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European visa cooperation: interest politics and regional imagined communities

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European visa cooperation: interest politics and regional imagined communities

Mogens Hobolth*

Abstract

Since the early 1990s the European Union has struggled to increase integration in the sovereignty sensitive areas of justice and home affairs and foreign policy. The aim of this paper is to enhance our understanding of what patterns of cooperation have been established between the member states, and why. I do so by analysing the case of short-stay visa policy. Visas are a corner stone of EU's border control, regulating access to the Union's area of freedom, security and justice. It is moreover an instrument used in foreign and diplomatic relations. As a field where the member states' cooperation is particularly intense it is an 'extreme case' well-suited for drawing out empirical patterns and developing theoretical concepts. The paper is based on a network analytical approach and a new dataset of all the EU/Schengen member states' mutual consular visa assistance agreements. This I use to document the extent and pattern of cooperation from 2005 to 2010. I show that the member states rely intensively on each other's consular services. They mainly share sovereignty in four distinct regional clusters – a Nordic, Benelux, Southern European and an emerging Central Eastern. France and Germany are at the centre of the network. To explain this structure of cooperation I discuss the relative merits of realist, liberal intergovernmentalist and constructivist approaches. I show how they each identify important dynamics but emphasise the relative merits of a constructivist perspective. I put forward a new concept of 'regional imagined communities' which explains cooperation by the existence of shared identities owing to regional commonalities in language and state-building histories. I argue that the concept improves our understanding of European integration in visa policy, and suggest it might hold wider potential for explaining dynamics of collaboration in other sovereignty sensitive policy areas.

Keywords: Regional imagined communities, Intensive transgovernmentalism, Sovereignty, Justice and home affairs, European foreign policy, Schengen, Visa, Consular cooperation

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European visa cooperation: interest politics and regional imagined communities

Introduction

From the beginning of the 1990s and onwards the European Union has established still closer cooperation in the controversial areas of justice and home affairs and foreign policy (Lavenex & W. Wallace 2005; Howorth 2001).

Yet because of the sovereignty-sensitive character of the policy fields integration has in both cases stopped short of full supranational and hierarchical governance (Lavenex 2009: 256f). Cooperation has instead primarily been marked by “intensive transgovernmentalism” (Lavenex 2010: 469; W. Wallace & Giegerich 2010: 431; H. Wallace 2010: 93).¹ This term captures the existence of substantial and dense collaboration strongly dominated by the member states. The supranational institutions, such as the European Commission, Parliament and the Court of Justice, only play a minor role (H. Wallace 2010: 92f).² Pin-pointing the overall importance of state governments existing research has, however, not investigated in detail the constraints and structures in their mutual interaction.³ In this paper I aim to

¹ Wallace (2010) classifies intensive transgovernmentalism as one policy-making mode alongside four other used in the EU: the classical community method, the EU regulatory mode, the EU distributional mode and policy coordination. Tömmel (2009) operates with four types of European governance: hierarchical, negotiation, competition and cooperation. In her framework intensive transgovernmentalism could be seen as a hybrid of negotiation and cooperation.

² Transgovernmentalism can also be defined as a situation where actors from diverse ministries and levels of government cooperate directly with their counterparts in other European states without explicit national coordination and control from for example foreign ministries (Mérand, Hofmann & Irondelle 2010; see also Bigo 2000; Lavenex 2009: 258).

³ An exception to this trend has been the general observation that cooperation is limited by the need for a converging interest of all members and that as a result political agreements reached tends to reflect the lowest common denominator (Lavenex 2009: 266).

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contribute to the existing literature by investigating what patterns of cooperation has been established between the member states in a particular sovereignty sensitive policy area, and why.

The case I study is European consular cooperation abroad in visa matters. Visas grant or deny individuals legal access to state territories (Guild 2009: 118f). Establishing and enforcing visa restrictions are matters of diplomacy and foreign relations, as well as central instruments in relation to internal security and the control of illegal migration (Martenczuk 2009). It is thus a case on both interior and foreign policy cooperation. Visas are, additionally, an example of a sovereignty-sensitive policy area where the member states have established especially strong cooperation (Lavenex & Ucarer 2002: 6).⁴ It is thereby an 'extreme case' (Flyvbjerg 1991: 150) and as such able to bring out empirical patterns otherwise not easily identifiable. In that way it provides a good basis for theoretical development (George & Bennett 2005: 75).

Based on a new, comprehensive and original dataset of consular visa cooperation agreements and a network analytical method I advance two empirical arguments and one theoretical:

Firstly, the EU-states cooperate intensively abroad in visa matters. Outside Europe, the average Schengen member has independent visa-issuing consular representation in about 50 countries, relies on cooperative agreements in 50 and is not represented in 70 states.

Secondly, the structure of the cooperation largely follows regional clusters within Europe. The Nordic countries, Benelux, Southern Europe and to some extent also the new Central and Eastern member states all cooperate internally. France and Germany ties the clusters together as the centre of the network. Thus, the Schengen states mainly cooperate in the visa entry control process within tight regional circles.

⁴ Lavenex (2010: 462) characterizes asylum and visa policy as the areas of justice and home affairs where the member states has gone the furthest in transferring "comprehensive competences" to the EU. These two areas "are gradually moving towards more supranational structures" although there is still not a "single official 'common policy'" (Lavenex 2009: 255).

