

**After Enlargement:
Voting Patterns in the Sixth European Parliament**

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Abstract

We analyze how voting behavior in the European Parliament has changed after the enlargement of the European Union to 10 new member states in 2004. Using roll call votes from the first half of the sixth European Parliament (between July 2004 and December 2006), we compare the voting behavior of MEPs in this Parliament with their behavior in the previous Parliament (between 1999 and 2004). We look at party cohesion, coalition formation, and the ‘spatial map’ of voting by Members of the European Parliament. We find stable levels of party cohesion, that inter-party coalitions form mainly around the left-right dimension, and that the ideological distance between parties is the strongest predictor of coalition preferences. Overall we find that EU enlargement in 2004 has not changed the way politics works inside the European Parliament. We also look at the specific case of the controversial Services Directive, and still find that ideology was the main predictor of voting behavior, though nationality played a role.

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1. Introduction

Scholars have extensively analyzed how Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) vote (e.g. Attina, 1990; Raunio, 1997; Kreppel, 2002; Hix, Noury and Roland, 2006, 2007). In particular, Hix, Noury and Roland (2007) studied the behavior of the MEPs in more than 12,000 roll call votes between 1979 and 2004. There are several findings from this research: MEPs vote increasingly along party lines and decreasingly along national lines; the ‘cohesion’ of the European political groups has increased; the political groups have become increasingly competitive, as left-right splits became more common than the grand-coalition between the two largest groups (the European People’s Party and the Socialists); and the main dimension of politics in the European Parliament is the classic left-right dimension. In short, the European Parliament is much like other democratic parliaments, in that it is dominated by parties and left-right politics, and increasingly so.

Did the enlargement of the EU to ten new member states in 2004 change these patterns? At least two possible theoretical effects might result from the 2004 enlargement. First, there may be a “size effect” as the European Parliament becomes larger. The number of member states increased from 15 to 25, the number of MEPs increased from 626 to 732 members, and the number of national parties in the Parliament increased from 122 to 175. In our previous research, we found that as the political groups grew in size, their voting cohesion actually increased rather than decreased, as a result of greater incentives to specialize and divide tasks between leaders and followers in larger parties.

Second, and pointing in the opposite direction, a “composition effect” may change coalition formation between MEPs and national parties. With the 2004 enlargement, the European Parliament became more politically, economically and culturally heterogeneous than

before. The ten new member states have lower income per capita than most of the ‘old’ fifteen members, and the level of inequality between the EU states is now comparable to the level of inequality between the states in the United States (Morrison and Murtin, 2004). Increased economic inequality may go hand in hand with political polarization in the European Parliament, as it has done in the US Congress (see McCarthy, Poole and Rosenthal, 2003). And, given the cultural, economic and historical differences between the new and old member states, a new east-west cleavage may emerge in the new Parliament (cf. Schmitt and Thomassen, 2005).

In short, one might expect the MEPs from the new member states to behave somewhat differently from the MEPs from the older member states, which would among other things reduce transnational party cohesion. To test whether this is the case we analyze all roll call votes in the first half of the Sixth Parliament (July 2004 to December 2006). We compare aggregate and individual level MEP behavior in these votes with MEP behavior in all the roll call votes in the Fifth European Parliament (July 1999 to May 2004). In section two of the paper we look at the levels of cohesion of the political groups and the member state groups of MEPs. In section three we turn to the patterns of competition and coalition behavior between the political parties. Then, in section four we present a spatial analysis of individual MEP voting. In section five we focus on the highly controversial legislation on opening up of the services sector to cross-border competition, known as the Services Directive.

