

## Decision-Making in the EU Council of Ministers: Sectoral Differentiation as an Explanation for its Apparent Adaptability ?

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Before the 2004, it was feared, even predicted, that the enlargement of the European Union would block the ability of the Council of Ministers to take common decisions. However, the blockage did not occur. The paper investigates this unexpected result, with a view to understanding better how the Council works, through an innovative policy-domain analysis. It examines whether decision-making is increasingly diverse across policy domains over the period 2002-2008, in particular in terms of legislative output, speed and conflictuality, and whether this phenomenon could contribute to the apparent institutional adaptability of the Council - 'productive' sectors compensating for 'unproductive' ones. The study relies on an innovative database documenting the entire EU decision-making process and including sector data. Comparing sector specificities adds value to the existing analyses that either stay at the surface of the overall decision-making process or focus on one specific domain.