10 votes that shaped 7th European Parliament: positions of the European political groups and national party delegations

VoteWatch Europe 2013 Annual Report launch
Brussels, 10 July 2013
Objectives

- Establish the voting patterns in the EP;

- Identify if (and to what extent) the ideological composition of the EP influences the outcome of legislation;

- Make voters aware of the importance of the EP 2104 elections.
Findings

- The EP leaves its footprint on an increasing number of pieces of legislation;

- In most votes, the voting alignment is ideological;

- Major social, economic, cultural or regulatory differences may determine deviations from group line.
10 key votes: what criteria for selection?

- That the issue has a high (legislative) impact;
- That it is relatively easy to understand;
- That it raised controversies and splits among the groups;

And:
- That VoteWatch has (clear) roll-call voting data about that issue.
10 key votes

- Maternity leave
- Nuclear energy
- Eurobonds
- Financial Transaction Tax
- ACTA
- MFF *
- CAP Reform
- Backloading *
- EP seat
- EU-USA FTA

Note: (over)simplification of titles to reach a wider audience.
Vote to reject backloading/reform of the EU ETS (April 2013)
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Clarifying provisions on the timing of auctions of greenhouse gas allowances - Draft legislative resolution:
Proposal to reject the Commission proposal, amendment 20 - ordinary legislative procedure, first reading
Power table within EPP
Vote to reject backloading / reform of the EU ETS (April 2013)

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Power table within ALDE/ADLE
EP’s position on the MFF (March 2013)
EP’s position on the MFF (March 2013)

Multiannual Financial Framework - Motion for a resolution: vote: resolution (as a whole)
Power table within EPP
EP’s position on the MFF (March 2013)

**Multianual Financial Framework** - Motion for a resolution: vote: resolution (as a whole)
Power table within S&D

[Graph showing vote distribution for the EP's position on the MFF as of March 2013, indicating votes for, against, abstentions, and non-voters.]
EP’s position on EU-USA FTA/TTIP (May 2013)
**EP’s position on EU-USA FTA/TTIP (May 2013)**

**EU trade and investment agreement negotiations with the US - Motion for resolution: vote: resolution (as a whole)**

Power table within EPP

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EU trade and investment agreement negotiations with the US - Motion for resolution: vote: resolution (as a whole)
Power table within S&D

For
Against
Abstentions
Non voters

VoteWatch Europe
Highcharts.com
10 votes that shaped 7th Parliament

Final notes:

- Positions of national party delegations (based on plurality of votes);

- Full data is on www.votewatch.eu
10 votes that shaped 7th Parliament

Main conclusion:

The political/ideological composition of the European Parliament, on both left-right and pro-anti EU integration dimensions, has a decisive impact on the shape of EU legislation!
10 votes that shaped 7th European Parliament: positions of the European political groups and national party delegations

What kind of (EP) legislative footprint?
What influences the outcome of a piece of legislation?

3 key factors:

1. Number of seats of each of the European political groups

2. Intra-group dynamics:
   A. Cohesion of each of the groups
   B. Participation in votes

3. Inter-groups dynamics: coalition formation between the groups
Who wins (then & now)?

...until January 2012: ALDE 1st

Percent of votes won by each of the political groups
All policy areas (14.07.2009 - 01.01.2012)

...since then: EPP 1st

Percent of votes won by each of the political groups
All policy areas (14.07.2009 - 13.06.2013)
What happened?

Change of focus: increasing number of votes on economy and agriculture and decreasing focus on civil liberties:

% of (roll-call) votes on a policy area out of total RCVs (most dramatic change):

<table>
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<th>Civil liberties</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
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<td>Until 31 Dec 2011</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<td>Since 1 Jan 2012</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>12%</td>
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What influences the outcome of a piece of legislation?

Factor 1, number of seats:

Constant balance of power between political groups

(until May 2014 !)
Factor 2.a: intra-group cohesion (varies by policy area)

**Agriculture:** EPP substantially more cohesive than ALDE and S&D; Greens are by far most cohesive

European political groups cohesion rates on Agriculture (14.07.2009 - 13.06.2013)

**Civil liberties:** S&D overcomes EPP, ALDE is slightly behind

European political groups cohesion rates on Civil liberties, justice & home affairs (14.07.2009 - 13.06.2013)
Factor 2.b: intra-group participation
(relatively constant across areas)

Average participation in (roll-call) votes
(14.07.2009 - 13.06.2013)
How does cohesion and participation in votes influence the strength of a political group?

Comparison between:

- **Nominal power** (as per number of seats)

  and

- **Real power** (calculated as number of seats x cohesion x participation)
Real internal strength of groups (no. seats x cohesion x participation):

EPP, S&D, Greens/EFA have a higher real share in the EP plenary due to superior cohesion and participation, at the expense of GUE-NGL, ECR, EFD and NI
Real internal strength of groups
(no. seats x cohesion x participation):

EPP’s real share goes from 35% up to 41% on AGRI due to superior cohesion and participation!
Real internal strength of groups (no. seats x cohesion x participation):

S&D’s real share almost equals that of EPP on FEMM due to superior cohesion and participation!

Comparison of nominal and actual power of political groups in the European Parliament (Gender equality 14.07.2009 - 13.06.2013)
Factor 3: coalition formation (varies by policy area)
Factor 3: coalition formation (varies by policy area)

ALDE’s allies on AGRI
ALDE/ADLE matching other European Party Groups on Agriculture (14.07.2009 13.06.2013)

EPP’s allies on AGRI
EPP matching other European Party Groups on Agriculture (14.07.2009 13.06.2013)
Factor 3: coalition formation (varies by policy area)

ALDE’s allies on LIBE

EPP’s allies on LIBE
Results:

What kind of (ideological) EP footprint on EU legislation?
Results: EP’s ideological footprint varies by policy area

Groups’ footprint on AGRI dossiers

Groups’ footprint on LIBE dossiers
Results: EP’s ideological footprint varies by policy area

Groups’ footprint on ECON dossiers

- Percent of votes won by each of the political groups

Groups’ footprint on ENVI dossiers

- Percent of votes won by each of the political groups
Results: EP’s ideological footprint varies by policy area

Groups’ footprint on IMCO dossiers

Percent of votes won by each of the political groups
Internal market & consumer protection (14.07.2009 - 13.06.2013)

Groups’ footprint on FEMM dossiers

Percent of votes won by each of the political groups
Gender equality (14.07.2009  13.06.2013)
Results: EP’s ideological footprint varies by policy area

Groups’ footprint on (EU) BUDG dossiers

Percent of votes won by each of the political groups
Budget (14.07.2009 - 13.06.2013)
Conclusions

- Overall, cohesion of the trans-national European political groups is (surprisingly) high, even after more powers have been granted to the EP by the Lisbon Treaty, i.e. MEPs have more to fight for;

- The lack of a clear government-opposition system determines some intra-group and high inter-groups dynamics;

- Changes in the political composition of the European Parliament after May 2014 elections will generate changing trends of the EU legislation.
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