European Union Member State coordination in the United Nations system: towards a methodology for analysis[1]

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I. Introduction

The Member States of the European Union (EU) are simultaneously members of other international organisations such as the United Nations, and in very many cases their membership of those international organisations predates their becoming a member of the EU.[3] Inside these international organisations European states participate alongside other states seeking to solve collective problems by cooperation. The solutions reached are through intergovernmental negotiation between sovereign states, instead of by coercion through the use of military force. In December 1973 the foreign ministers of the Nine EU Member States produced a public declaration titled the *Document on the European Identity*, which *inter alia* called for the Member States to adopt 'common positions wherever possible in international organizations, notably the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies.' (Hill and Smith, 2000) This call was for EU Member States to prioritise working together for the goal of speaking with one voice, and remains explicit today within Articles 18-20 of the Treaty on European Union. On the one hand there is an expectation for the EU Member States to coordinate their positions, while on the other hand EU Member States remain part of other networks of states based on shared history, language, culture, geography or political similarities. These include Spain's links with Latin America, Britain and France's links to the Anglophone and Francophone worlds respectively, and Denmark's to the Nordic group of states

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[1] This paper draws on the methodology employed in my PhD thesis *Who Speaks for Europe in the ILO? EU Member State Coordination and European Union Representation in the International Labour Organisation* (Kissack. 2006).

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[3] Only the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) stands out from this general trend, because both the FRG and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) joined the United Nations Organisation (UN) in 1973 (although the FRG joined the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 1954).

(Manners and Whitman, 2000). Of central interest to students of EU-UN relations is the question to what extent do EU Member States coordinate their actions *together* in the UN, as opposed to with third states?

The purpose of this paper is to elaborate a methodology for the study of the EU Member States' coordination in the United Nations system. To date, much of the study of the European Union Member States' collective action in the United Nations has been focused on the UN General Assembly, where political cooperation began in 1973 (Luif, 2003). More recent research has extended the scope of investigation into the areas of human rights, security, the economic and social organisations, the environment and labour standards (See the collected volume by Laatikainen Verlin and Smith, 2006). Studying EU participation in UN organisations concerned with environmental and labour issues brings into focus the role of the European Community (EC) as an international legal actor with exclusive competence to legislate for the single market. A recent investigation of the EU and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) showed that EU Member States began speaking with one voice on both Community issues and through the EPC framework as early as 1973 (Kissack, 2006).

The methodology presented in this paper was developed for the study of EU Member State coordination in the ILO over a thirty-year period, and was designed to overcome a number of difficulties that can hinder the collection of data on coordination dating back over such a long period of time. The methodology proposed identifies coordination between the Member States as the central object of study, while acknowledging that reliable archival records evidencing coordination are often difficult to locate. For example, European Council archives have strict limits on the disclosure of information (as do many governments), and one cannot assume that detailed records of all coordination meetings are still in existence. In order to address this problem, two proxy measures of coordination are considered; representation or 'declaratory cohesion' and voting cohesion. Both of these can be considered 'outputs' generated by the coordination process, and both are more often measurable from the records of proceedings published by the UN institutions being studied. The paper argues that representation is the more important of the two proxies, and that meaningful analysis of voting cohesion can only take place when there is accompanying analysis of coordination too.

The remainder of the paper is divided into four sections. Section II presents the definitions and framework in which they are employed in the paper. Section III surveys some of the current literature and examines how it uses voting cohesion as its primary data source, as well as some of the strengths and weaknesses of this approach. Section IV assesses how representation could be introduced into the study of EU Member States coordination in the UN system, and what might be gained from doing so. The concluding section presents a summary of provisional findings.

II. Definitions and framework

This paper is structured around the three variables of 'coordination', 'representation' and 'cohesion', the latter being frequently applied in the literature to patterns of voting behaviour. Briefly, they can be defined as follows:

- *Coordination* is the meeting of diplomats and officials from the governments of the European Union Member States (most likely with staff from the Council Secretariat and/or Commission present but this is not essential) in any location (national capitals, Brussels, New York or Geneva) with the purpose of discussing an issue on a UN agenda.

- *Representation* is any verbal or written intervention by Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the European Commission or another EU Member State explicitly representing the views of (i) the Member States of the European Community, (ii) the Member States speaking as the 'Nine' members of the European Community[4] or (iii) the EU. Which of the three titles is used depends on the coordination mechanism used to prepare the intervention.