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2. Party and Member State Cohesion

To measure the voting cohesion of political party and national groups in the European Parliament we use the ‘agreement index’ in Hix et al. (2005). However, any group of MEPs will inherently

be more ‘cohesive’ in lopsided votes (purely as a function of the fact that almost everyone voted the same way) than in more evenly split votes. So, to compare how cohesion has changed over time, irrespective of the majority size in votes, we calculate what we call the ‘relative cohesion score’ for each group of MEPs, which is the basic cohesion score of the group of MEPs in a vote divided by the *majority size* in the vote.²

[Figure 1 about here]

Figure 1 illustrates the average relative cohesion of the transnational European parties and each member states’ group of MEPs in each of the five directly-elected European Parliaments since 1979 and in the first half of the Sixth European Parliament (2004-06). The dotted lines represent the standard deviations around these averages. Three patterns are worth noting. First, voting in the European Parliament is more along transnational party lines than along national lines, as the transnational parties are more cohesive than the member state-based groups. Second, the gap between voting along party lines and national lines has increased since the early 1990s, as party cohesion has grown while member state-based cohesion has remained constant. Third, this gap has remained constant in the first half of the Sixth Parliament relative to the whole of the Fifth Parliament (1999-2004).

[Tables 1 and 2 about here]

Tables 1 and 2 look at voting along national and party lines, as measured by the relative cohesion of each member state’s group of MEPs and each political group in all votes in the Sixth and Fifth Parliaments as well as in legislative, non-legislative and budgetary votes in the Sixth Parliament. Voting along national lines has grown slightly, by .053 (p-value=.000) in relative terms when comparing all 25 member states in the current Parliament with the 15 member states in the previous Parliament. When comparing the 15 member states represented in both

Parliaments the increase in relative cohesion is .02 (p-value=.000). However, cohesion along national lines remains considerably lower than cohesion along party lines.

Regarding individual member states, in general there have only been minor changes in the levels of member state-based cohesion between the Fifth and the Sixth Parliaments. National-based voting has increased slightly for MEPs from Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Finland, Denmark, France and Italy, but decreased slightly for MEPs from Germany, Austria, Sweden, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. Also, the MEPs from several of the new member states are more cohesive along national lines than the MEPs from the old member states. However, this may simply be a function of the fact that member states with fewer MEPs appear more cohesive than member states with more MEPs.³

Table 1 also shows that these national-based voting patterns generally hold across legislative votes, non-legislative votes and budgetary votes. The only additional fact to observe is the slightly higher levels of member state-based cohesion in budgetary votes compared to legislative votes. Further, even on budgetary issues, MEPs vote with their transnational parties more often than they do with their national colleagues in other political groups.

Meanwhile, party cohesion has remained stable despite the 2004 enlargement. Relative party cohesion has slightly, but not significantly, declined (by -.014, p-value=.113).⁴ The Socialists (SOC) and the Greens (G/EFA) remain the most cohesive parties, whereas the Nationalists (UEN) and the Anti-Europeans (IND/DEM) remain the least cohesive. The biggest decline in relative cohesion has been for the Liberals (ALDE). This is not surprising since this group is more ideologically heterogeneous than it was in the previous Parliament, as a result of Italian Margherita party and the French UDF party joining the Liberals from the Conservatives. The Greens were also less cohesive in the first half of this Parliament than it was in the whole of the last Parliament. However, the two largest groups (Conservatives and Socialists) have become

slightly less cohesive while the Radical Left, Nationalists and the Anti-Europeans have become slightly more cohesive.

Party cohesion is very stable across different types of votes. What explains the lower relative cohesion of parties on budgetary votes is that the European Parliament as a whole is more cohesive on budgetary issues than on legislative or non-legislative issues. Indeed, the majority size on budgetary issues is about 77 percent, whereas on legislative and non legislative issues the majority size is respectively 73 percent and 71 percent.

3. Party Competition and Coalitions

To investigate patterns of party competition and coalitions, Table 3 shows the proportion of times the majorities in any two parties voted the same way in the first half of the Sixth Parliament compared to the whole of the Fifth Parliament.

[Table 3 about here]

The first regularity is the stability of the left-right structure of competition. In both Parliaments, any political party is more likely to vote the same way as a party which is closer to it on the left-right dimension than with a party which is further away on this dimension. For example, in the Sixth Parliament, the Nationalists, which is the furthest right party, voted 84 percent of the time with the Conservatives, 72 percent with the Liberals, 63 percent with the Socialists, 45 percent with the Greens and 42 percent with the Radical Left. Only the Anti-Europeans and the non-attached member (na) do not fit this left-right pattern. This is because the main activity of these two groups of MEPs is to ‘protest’ against the main political groups, and hence these two groups vote least with the two biggest parties and more often with the parties on

the left and right extremes. Again, the protest behavior of these two groups is consistent across both parliaments.