Thirdly, while both realism and liberal intergovernmentalism are able to explain important parts of the empirical pattern, constructivism on the whole goes furthest in accounting for the network structure (Waltz 1979; Moravcsik 1993; Jepperson, Wendt & Katzenstein 1996). In particular, I put forward a concept of ‘regional imagined communities’ (cf. Anderson 1991) as a central factor in explaining the cooperation. This notion, I suggest, could have a wider analytical potential as a tool for understanding integration in other sovereignty-sensitive areas.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. I start out by presenting the case and existing research on visa cooperation abroad. Then the data and methods used are presented. I subsequently conduct the empirical analysis and discuss three theoretical explanations of the patterns of cooperation identified. Finally, I conclude and set out the wider implications of the findings.

EU visa policy cooperation

Today, with the dismantling of almost all internal borders in Europe considerable political and administrative resources are invested in attempts to strengthen and harmonise the control of the EU’s external border (Thielemann & Sasse 2005). Short-stay visas are a centre-piece of these efforts (Bigo & Guild 2005). For the nationals of the approximately 130 countries currently on EU’s common visa list the first and main check of their eligibility to enter the EU occurs at consulates abroad during the application procedure (Guild 2003). Visas thus aim to ensure that travellers are pre-screened before they arrive at the territorial border.

Visa requirements also play a role in diplomatic relations (Martenczuk 2009; Stringer 2004). Travel restrictions can be imposed on some third countries and not others as part of a differentiation between allies and adversaries. They are used as a ‘carrot’ and ‘stick’ and can be imposed or lifted as a concession to another partner or to signal a bi-lateral worsening or improvement of relations. As part of the EU

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enlargement process, for example, visa restrictions have been gradually liberalized for most of the countries in the Balkans (Trauner 2009: 75-77).

The EU has attempted to encourage different forms of administrative cooperation in the visa-issuing process to ensure a uniform application of the shared visa legislation. The European Commission has promoted the idea of joint application processing centres (see for example Com 2007). The common rules also encourage local consular officials to meet and exchange data. Finally, a member state can make a bilateral agreement transferring fully or partly the visa-issuing process in a specific country or city to another Schengen member represented at the location (OJEU 2009). These options for cooperation abroad have been partially analysed both within the justice and home affairs and the foreign policy literature.

The justice and home affairs literature has in general shown considerable interest in visas and consular cooperation abroad (cf. Bigo & Guild 2005; Guild 2003; Pijpers & van der Velde 2007). It has, however, mainly focused on the overall legal framework and policy documents. Systematic empirical studies of the practice of consular visa cooperation have not been carried out within this literature.

Foreign policy analysts have largely focused on the creation of institutional structures of cooperation in Brussels, or on changes in the central offices of national foreign ministries as a result of EU integration (Carlsnaes, Sjørusen & White 2004). A few authors have also devoted some attention to European diplomatic and consular networks abroad.

Rijks and Whitman (2007: 39-41) analyse overall aspects of European diplomatic cooperation. They note that this concept is somewhat vague and propose a distinction between sharing “facilities” (buildings, support staff) and “capabilities” (diplomatic tasks, consular services). They state that the sharing of facilities and capabilities have not yet been much of a success. The attempts to construct joint visa application centres have not gained particular momentum.

Fernandez (2006) uses an Europeanization framework to analyse local consular cooperation and investigate how and to what extent the member states regularly meet and exchange information. Based primarily on an analysis of EU evaluation reports and policy documents she concludes that results have been “mixed” (Fernández 2006: 16f). On the one hand there has been an incorporation of EU rules and norms in local practices. But, on the other hand, resistance and lack of convergence remains due to the sensitivity of the area.

In sum, the member states have over the years harmonized overall approaches in the area of visas, a policy central to both foreign relations and internal security and migration control. Both the justice and home affairs and the foreign policy literature have taken an interest in the consular cooperation abroad in visa matters. The few analyses conducted so far indicates, however, that at this administrative level cooperation remains more limited. In the next section I set out the data and methods I utilize to contribute to our existing knowledge of European consular cooperation abroad in visa matters.

Data and methods

I measure the structure and extent of cooperation abroad using a new dataset covering the bilateral visa representation agreements entered into by the member states. I do not investigate meetings and exchange of data between officials in third countries (‘local consular cooperation’) or the establishment of joint embassy compounds (‘shared visa application centres’).

The rules governing the bilateral agreements are set out in the common visa code (OJEU 2009).⁵ The specific form of cooperation can vary within a given bilateral agreement. There can, for example, be rules on costs-distribution and consultation

⁵ The 2009 visa code replaced, with minor changes, the previous regulations about bilateral agreements specified in the so-called Common Consular Instructions (CCI). This document laid out the rules and norms for the entire visa issuing process (OJEU 2002). The main difference between the old and the new regulations were the introduction of somewhat more detailed and explicit requirements about how the agreements should be legally formulated.

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for certain categories of applicants. I only measure the overall existence of agreements. This entails that the indicator might capture somewhat different forms of bilateral cooperation. For my purposes, however, what matters is less the precise nature of the agreement but whether or not some form of collaboration takes place.