- *Cohesion* is 'the degree to which an entity is able to formulate and articulate internally consistent policy preferences' (Caporaso and Jupille, 1998: 214).

In order to understand how they can be used in the study of the EU in the United Nations system, I shall begin by contextualising their relationship within the wider

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[4] 'The Nine' signifies the nine Member States of the European Economic Community (EEC) from between 1973 and 1980 speaking in the context of EPC coordination. This became 'the Ten' with the accession of Greece in 1981, and 'the Twelve' in 1986 with the accession of Portugal and Spain. The creation of the European Union in the Maastricht Treaty ended the practice of separately identifying EPC and EEC coordination.

literature. A useful starting point is Michael Smith's distinction between 'strategic agent' and 'strategic actor'. In his 1998 article Smith uses these two terms to substantiate his argument that the EU's common trade policy is the best example of an emergent EU foreign policy. The common commercial policy (CCP) of the European Community and the apparatus for defining and implementing the external dimension of the policy (including *inter alia* the Article 133 Committee) gives the EU's trade relations a strategic direction that is lacking in other areas, including (most significantly) the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The EU is the strategic actor and the European Commission (acting in its capacity as the legal representative of the European Community) is the strategic agent responsible for carrying out the policy (Smith, 1998: 80). Smith argues that there is no comparable actor to the European Commission in the field of CFSP, neither in the scope of the mandate nor the authority of the agent.

In the United Nations system there are a limited number of areas in which EC competency allows it to serve as the agent of the EU, such as in the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and in some aspects of environmental law (the EC has ratified the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change).[5] However, for the majority of cases the European Community has a form of observer status within the various organisations and the EU Member States remain the primary agents of EU actorness. The question is to what degree do the EU Member States behave in a manner so that they could be regarded as the 'strategic agent' of the EU? The expectation for them to do so originates from Article 18 §2 of the TEU, where it states

> The Presidency shall be responsible for the implementation of decisions taken under this title; in that capacity it shall in principle express the position of the Union in international organisations and international conferences.

Strategic agency (to the extent that it exists) comes from the diplomatic staff of the Member State holding the Presidency of the Council. The strategic agent is the decision-making structure of the EU Member States, and in the context of the UN system this is likely to include the CONUN working group in Brussels and diplomatic

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[5] The UNFCCC was ratified on 21/12/1993 (See http://unfccc.int/resource/conv/ratlist.pdf accessed 12/01/2007). The EC and the Member States have also ratified the Kyoto Protocol (See: http://www.europa-eu-un.org/articles/en/article_1420_en.htm accessed 12/01/2007)

staff in New York or Geneva. The EU common statements and positions agreed by the diplomatic staff form the content of the declarations made in the name of the EU in each particular UN setting.

When the EU Member States meet to consider what form of strategic agency in the UN system they want to initiate, there are three possible outputs. The first is to issue a joint statement in the name of the EU, and represents *declaratory cohesion*. The second is to all vote in unison in either a roll-call or consensus vote, and represents *voting cohesion*. The third is not to act together, and represents *unachievable cohesion* or *non-cohesion*. To what extent can we refer to this third scenario as an 'output' at all, if there is nothing generated that is visible to the eye? There are two reasons why the failure to produce an output does not mean we can afford to disregard the process that attempted to bring an output about. The first is that a considerable amount of time may have been spent trying to arrive at either a declaratory - or voting -cohesive position, and the failure to do so raises the question of what were the opportunity costs of the attempt. The second is that successive failures to reach agreement may not be worthless if they contribute to a gradual reconciliation of divergent positions that leads to agreement over time. This is consistent with sociological institutional understandings of EU foreign policy making, in which learning plays an important role in the adoption of European positions over time.

In a perfect world there would be reliable and accurate archival records of the coordination meetings taking place between the diplomats from the EU Member States, and we would be able to identify each of the three outputs when they occurred, based on what we knew about the preceding coordination. Unfortunately this is very often not the case, and as mentioned in the opening remarks, researchers are often without access to reliable information about coordination. In its place, they can only look at outputs recorded in the documentation of the UN organisation, but outputs can be misleading. Just as we have seen that the attempts of the EU Member States to act together can potentially lead to nothing, the opposite is also possible, where cohesive voting gives the impression of EU Member State strategic agency when in reality there has been no prior agreement made. In situations where the level of consensus is high among all parties voting, one cannot rule out the possibility that cohesive voting by the EU

Member States is coincidental,[6] instead of the result of volitional action by the EU Member States.[7] In order to make meaningful statements about the EU Member States' actions in the UN system, it is necessary to focus exclusively on their volitional actions. However, as has been shown, these volitional actions can take the form of concrete outputs and concrete *absences* of output, and intermixed among these are some identical outputs that are non-volitional. A beacon shining out among this confusion are declaratory statements in the name of the EU, which must be agreed by the EU Member States prior to utterance.