Regarding the two biggest parties, the Conservatives and Socialists voted together slightly more often in the first half of the Sixth Parliament (68 percent of the time) than they did in the Fifth Parliament (65 percent). It is worth noting, however, that these figures are lower than in the peak of cooperation between the two largest parties, in the Third Parliament (1989-1994), when the Conservatives and Socialists voted together 71 percent of the time (Hix, Noury and Roland, 2005: 221).

Nevertheless, underneath the generally stable structure of party alignments, there are several subtle changes in competition and coalition behavior between the Fifth and the Sixth Parliaments. First, the behavior of the Liberals changed. Whereas in the Fifth Parliament the Liberals voted more often with the Socialists than with the Conservatives (73 percent compared to 68 percent), in the Sixth Parliament the Liberals voted more often with the Conservatives than with the Socialists (78 percent compared to 75 percent). Second, the pattern of behavior within the right and within the left changed between the Fifth and Sixth Parliaments. On the right, the Conservatives and Nationalists voted together more often, and so did the Liberals and Nationalists. Meanwhile, on the left, the Socialists voted slightly less often with the Greens and Radical Left.

Overall, these patterns suggest that whereas in the Fifth European Parliament the Liberals were pivotal in deciding whether a majority coalition formed from the right or from the left, in the first half of the Sixth Parliament there was a clearer centre-right majority bloc (between the Liberals-Conservatives and Nationalists), while the three groups on the centre-left and left (Socialists, Greens and Radical Left) were in a minority position and were less united.

4. Spatial Maps of Individual MEPs' Voting Behavior

To analyze individual voting patterns we apply Poole and Rosenthal's (1997) NOMINATE geometric scaling method to the European Parliament roll call votes. This method provides a measure of how much variance is explained by each recovered dimension as well as ideal point estimates for every MEP (cf. Hix, Noury and Roland, 2006, 2007).

[Figure 2 about here]

Figure 2 shows the two-dimensional map of MEP voting in the Fifth and Sixth European Parliaments; where every dot represents an MEP, and the distance between any two MEPs reflects the proportion of times they voted the same way. The Figure shows the relatively high level of party-based voting, as the members of each political group are clustered together.

Although NOMINATE (as with all scaling methods) does not reveal anything about the substantive meaning of each of the dimensions, the location of the parties in Figure 2 suggests that the first dimension in both Parliaments is clearly the left-right dimension. On the furthest left are the Radical Left and Greens, the Socialists are then on the centre-left, the Liberals are in the centre, the Conservatives are on the centre-right, and on the furthest right are a group of MEPs in the Conservative group who vote differently from the Conservative group approximately 30 percent of the time.

The content of the second dimension is more difficult to interpret. This dimension, at face value, appears to represent anti-/pro-Europe policy preferences, since towards the top of the figure are the more pro-European parties (Socialists, Conservatives, and Liberals), whereas towards the bottom of the figure are the more anti-European parties (Radical Left, Greens, Nationalists and Anti-Europeans). More detailed analysis of MEP locations reveals that this second dimension also captures government-opposition interests in the EU: with the MEPs from

national parties that are in government towards the top on this second dimension and MEPs from national parties that are in opposition towards the bottom (Hix, Noury and Roland, 2006).

Comparing the figures of the two Parliaments reveals a stable pattern of MEP voting behavior. There is one important difference, however, in that the Liberal MEPs are closer to the Conservative MEPs in the Sixth Parliament than they were in the Fifth Parliament. Note that it is difficult to compare NOMINATE scores across legislatures without a dynamic model.

Nonetheless, similar maps across legislatures indicates, at least to some extent, similar voting patterns.