The data source for the analysis of the representation agreements is the overviews produced by the Council's General Secretariat until April 2010 ("Annex 18" tables).⁶ These were based on notifications by the member states of the cities abroad in which they had independent representation or relied on a visa-issuing agreement.

I have coded six versions of the consolidated overviews at yearly intervals starting in October 2004 and ending in April 2010 (Council 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2010b). The amount of cooperation changes throughout a given year. I used the consolidated version closest to January as an indicator of the approximate setup for the year in question. For example, the consolidated version from November 2005 is used as the best possible indicator of the cooperative setup throughout the whole of 2006.

For the different years the dataset covers all members of the Schengen cooperation, and all third countries abroad. One of the major events in the period was the enlargement of the Schengen area from 15 member states to 24 in late 2007. The dataset contains three measurements before the enlargement of Schengen and three afterwards. In 2008 Switzerland also joined bringing the total membership up to 25.⁷

The core of the dataset is two tables. The first contains a list of all the member states' own visa-issuing representations abroad per country, city and year. The raw data contains footnotes about the extent of consular services – if for example visas are solely issued to diplomatic personnel. I have only used a simple coding of whether or not a country has a visa facility at the location. For all six years this yields 9.472 observations. The second table contains a list of each cooperative agreement between

⁶ According to article 53(a) of the new visa code the member state must now inform the Commission of the existence of bilateral agreements, which is then obliged to publish the overview of agreements (OJEU 2009, cf. Council 2010a).

⁷ I use the following member state acronyms: AT: Austria, BE: Belgium, DE: Germany, DK: Denmark, EL: Greece, ES: Spain, FI: Finland, FR: France, IS: Iceland, IT: Italy, LU: Luxembourg, NL: Netherlands, NO: Norway, PT: Portugal, SE: Sweden, HU: Hungary, LV: Latvia, MT: Malta, SI: Slovenia, EE: Estonia, LT: Lithuania, PL: Poland, CZ: Czech Republic, SK: Slovakia, SZ: Switzerland.

two member states per city, country and year. The total count of agreements is 6.852. If a cooperation agreement ended during a year, I included it if it lasted for more than half of the year in question.

The main method I utilize to investigate the data is network analysis (Wasserman & Faust 1994; Scott 2000). This technique is especially well-suited for identifying and clarifying the structure of relationship between actors by modelling their mutual contact. The analytical unit in network analysis is pairs of actors – for example two countries and the amount of contact between them. For the purpose of the network analysis I thus recoded the data into bilateral pairs of member states. For each year I measured the total number of agreements between them. This measure is directional (Wasserman & Faust 1994: 273). There are not necessarily a symmetric number of agreements between two actors. In 2010, for example, Sweden relied on Norwegian consular services in 17 cities abroad; Norway was represented by Sweden in 14 locations.

I conduct the empirical analysis over time highlighting changes and continuities in the cooperation. Although the analysed period is relatively short – six years – an analysis over time is mandated because of the considerable shift in membership in the middle of the period with the enlargement of the Schengen area.

The two main network analytical tools are sociometrices and graphs (Scott 2000: 8-16). Sociometrices are tables detailing the relationships between the actors. Network graphs give an overview of the content of the tables by displaying the actors (nodes) and their interaction (relations) in such a way that the actors with the highest amount of mutual contact are clustered together. I mainly use network graphs in the analysis. I constructed the graphs using the visualization software ORA developed by the Center for Computational Analysis of Social and Organizational Systems at the Carnegie Mellon University (CASOS 2010). The positioning of the different actors on the graphs is in general stable, but the location of a node can vary slightly if the data is open for varying mathematical solutions. Sociometrices setting out the detailed content of the dataset are included in the annex.

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A key consideration in the construction of the graphs is to what extent all relations between actors should be modelled or only significant or strong ties. This is an important issue because a threshold makes it possible to better identify patterns, and is thus also highly important for the conclusions drawn. I have consistently used the mean number of agreements between any two member states as the cut-off point for all years. This ensures the reliability of the analysis. The threshold for inclusion is thereby in practice between seven to nine agreements. The Schengen-members on average has about 50 mutual cooperative agreements. A bilateral relation covering less than seven to nine agreements would thus seem minor. The threshold therefore also appears valid as it ensures that only significant relations are included.

In the next sections I present the results of the analysis.

The extent of the European consular cooperation in visa policy

Table 1 presents an overview of the extent of the European consular cooperation in the area of visa policy at the beginning of 2010:

Table 1. European consular representation in third countries in visa matters

Member state	Independent	Cooperative	Both	None
Europe / Schengen average	51	49	2	67
Austria	50	80	6	34
Belgium	64	72	3	31
Czech Republic	66	0	0	104
Denmark	39	65	4	62
Estonia	10	56	3	101
Finland	46	52	1	71
France	125	12	2	31
Germany	116	24	1	29
Greece	57	74	5	34
Hungary	46	27	5	92
Iceland	0	90	1	79
Italy	102	35	0	33
Latvia	14	34	2	120
Lithuania	21	16	0	133
Luxembourg	4	129	3	34
Malta	11	70	3	86
Netherlands	80	54	3	33
Norway	44	58	6	62
Poland	63	1	0	106
Portugal	50	85	1	34
Slovakia	37	0	0	133
Slovenia	16	88	5	61
Spain	96	45	0	29
Sweden	46	62	3	59
Switzerland	77	0	0	93

SOURCE: 2010 data from annex 18 of the Common Consular Instructions (Council 2010b). The dataset covers 170 third countries outside the Schengen area.