In this highly confused situation the issue of measuring EU strategic actions in the UN appears fraught with difficulties. To cope with this we must look for proxy measures in the absence of archival evidence, and have therefore reached the point where we can put coordination, representation and voting cohesion into a model for studying the working of the EU at the UN. Firstly, *coordination* is the process whereby diplomats from the EU Member States meet and act as the EU's strategic agent in the UN. The actions that they decide on make either the European Commission or the Council Presidency into a strategic agent in the UN, except when voting when the EU Member States are the strategic agents that cast the votes that collectively demonstrate cohesive voting. *Representation* of the EU is through the declaratory cohesion of the EU Member States agreeing on common statements and positions after a period of coordination. Representation is therefore one way in which the EU can be seen as a strategic actor through the mouthpiece of the Presidency or the European Commission. Finally, *voting cohesion* can be the result of coordination and therefore another form of strategic action by the EU.

Coordination is the most important variable to identify, but is also the most difficult given the restrictions on the disclosure of documentation. Representation and voting cohesion are easier to measure through the records of UN system organisations,

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[6] Hidemi Suganami writes that we can think of a 'social event as an outcome of a combination of chance coincidences, mechanistic processes and volitional acts. … A 'chance conincidence' – 'co-incidence by chance' – is not an uncaused event, but a simultaneous occurrence of two or more causally independent events.' (Suganami, 1999: 6)

[7] This issue is raised by Katie Laatikainen Verlin in her commentary on the European Commission's assessment of EU Member State voting in the UN General Assembly, where consensus votes are included. For a detailed study of how to differentiate between cohesive EU Member State voting and general levels of consensus within the total voting population, see (Kissack 2006).

but remain inadequate proxies. Of the two, representation is the more useful since there is a clearer causal linkage between coordination and representation, although this is not foolproof. For the remainder of this paper, I will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using voting cohesion and representation as proxies for coordination, before concluding with some suggestions for how to improve our methodology in this field.

III. The limitations of measuring voting cohesion

The measurement of EU Member State voting cohesion has been widely used to assess the extent to which the EU acts cohesively in the UN system. When all the Member States cast identical votes they are said to demonstrate voting cohesion, and when one or more EU Member State casts a vote different from the majority position cohesion is lost. From the perspective of a social science researcher, the readily available information on voting patterns in UN organisations means that the study of EU Member State voting cohesion is the most convenient place to begin the study of the EU's actorness in the UN system. There are a number of strengths and weaknesses associated with the focus on voting cohesion. I will present four points in favour and four against, and conclude that although this approach has featured prominently in the literature until now, it is time to research more systematically into declaratory and voting cohesion, in order to make authoritative claims about EU coordination in the UN.

The first strength of studying EU Member State voting cohesion stems from the voting data itself. The information is reliable and easily available through public records of the proceedings in UN organisations, and is extremely easy to read in its tabulated format. By contrast, the collection of empirical evidence of common statements (representation) by the EU Member States can be much more time consuming, requiring the researcher to sift through the transcriptions of conference proceedings. While plenary addresses are often indexed, searching through committee meetings and working groups records requires much more work.

The second advantage of studying voting cohesion is its consistency over time and the opportunity to compile data over a long time period. For example, Leon Hurwitz studied voting cohesion between 1946 and 1975 in his 1975 survey, while

Johansson-Nogues surveyed from 1970 to 2000 in her recent analysis (Johansson-Nogues, 2004, Hurwitz, 1975). An important additional point related to this one is that voting records can be assumed to be consistent in their accuracy over the course of the survey. By comparison, the use of interviews with diplomats becomes increasingly difficult over the medium and long term because of the higher chance of inaccurate recollections the further ones goes into the past.

The third strength of voting records is that they are well suited to statistical analysis. At the simplest level voting cohesion can be given as a percentage of all votes, and can be viewed over time to identify periods of greater (or lesser) cohesion. Looking at the behaviour of the individual Member States is also possible, identifying which states are most likely to break voting cohesion, during which periods and over which issues.