The average correct classification score and the average proportional reduction in errors for the Sixth Parliament were .871 and .555, respectively, for the first dimension and .873 and .560 for the second dimension. The increases in these goodness-of-fit statistics, when adding a second dimension, are thus small, indicating that the second dimension is not capturing a large proportion of the variance of voting. Also, these statistics are similar to those for the Fifth Parliament: .875 and .512 for the first dimension, and .899 and .605 for the second dimension.⁵

In other words, the findings from the aggregate-level data on party cohesion and coalition behavior are reinforced by looking at individual MEP voting. In both the Fifth and Sixth Parliaments, the transnational parties are highly cohesive and the main dimension of competition is the left-right dimension. Also, the only clearly identifiable difference between the two Parliaments, in both the aggregate and individual data, is in the relationship between the Liberal MEPs and the EPP-ED. In the Fifth Parliament the Liberals represented a more-or-less mid-way position between the Socialists and Conservatives, whereas in the Sixth Parliament, the Liberals are closer to the Conservatives than the Socialists.

5. A Case-Study: Directive on Services in the Internal Market

The results thus far are based on the aggregation of a large amount of votes. One could argue that a conclusion based on a large number of votes, many of which are not very salient, will not necessarily apply when MEPs are faced with an important issue which might divide them more clearly along national lines. To test this we look at the highly important and controversial Directive on services in the internal market.⁶ This directive aimed to open up the services sector to cross-border competition, mainly by removing the service industry regulations of individual EU member states (unless those regulations are non-discriminatory or can be justified on the grounds of public interest). The directive was considered by its supporters to be essential for the development of a genuine EU single market in services. For opponents, however, the directive threatened to push down wages, lower social and environmental protections, and lead to an influx of foreign workers.

The European Parliament voted on this directive on 16 February 2006. We collected the 81 roll call votes on the directive. Looking at the cohesion scores of the political groups and the member states on these votes, we find that the political groups were on average more cohesive than the member states. However, MEPs from the new member states seemed more likely to vote along national lines than MEPs from the old fifteen member states.

To analyze how MEPs voted on this legislation, we create an index from MEP voting behavior in these 81 votes. We first looked at the exact subject of each vote, to determine the direction, or policy implication, of the outcome of each vote. Some proposals aimed to liberalize services (a 'pro-liberalization' issue), while others aimed to reduce the scope of this legislation (an 'anti-liberalization' issue). Pro-liberalization MEPs should vote Yes on a pro-liberalization issue and No on an anti-liberalization issue. We consequently granted 1 point if an MEP voted in a pro-liberalization way (voting Yes if the issue was pro-liberalization or No if the issue was anti-

liberalization), and 0 if the MEP did not vote in a pro-liberalization way (No on a pro-liberalization proposal or Yes on an anti-liberalization vote). The final score for an MEP on the index was then calculated as the sum of the points each MEP achieved, divided by the number of roll call votes (81). So, if an MEP voted in a pro-liberalization way in all 81 votes he or she scored 1, and if an MEP voted in an anti-liberalization way in all 81 votes he or she scored 0.⁷

To determine the factors influencing MEP voting on the Services Directive we estimate a simple regression model. This model takes the following general form:

$$Y_m = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{left right}_m + \beta_2 \text{pro/anti EU} + \beta_3 \text{GDP per capita}_m + \beta_4 \text{new member state}_m + \varepsilon_m$$

$$m = 1, \dots, 748$$

where Y is the dependent variable, α is a constant, β_1 to β_4 are regression coefficients, ε is an error term, and each MEP is indexed by m .

Our dependent variable is the score of each MEP on the liberalization index. As explanatory variables we use individual level data as well as member state level data. Individual level data include the left-right ideology of each MEP and his or her attitudes towards the EU. These left-right ideology and pro/anti-EU position variables are coordinates of the first and second dimensions, respectively, of the voting space estimated by NOMINATE using the 2004-2006 data. Given that the roll call data used to compute these variables are from the previous year, this variable can be considered as exogenous. To distinguish between ideology and party effects, or to differentiate between *within party* ideology and *between party* ideology, in one specification we include party dummy variables. We also use member state level data such as GDP per capita, and a dummy variable indicating whether an MEP is from a new member state. One can interpret this last variable as capturing the effect of Central and Eastern European countries since eight out of ten new member states are from Central and Eastern Europe.

