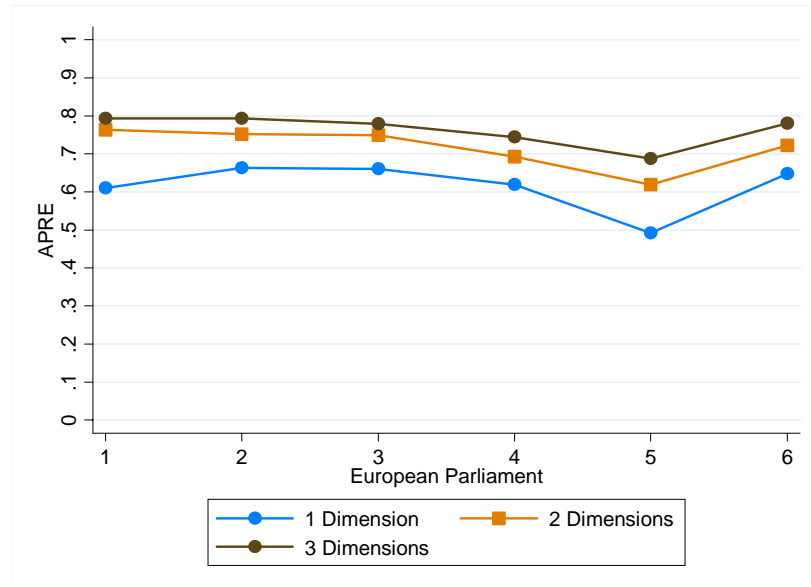


Figure 5: Within-Party Scalings of Eastern European (black) and EU15 (grey) MEPs