This leads to the final strength, which is the identification of the key issues that break EU voting cohesion. Hurwitz, Foot, Lindemann, Luif and Norges-Johansson all identify items on the UN agenda that have divided the EU Member States, such as the Arab-Israeli dispute in the 1970s, the apartheid regime in South Africa in the 1980s, and nuclear testing in the 1990s (Hurwitz, 1975, Foot, 1979, Johansson-Nogues, 2004, Luif, 2003, Lindemann, 1982). Within their individual surveys all of the authors note wider trends and identify other issue areas that they regard as being especially important.

There are also a number of weaknesses regarding the study of the voting records of EU Member States. The first is that privileging voting cohesion as the most important variable being studied means that there is little or no consideration of what the EU Member States are voting about, and what their common position is. More emphasis is placed on speaking as one than is put on what is being said, or where the EU Member States stand in relation to the rest of the organisation's membership. Consider the example of a three-phase shift in voting behaviour. In the first phase the EU common position is agreed but is in opposition to a more widely accepted view by the organisation's membership. In the second phase a split occurs as some EU Member States align themselves with the widely accepted view, while other EU Member States remain committed to the previously agreed common position. In the third phase all of the EU Member States become persuaded by the wider viewpoint and reaffirm their

unity through a new common position. If one only looks at voting cohesion this appears to be a decline followed by an increase to the previous level, without any insight into what happened or why. Closer inspection would show that there was a change in EU policy instigated by a group of EU Member States, which would have been overlooked if only voting cohesion is studied.

The second weakness of the approach ignores the type of vote being cast. Can one attribute equal significance to voting 'for' and 'against' a motion, as well as abstaining from voting? To answer this one must decide what political significance an abstention has in the voting procedure. There are a number of reasons for casting an abstention, such as a government wanting to be seen as impartial over an issue or a diplomat not having received instructions from their capital on how to vote. However, abstentions can be strategic votes to prevent a quorum being reached and prevent a motion being passed.[8] In the latter case an abstention is a political vote and can be argued to have equal significance to either a vote for or a vote against.

The third weakness of looking at voting cohesion is that no consideration can be made of how difficult it was to reach a common position. Juergen Dedring noted that it was more insightful to look at the times that EU Member States voted separately than when they voted cohesively because such cases show the limitations of coordination (Dedring, 2002). Dedring's comment is based on the assumption that some common positions are easier to arrive at than others, and ultimately it is sometimes too difficult to accommodate all interests. When looking at voting cohesion some consideration should be made of the issues being discussed and voted on, since the power to set the UN agenda lies outside the EU Member States' hands and plays an important role in determining the level of voting cohesion achieved. Furthermore, as noted in Section II, some attempts at reaching common positions might prove ultimately unsuccessful and thus reiterate the point that some issues are easier to coordinate than others.

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[8] This is the case in the ILO where quorum in a record vote is two-thirds of registered voting delegates attending the annual conference. 33.4% of votes cast as abstentions will lead to a vote failing to pass, while 50.1% of votes against the motion would be needed if they were cast as 'no'. This method was used during the 2005 International Labour Conference when the proposed convention concerning the fishing sector failed to be adopted by one vote. 288 votes were cast in favour, 8 were cast against and there were 139 abstentions. The quorum was 297 and the total votes (for and against) were 296. (ILO, 2005:3.

The final weakness has been noted by a number of scholars looking at UN General Assembly voting cohesion and testing the European Commission's claim that the EU Member States achieve 95% cohesion (Laatikainen Verlin, 2004). A high proportion of UN General Assembly votes are decided by consensus, and only contentious issues are subject to roll-call votes. When looking at EU Member State voting cohesion in roll-call votes alone the level of cohesion drops considerably and this alerts us to the possibility that the overall level of consensus in the UN organisation skews the data on voting cohesion. In issue areas where there are very high levels of consensus between all states in the UN, the likelihood of EU Member State consensus is also very high (Kissack, 2006: 135-141). In such votes one could argue that being a member of the EU plays only a minimal role in altering the voting preference of the state, and that EU voting cohesion is as likely to occur by coincidence as by volition.

In summary, looking at voting cohesion provides an overview of the general positions of the EU Member States in relation to each other, but as a method for inferring a picture of the level of coordination taking place it has a number of shortcomings. The most important is that on a number of issues where voting takes place by consensus, *coordination need not take place at all for EU Member States to vote cohesively*. Furthermore, the type of vote cast and the issue to which it was addressed are important variables to consider, as they illustrate how coordination is targeted at specific areas where there is a potential for agreement between EU Member States but still differences in national positions. Finally, as Dedring points out, the cases where there is no voting cohesion may still have been subject to coordination meetings that ultimately proved unsuccessful. In order to address these shortcomings, the paper moves on to consider how declaratory cohesion, which I refer to as 'representation', can add an important dimension to the study of coordination.