[Table 4 about here]

The results of our OLS estimations are reported in Table 4. The left-right ideology of an MEP is highly significant across all specifications, except when political group dummy variables are included. This consequently suggests that MEPs in rightwing groups generally voted in favor of the directive while MEPs in leftwing groups generally voted against. The pro/anti-EU position of an MEP is also significant with the expected positive sign. Being from a new member state is positive and significant, suggesting that MEPs from new member states voted for the Services Directive. The effect of GDP per capita is also significant and negative, meaning that members from rich countries were generally against liberalization of the services sector.

We also computed standardized beta coefficients, which reveal that the two most important predictors are the left-right ideology of an MEP and whether an MEP was from a new member state. A one standard deviation change in the left-right ideology variable is associated with a 0.60 standard deviation change in the dependent variable, while a one standard deviation change in the new member state variable is associated with a 0.17 standard deviation change in the dependent variable.

6. Conclusion

In general, despite the enlargement of the EU to ten new member states in May 2004, voting behavior in the European Parliament has changed very little. MEPs still vote primarily along transnational party lines. The cohesion of the political groups in the European Parliament remains high and has neither increased nor declined significantly. Voting along national lines, in contrast, remains low. Furthermore, the dominant dimension of competition in the European Parliament is the left-right dimension. This reinforces the findings of our previous research, that the European Parliament is dominated by political parties and left-right politics.

Nevertheless, there were two main changes in voting behavior in the first half of the Sixth European Parliament (2004-05) relative to the Fifth European Parliament (1999-2004). First, whereas in the Fifth Parliament the Liberals voted approximately the same amount of time with the Socialists as they did with the Conservatives, in the Sixth Parliament the Liberals voted significantly more often with the Conservatives than with the Socialists. This is consistent with the general view of the dominance of left-right politics in the European Parliament, because the changed behavior of the Liberals is a product of the rightwards shift in the membership of this group, as a result of two centre-right parties leaving the Conservatives and joining the Liberals at the start of the Sixth Parliament.

The overall left-right make-up of the Fifth and Sixth Parliaments is very similar, in that the Conservatives are the largest group in both Parliaments and the median member of both Parliaments is in the Liberal group. However, the change in the coalition behavior of the Liberals potentially has a significant effect on the balance of power in the European Parliament. The left and right blocs were evenly balanced in the Fifth Parliament, with the Liberals pivotal in determining which side is in a majority on any particular vote. However, in the Sixth Parliament, with the Liberals voting more often with the Conservatives and Nationalists, a centre-right coalition is dominant.

Second, MEPs from the new member states from Central and Eastern Europe tend to vote slightly more along national lines than the MEPs from the 'old15' member states. This was particularly the case on the Services Directive, where the MEPs from the new member states voted in a more pro-liberalization way than the MEPs from the older member states, once ideological preferences of MEPs are controlled for. Specifically, MEPs on the left from the new member states were less likely to be opposed to the liberalization of the services market than MEPs on the left from the old member states. Nevertheless, even on the most important and