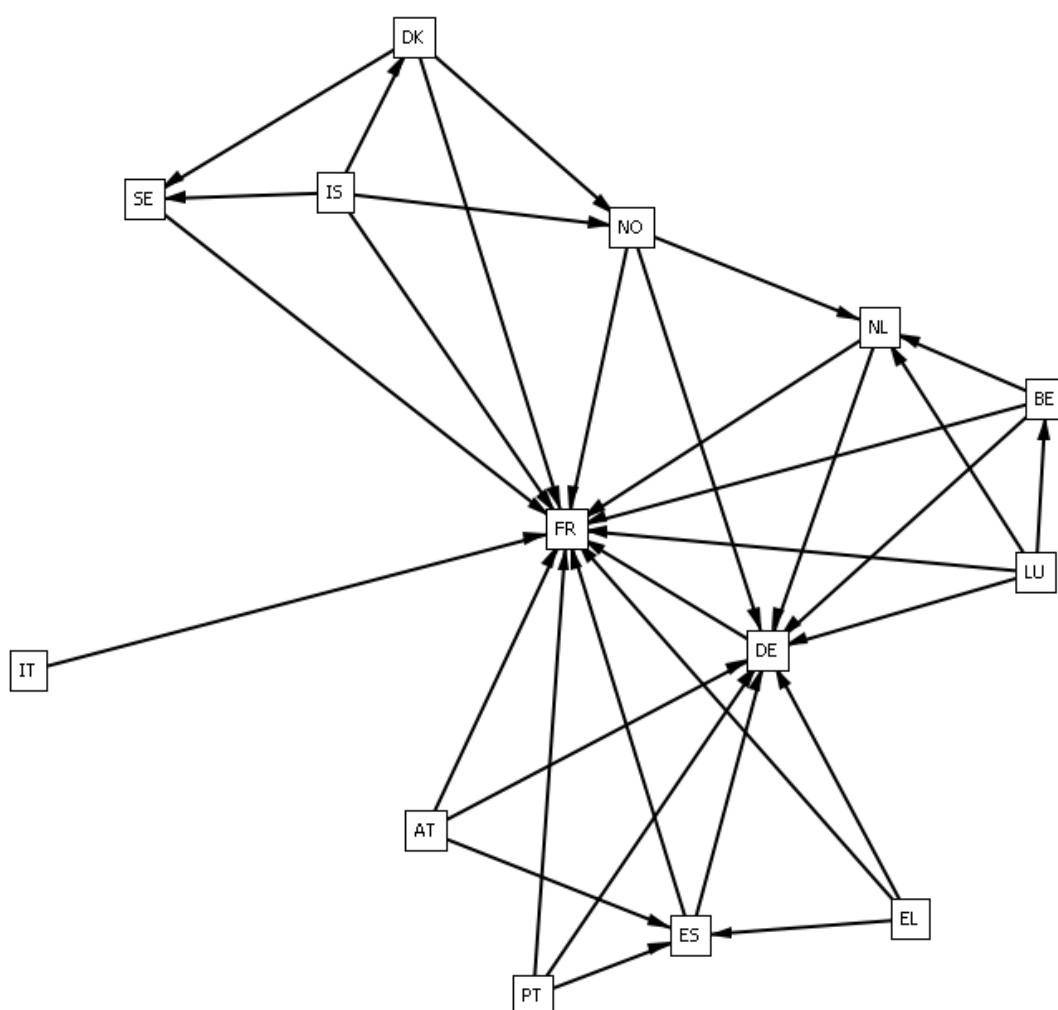
Table 1 show that the Schengen states in general strongly rely on cooperative arrangements for visa-issuing. On average, the European states have independent representation in 51 third countries, relies on their partners in 49, both forms in 2 and do not have a consular presence at all in 67 states. Cooperative representation is thus almost as common as having independent visa issuing facilities in a third country. There are, however, considerable differences between the member states. France, Germany and Italy are independently represented in over 100 countries. Iceland and Luxembourg have almost no visa-representations. The vast majority of the EU-states have independent representation in visa matters in 40 to 60 third countries.

In the next section I investigate in closer detail the precise structure and development of the cooperation in the analysed period.