IV. The case for measuring representation

This section presents the case for measuring representation and argues why it should be incorporated into a more sophisticated methodology for the study of the EU in the UN system. Set out below are four key strengths to this approach, but as stated above this is not a panacea for the problems set out in Section III and therefore also includes a list of weaknesses too.

The first strength is the 'concrete' linkage between representation and coordination. Given that the purpose of this methodology is to gain as accurate a picture of the coordination process as possible, the observation of utterances made in the name of the EU is a sound foundation on which to build a detailed analysis. In this paper I put forward the argument that representation (declaratory cohesion) is a more important variable to identify than voting cohesion because it is a more accurate proxy for coordination. This is because all evidence of representation (output) is verifiable evidence of coordination (process) between the Member States (with or without the assistance of Commission and/or Council staff) since no common statements in the name of the EU Member States are sanctioned without prior agreement.

The second strength is that through the reading of the common statements made in the name of the EU the researcher is able to gain a better understanding of the ease or difficulty of reaching a common statement. This opens the possibility of classifying the outputs of declaratory cohesion qualitatively as well as quantitatively, and thus expanding the possible avenues of research beyond those of voting cohesion alone.

The third strength comes about as a result of the approach advocated in the second, which is the possibility of identifying an *acquis politique* over time through the incremental development of EU representation, both in its scope and depth. Scope refers to the increasing number of issue areas in which EU representation takes place, and observing changes in scope help the researcher to confirm or refute theoretical assumptions about the nature of foreign policy making, in particular the extent to which political coordination is extended into areas of 'high politics' that are closely related to national interests. In terms of depth, the same theoretical arguments can be tested through observing whether EU representation remains at the level of 'lowest common

denominator' or whether it becomes more detailed over time. Finally, the reading of representative declarations can also inform our understanding of how enlargement affects coordination in the UN. Are there noticeable changes in the level of EU representation after new members arrive? Are there changes in its scope or in its depth? Voting cohesion tells us if it is still happening but nothing more.

The final strength of looking at representation is that it also gives information about which states align themselves with EU positions. Many of the states preparing for membership of the EU, either as official candidate states, or those in the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) choose to associate themselves with EU statements.[9] Other European states such as Norway and Switzerland, as well as other 'like-minded' non-European states such as Canada that share a strong normative commitment to the United Nations sometimes associate themselves with EU statements, and evidence of this demonstrates coordination between EU Member States on the one hand, and the EU and non-members on the other hand. Once more, while voting records can show which non-EU states vote in the same way as the EU Member States do, they do not show any volitional, deliberate management of wider voting strategies and therefore of strategic agency.

Turning to the weaknesses, the first is that uncovering data on EU representation is far more time consuming that looking at voting records, and is yet more time consuming if the researcher attempts to gather qualitative data on the content of common statements. The advantage of a record vote is that it represents the purest synthesis of the national interest (or the agreed European common interest when voting cohesively) and its relationship with the resolution being voted on. EU statements can be long and detailed, and can also be convoluted if they have been the subject of long negotiations and include separate sections acceptable to a variety of national audiences. The researcher also requires a higher level of knowledge on the subject of each representation in order to identify key phrases or passages of particular significance. In the UN General Assembly this is problematic due to the wide range of issues under discussion, while in the Specialized Agencies the situation is no easier because of the highly technical issues being discussed.

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[9] See Kissack 2006 for details on how this process works in Geneva in relation to EU statements made in the International Labour Organisation's Committee on the Application of Standards.

The second weakness of this approach is the possibility of inaccurate reporting by the UN secretariat responsible for minuting discussions. Given that a central tenet of the analytical approach is identifying when an intervention is made in the name of the EU, any failure to attribute the correct authorship to a statement can lead to inaccurate results. The problem becomes more acute during the early years of European coordination in the UN, from the early 1970s onwards. As documented in detail in the ILO, the specific terminology used to describe the capacity in which a spokesperson made a common representation was sometimes inaccurately reported (Kissack, 2006: 27-28).