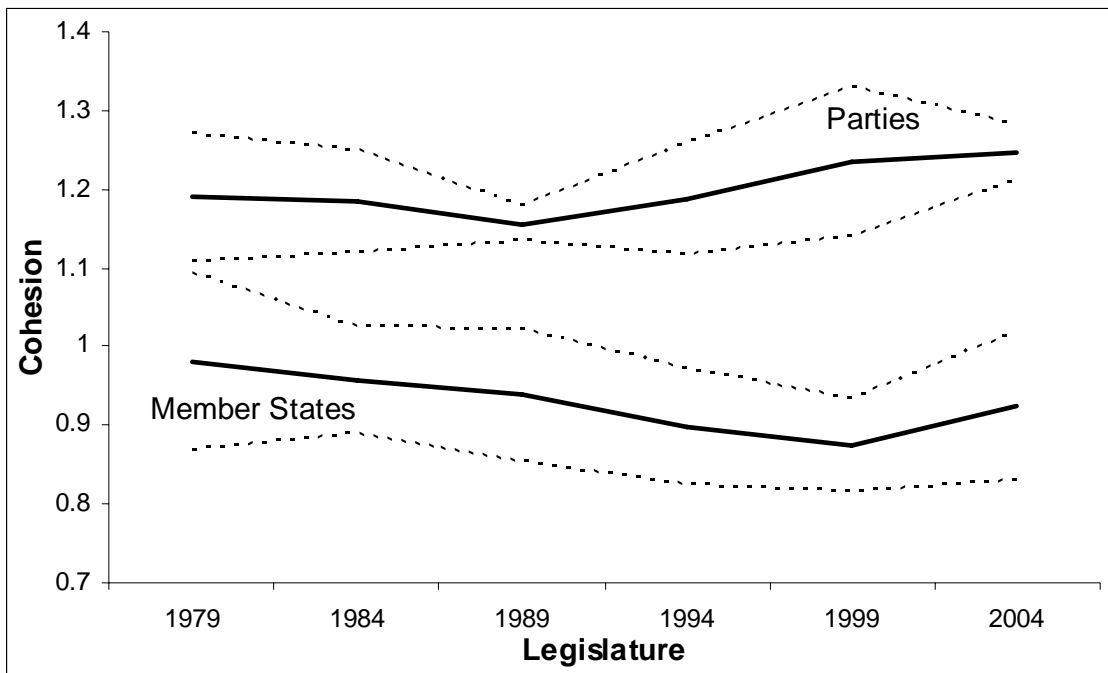
controversial piece of legislation so far in the Sixth Parliament, we found that ideological preferences were the dominant factor.

It should be pointed out, however, that party cohesion may be lower in the first few months of any European Parliament, as the MEPs gradually sort themselves into political groups and ‘learn’ how to behave in relation to their political group whips and leaders. By the end of the Sixth Parliament the effect of the initial period of learning on the average measures of cohesion will be smaller, which suggests that average party cohesion may well be higher in the 2004-2009 Parliament as a whole than it was in the 1999-2004 Parliament.

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Figure 1. Changes in Political Group and Member State Cohesion



Note: The figure shows the average 'relative cohesion' of the parties in each parliament plus the first half (two and half years) of the current parliament relative to the average relative cohesion of each national group of MEPs in the same period. The dotted lines represent the standard deviations around these averages.

Table 1. Member State Relative Cohesion

Member state	All Votes			Legislative Votes	Non-Legislative Votes	Budgetary Votes
	EP5 (1999-2004)	EP6 (2004-05)	Change	EP6 (2004-05)		
Slovenia	-	1.103	-	1.093	1.106	1.125
Estonia	-	1.088	-	1.090	1.084	1.104
Hungary	-	1.073	-	1.097	1.046	1.144
Lithuania	-	1.065	-	1.049	1.074	1.066
Latvia	-	1.017	-	1.035	1.000	1.047
Ireland	0.921	1.011	0.090**	1.004	1.016	1.005
Luxembourg	0.92	0.995	0.075**	0.986	0.992	1.049
Portugal	0.894	0.980	0.086**	0.979	0.975	1.013
Spain	0.905	0.955	0.050**	0.932	0.959	1.018
Finland	0.897	0.946	0.049**	0.935	0.952	0.956
Slovakia	-	0.942	-	0.944	0.915	1.095
Greece	0.897	0.914	0.017	0.936	0.885	1.006
Poland	-	0.914	-	0.988	0.871	0.907
Denmark	0.86	0.905	0.045**	0.919	0.906	0.846
Malta	-	0.903	-	0.926	0.894	0.874
Germany	0.949	0.899	-0.050**	0.907	0.884	0.958
Cyprus	-	0.874	-	0.839	0.894	0.881
Austria	0.919	0.879	-0.040**	0.914	0.864	0.847
France	0.694	0.861	0.167**	0.889	0.836	0.913
Belgium	0.86	0.859	-0.001	0.856	0.858	0.877
Italy	0.823	0.836	0.013**	0.847	0.824	0.866
Sweden	0.863	0.812	-0.051**	0.796	0.822	0.816
Netherlands	0.885	0.81	-0.075**	0.799	0.812	0.836
Czech Republic	-	0.781	-	0.800	0.776	0.736
UK	0.832	0.745	-0.087**	0.753	0.757	0.643
Average EU15	0.874	0.894	0.019	-	-	-
Average EU25	-	0.927	-	0.932	0.920	0.945
N	5760	2452		841	1381	225

Note: The table is sorted from the most cohesive member state's group of MEPs in legislative votes to the least cohesive member state's group of MEPs, as measured by the relative cohesion scores. ** significant at 1%, * significant at 5%.