The structure of the consular cooperation

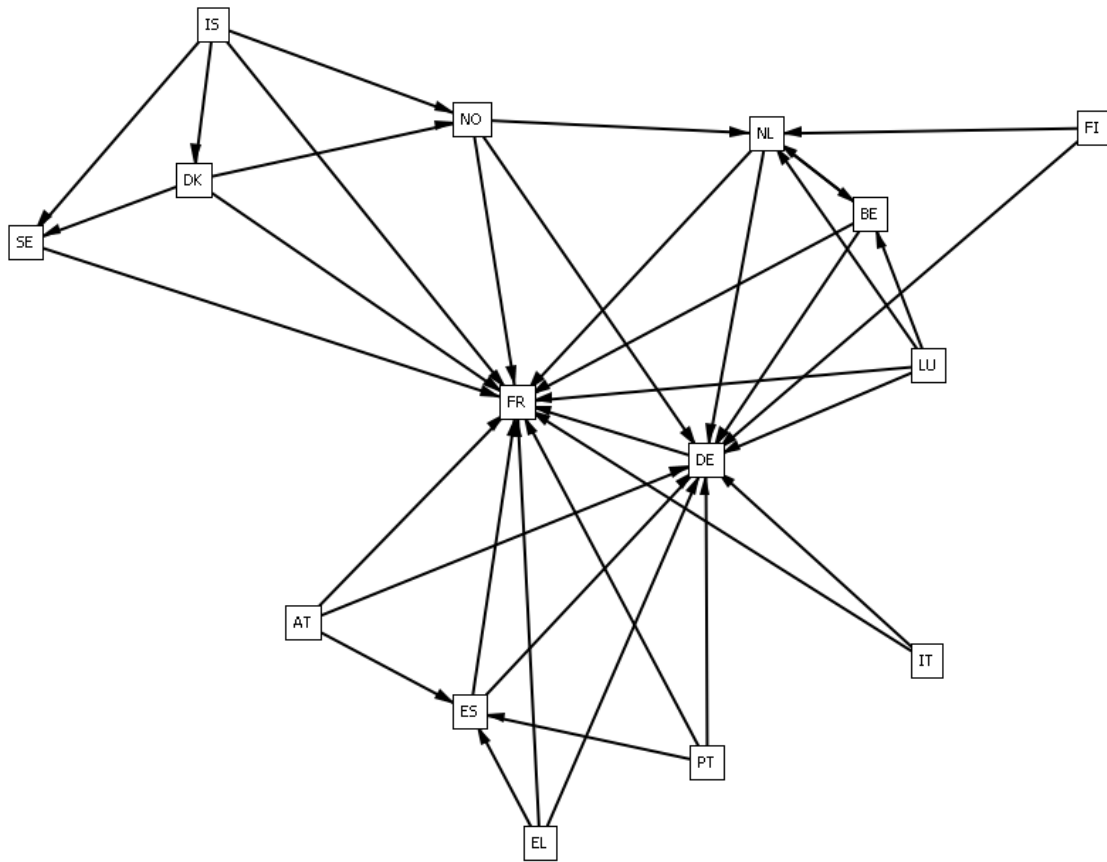
This section discusses the results of the network analysis focusing on the main tenets of the consular network before and after the enlargement of the Schengen area in December 2007. Figure one to three below shows the structure of the cooperation in the period from late 2004 until the Schengen enlargement:

Figure 1: Consular cooperation 2005



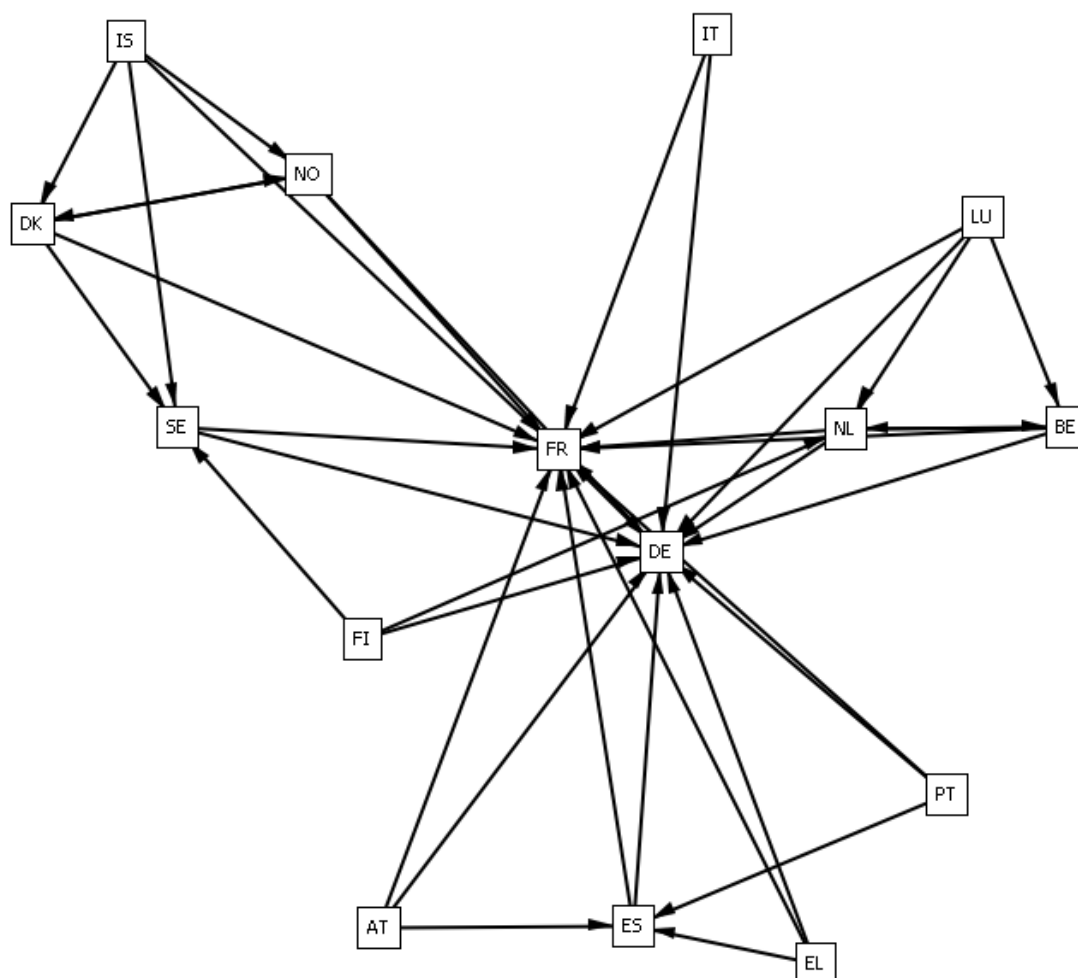
Notes: Data from 2004.10.11. Relations with a weight below 8.7 (the mean number cities abroad covered by an agreement between two member states) excluded. These are viewed as insignificant. The arrows show the direction of the relationship. Finland is not included because none of its relations has a weight above the cut-off point. Size of the Schengen area: 15 member states.