The third and final problem with this approach is a consequence of the previous point. If the researcher concentrates on measuring coordination through representation there is a likely margin of error that under-counts the level of coordination taking place. As noted above, representation measured as the output of statements is likely to under-record the level of coordination taking place due to the possibility of coordination meetings that yield no concrete output. There is also the potential situation in which the researcher is confident that a statement was made in the name of the EU but the record in the UN documentation does not attribute it to the EU in name. According to the definition of representation set out above this would not be counted, but in reality the researcher believes it to be another example of EU representation. It is up to the researcher to decide what course of action to take, but if the primary objective is to seek the highest level of certainty that coordination has taken place then the appropriate course of action is not to count the intervention and remain closely observant of the proposed methodology.

Representation does not solve all of the problems identified at the outset inherent with the measurement of EU Member State coordination in the UN. There is still a likelihood of inaccurately capturing the actual level of coordination taking place, but it is hoped that the arguments set out above demonstrate why it constitutes a considerable step forward in terms of certainty, by building on the firmer platform of a causal linkage between coordination and representation. In the final section I will suggest a number of ways in which both representation and voting cohesion can be used together to further improve research methodology.

V. Conclusion: Towards an improved methodology

The best method for measuring EU Member State coordination in the UN system is to gather evidence of its existence. In an ideal world this would take the form of observing coordination meetings taking place, but since that is unlikely to be an option for the majority of researchers the second best option is to interview a number of participants of those meetings. Alternatively, having access to archives containing minutes of coordination meetings would prove conclusively their existence, and give details of what was agreed, although perhaps less information on what was not agreed. The next best alternative to minutes are coordination meeting agendas, which again provide evidence of coordination meetings but are less clear on the details and time spent on them. However, as noted in the introductory remarks, such records are hard to find and are very likely to be incomplete over time, making time-series analysis nearly impossible. When fragments such as these do materialise, what sort of additional empirical data can be gathered to substantiate them, or alternatively, what methodology should a researcher adopt who has no access to the records of the EU Member States or the Council?

This working paper has set out a methodological framework that is useful for the majority of researchers who do have access to little or none of the above. Instead it is based on looking at the public records provided by the UN system of its extensive range of meetings. There are at least four circumstances in which this approach will be applicable. The first is that UN archives are the only ones that stretch back long enough in time for the period being studied. The second is that coordination that did take place was partly formal and partly informal, and therefore only partial records will exist at best. Thirdly, the necessary archival documents are spread around Brussels, Geneva, New York and the various national capitals and thus are too dispersed to visit. Finally, those records that do exist might be subject to release to the public many years in the future. So what is the best we can make of the public records kept by the UN on its meetings?

Declaratory and voting cohesion are the best proxies we can find for coordination taking place. By their very nature these proxies will be inaccurate so it is the researcher's responsibility to minimise inaccuracy and remain aware of the

limitations. For this reason they need to be systematic in her application and remember that if the proxies are to be useful in the aim of measuring coordination, and must apply them systematically. For this reason representation is prioritised over voting cohesion because it is the only proxy that can be linked back to coordination unequivocally. While noting the likelihood of undercounting due to minuting errors and unsuccessful coordination that does not yield quantifiable outputs, this approach is far more substantial that the more widely used measure of voting cohesion. The use of voting cohesion is most seriously challenged when asked to evidence coordination beyond mere common behavioural patterns, which in many cases in the UN there is no difference between EU Member States' voting patterns and numerous other states.

The choice between measuring representation and voting cohesion need not be an either / or decision, but can incorporate both. The important research question to consider is do EU Member States speak *and* vote cohesively, or do they sometimes do one and not the other? Also, in terms of quantifying change over time, is there a convergence of voting patterns prior to common statements (i.e. does voting cohesion precede declaratory cohesion) or do they occur at the same time? Comparing the two identifies which EU Member States impede common statements and what factors trigger a change in policy (such as a change in national government). Thus by looking at the two proxies together we are able to look more closely at changes in EU Member State behaviour over time and to what extent EU membership alters national interests.

In summary this approach is best suited to the study of EU Member States in UN organisations where there are extensive records of meetings and committees held, such as in the Specialized Agencies and the General Assembly. It is also best suited to long-term analysis where one is most likely to come across incomplete records or where practitioners have little recollection of negotiations. Given than many diplomats from the EU Member States are stationed in Geneva or New York for four or five year rotations there is unlikely to be much institutional memory in the periods under consideration. The limitations of studying EU coordination in the UN system pose a number of challenges, some of which present more serious problems than others. Short of waiting for national archives to be thrown open, we must in the meanwhile attempt as systematic study of the coordination process as possible, and this paper presents a methodology that is intended to contribute to that end.

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