Table 2. Party Cohesion

Political group	All Votes			Legislative Votes	Non-Legislative Votes	Budgetary Votes
	EP5 (1999-2004)	EP6 (2004-05)	Change	EP6 (2004-05)		
Greens (G/EFA)	1.341	1.292	-.048**	1.300	1.289	1.290
Socialists (SOC)	1.297	1.258	-.039**	1.269	1.200	1.107
Radical Left (EUL/NGL)	1.253	1.223	-.030**	1.237	1.275	1.236
Conservatives (EPP-ED)	1.166	1.215	.049**	1.214	1.239	1.162
Liberals (ALDE)	1.267	1.207	-.060**	1.178	1.228	1.186
Nationalists (UEN)	1.084	1.097	.013	1.107	1.092	1.099
Anti-Europeans (IND/DEM)	.713	.739	.026**	.688	.761	.794
Independents (na)	.638	.613	-.025**	.604	.622	.590
Average	1.095	1.081	-.014	1.074	1.088	1.058
N	5760	2452		841	1381	225

Note: The table is sorted from the most cohesive party on legislative votes to the least cohesive party, as measured by the relative cohesion scores. The average excludes the non-attached MEPs, who are not a political group. ** significant at 1%, * significant at 5%.

Party abbreviations:

EPP-ED European People's Party-European Democrats

SOC Socialist Group

ALDE Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
(European Liberal, Democratic and Reform Party in EP5)

G/EFA Greens/European Free Alliance

EUL/NGL European United Left-Nordic Green Left

IND/DEM Independence/Democracy Group (Group for a Europe of Democracies and Diversities in EP5)

UEN Union for Europe of the Nations Group

na non-attached members (mostly on the radical right)

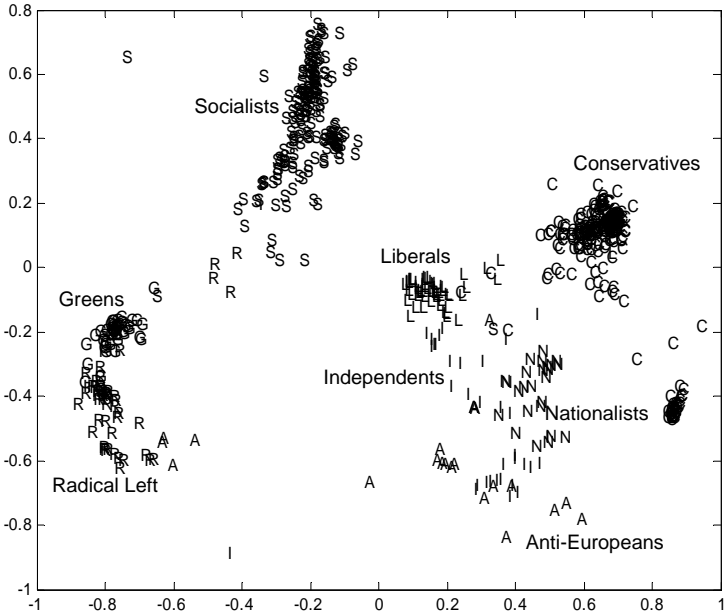
Table 3. Party Competition and Coalition Patterns

Political group (Left to Right)	Radical Left	Greens	Socialists	Liberals	Conservatives	Nationalists	Anti-Europeans	Independents
Radical Left	-	79.3	69.1	55.4	42.4	45.9	59.2	52.4
Greens	75.4	-	72.0	62.3	47.1	45.2	55.5	51.0
Socialists	62.0	70.3	-	72.9	64.5	52.6	52.6	56.8
Liberals	48.0	59.2	75.3	-	67.9	55.0	52.3	60.0
Conservatives	39.6	47.4	68.4	78.0	-	71.2	52.0	68.2
Nationalists	42.2	45.1	62.8	72.4	84.3	-	62.6	73.8
Anti-Europeans	45.5	40.3	42.9	48.0	54.0	56.8	-	63.8
Independents	48.6	43.0	52.3	53.7	64.1	64.7	68.1	-

Note: Above the diagonal entries indicate coefficients for the Fifth Parliament (1999-2004) and the below diagonal entries indicate coefficients for the Sixth Parliament (2004-2006). Each cell shows the percentage of times the majority of MEPs in the two political groups voted the same way in all the roll call votes in the given period.