Figure 2: Consular cooperation 2006



Notes: Data from 07.11.2005. Links with a weight below 8.9 excluded as insignificant (see explanatory comments to figure 1). Size of the Schengen area: 15 member states.

Figure 3: Consular cooperation 2007



Notes: Data from 16.10.2006. Links with a weight below 8.7 excluded as insignificant (see explanatory comments to figure 1). Size of the Schengen area: 15 member states.

Figure 1, for 2005, shows France at the centre of the network. All the other member states rely on France to represent them in a significant number of locations abroad (above 8). Germany is also highly central but not to the same extent. This is primarily because Italy and the Nordic countries – except for Norway – solely interact with France. Thus, only 11 countries rely on Germany’s consulates for representation abroad.

Italy is somewhat isolated in the network as it only cooperates with France, and the other member states do not in general rely on its otherwise extensive consular services. Finland is excluded altogether from the picture because it only has a marginal number of ties with the other member states.

The remaining member states cluster in three sub-groups. There is, firstly, a Nordic group consisting of Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Iceland relies on all the other Scandinavian countries. Denmark cooperates with Norway and Sweden. Norway and Sweden, finally, do not cooperate with each other and thus occupy opposite ends of the Nordic sub-group. The Scandinavian countries are primarily connected to the rest of the network through France. The second grouping is the Benelux countries. The Netherlands is the primary actor in this group with Luxembourg and Belgium relying on its representations. The Southern European cluster is slightly more complex. At the centre of it is Spain, which Greece and Portugal rely on. Austria also belongs to this group because of its ties with Spain. Italy, as noted, is not a part of the Southern group.

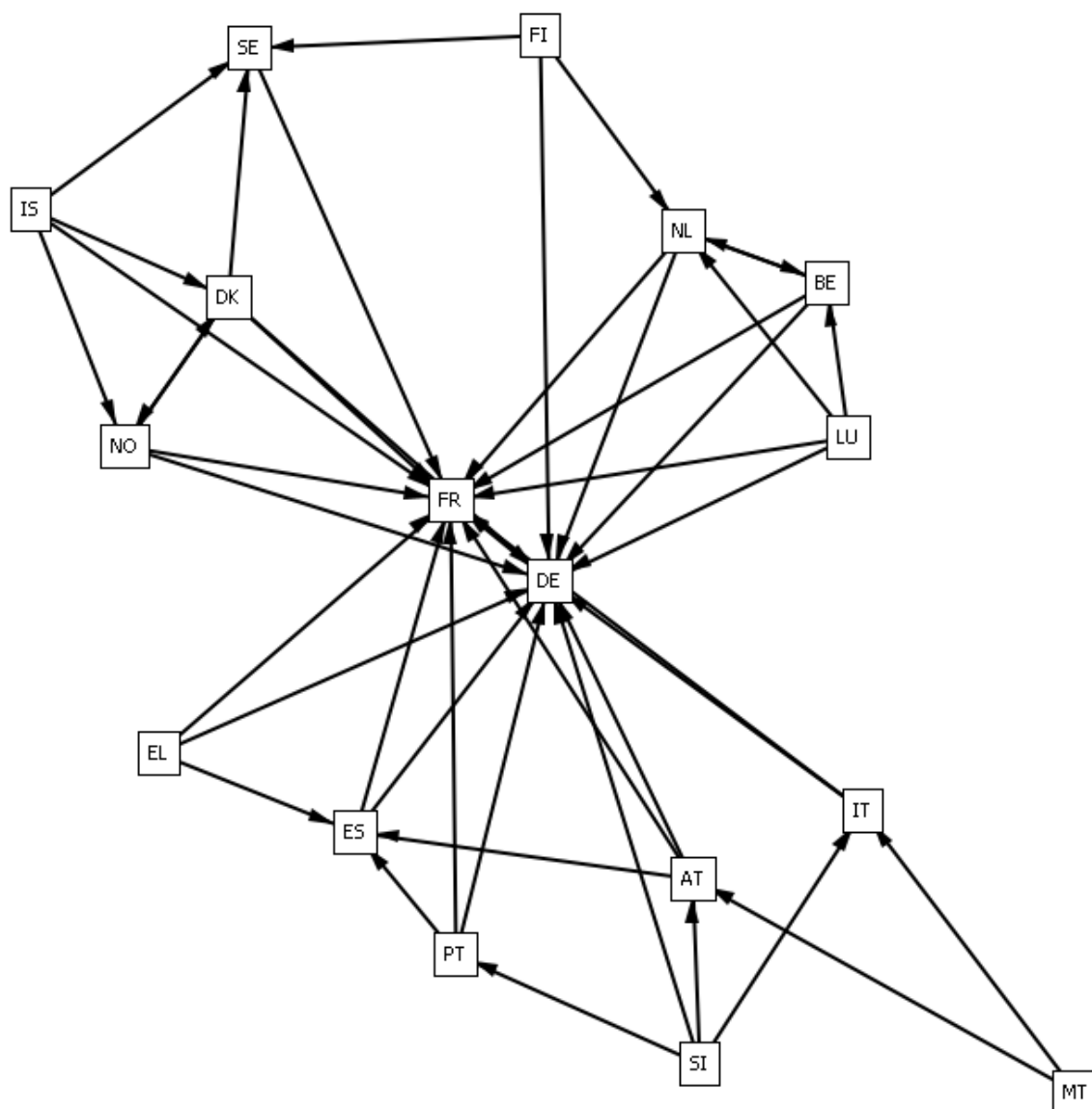
In 2006, as shown in figure 2, Finland entered the network connected to Germany and Netherlands. It did not join the Nordic group perhaps testifying to its peculiar relation to the other Scandinavian countries. Italy established ties with Germany.