Figure 2. Spatial Maps of the European Parliament

a. Fifth European Parliament



b. Sixth European Parliament

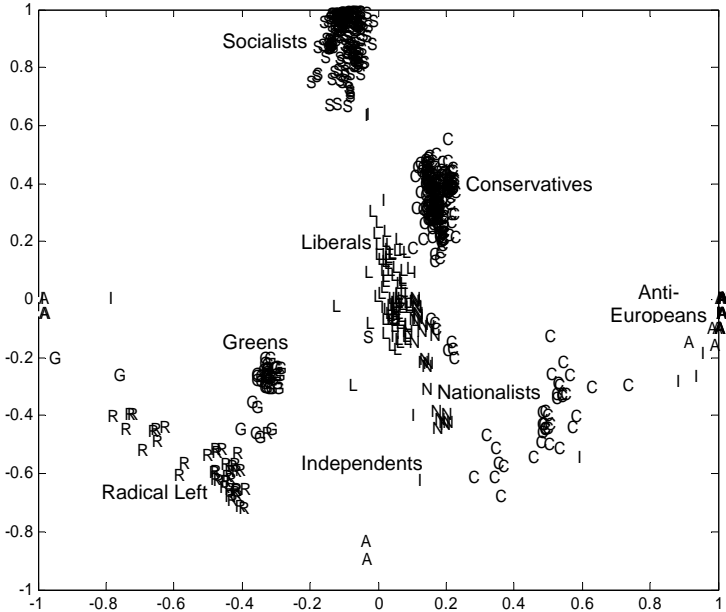


Table 4. Determinants of MEP Voting on the Services Directive

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Left-right ideology	0.301 (12.35)**	0.306 (12.66)**	0.299 (12.21)**	-0.011 (0.31)
Pro/anti-EU position	0.018 (2.48)*	0.014 (1.97)*	0.021 (2.86)**	0.028 (3.49)**
New member state	0.065 (3.68)**		0.099 (11.64)**	0.06 (5.03)**
GDP per capita	-0.049 (2.17)*	-0.122 (10.90)**		-0.042 (2.66)**
Constant	0.800 (7.32)**	1.146 (20.65)**	0.570 (24.56)**	0.741 (9.61)**
Party fixed effects	No	No	No	Yes
Observations	649	649	649	649
R-squared	.50	.49	.50	.78

Note: Dependent variable: Pro-liberalisation score of MEPs. Parameters of the models are estimated by linear regression model. Robust t-statistics in parentheses, * significant at 5%; ** significant at 1%.

Endnotes

¹ For more information see for example <http://www.stopbolkestein.org>.

² The relative cohesion score ranges between 0 and 2, as we divide the absolute agreement index by majority size which varies between .5 and 1.

³ Interestingly, one of the most 'Euro sceptic' member states, the United Kingdom, has the lowest level of national-based voting amongst its MEPs.

⁴ Note that absolute party cohesion has risen slightly (by .010, p-value=.030). This difference reveals that votes in the European Parliament have been slightly more consensual in the first half of the current Parliament than they were in the whole of the previous Parliament.

⁵ One should bear in mind that both the number of roll call votes and the number of the MEPs are different. Nonetheless, these statistics give an indication of whether dimensionality has changed.

⁶ The Services Directive provoked intense debate and mass protests in various EU countries, including France, Belgium, Sweden and Denmark. In March 2006 about 100,000 people marched in Brussels in protest against the Directive.

⁷ This is similar to the index computed by Kalt and Zupan (1984), and more generally to the method used by interest groups in the US to rank Congressmen on the issues they care about, such as the liberal-conservative index produced by the Americans for Democratic Action (<http://www.adaction.org/votingrecords.htm>).