Figure 3 illustrates that in 2007 Finland began to cooperate with Sweden moving it towards the Nordic group. It also, however, had relations with the Netherlands. This pulled the Netherlands somewhat away from the other Benelux countries. The centrality of Germany, finally, increased as Sweden established a connection with it.

In sum, in the years prior to the enlargement of Schengen the consular cooperation between the member states occurred in a stable and recurrent structure. France was at the centre of the network. Germany similarly occupied a key role, but was less central because it did not cooperate with most of the Nordic countries. Italy had a somewhat secluded role only linked with France and partially Germany. The Nordic countries – but Finland – cooperated in a distinct sub-group as did the Benelux countries. The Southern European countries, and Austria, finally clustered together. The pattern of cooperation thus largely followed regional geographical groupings in Europe.

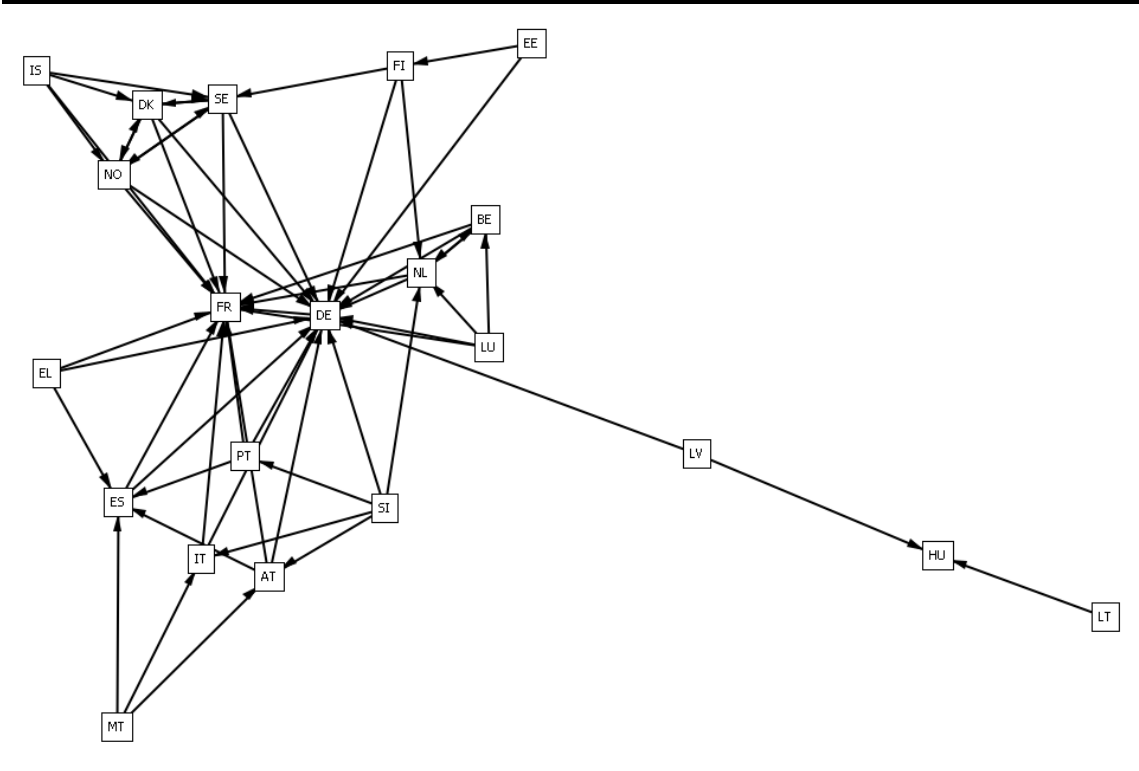
Figure four to six shows the structure of the consular network after the Schengen enlargement.

Figure 4: Consular cooperation 2008



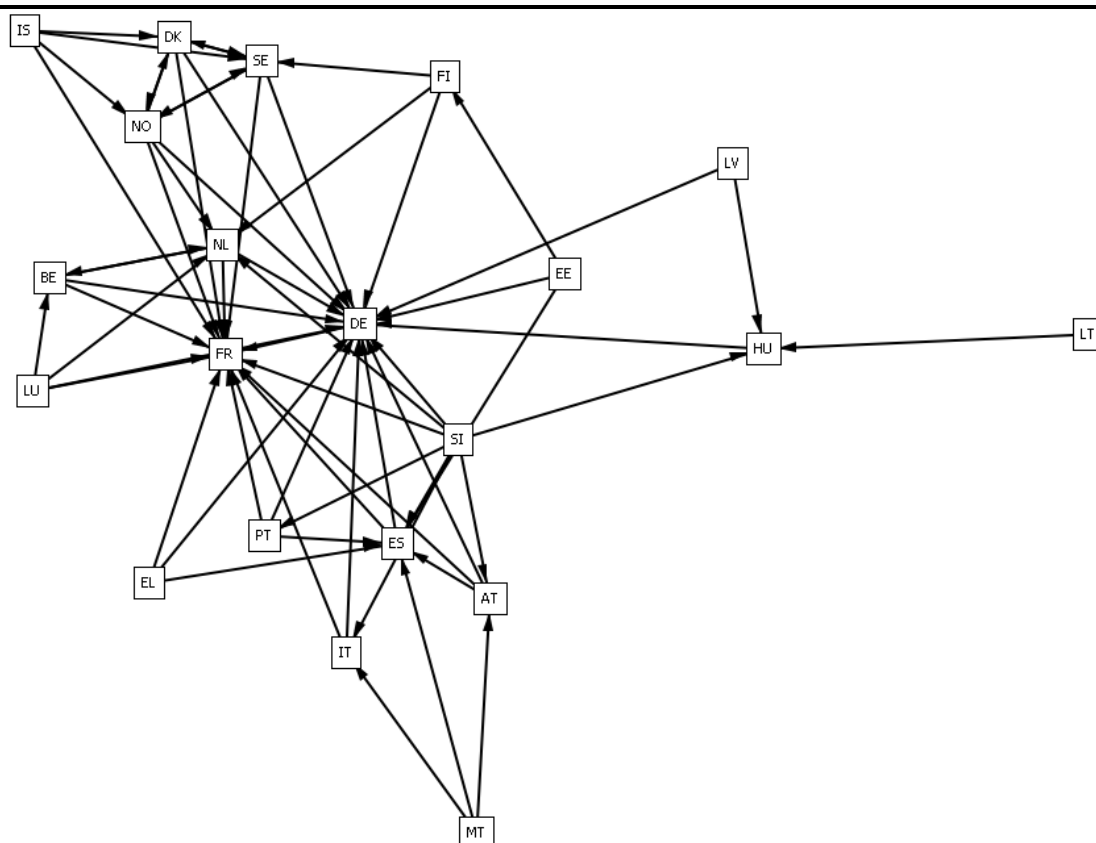
Notes: Data from 17.12.2007. Links with a weight below 8.8 excluded as insignificant (see explanatory comments to figure 1). Hungary and Latvia are not shown because none of their relations had a weight above the cut-off point. Estonia, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland were not part of any cooperative agreements at all. Size of the Schengen area: 24 member states.

Figure 5: Consular cooperation 2009



Notes: Data from 01.12.2008. Links with a weight below 8.4 excluded as insignificant (see explanatory comments to figure 1). Poland is not shown because none of its relations had a weight above the cut-off point. The Czech Republic and Slovakia were not part of any cooperative agreements at all. Size of the Schengen area: 24 member states.

Figure 6: Consular cooperation 2010



Notes: Data from 04.30.2010. Links with a weight below 7.5 excluded as insignificant (see explanatory comments to figure 1). Poland and Switzerland are not shown because none of their relations had a weight above the cut-off point. The Czech Republic and Slovakia were not part of any cooperative agreements at all. Size of the Schengen area: 25 states.

The post-enlargement figures in general show a process of change from 2008 to 2010, and the added complexity of the network resulting from the larger membership.

Initially, as shown in figure 4, the Schengen enlargement only entailed changes in the Southern cluster of the network. Malta established ties with Italy and Austria; Slovenia with Austria, Portugal, Italy and Germany. Compared with the Nordic and the Benelux groups the Southern cluster thus became more diverse and less clearly structured. The remaining new members did not enter into agreements.

A year later, in 2009, the Southern European network gained a clearer structure. In general, it was connected to the rest of Europe through Germany and France. Slovenia, however, also had direct ties with the Netherlands. Additionally, the Baltic States and Hungary entered the network. But in contrast with the Nordic and the Benelux states the Baltic States did not establish a sub-group. Estonia established ties

with Finland and Germany, Lithuania with Hungary, and Latvia with Hungary and Germany. Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia were still not a part. The new members of the network mainly established ties with Germany moving the centre away from France.

The data for 2010, finally, shows several changes. The main trend was the establishment of Hungary as the centre of a new Central-Eastern cluster covering Slovenia, Lithuania and Latvia but not Estonia. Estonia is only indirectly connected to the cluster through a new link with Slovenia, but it also initiated a new relation with Spain. Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia did not participate in the network at all. The Netherlands appeared to be gradually becoming a minor Northern centre in its own right. Spain, finally, became more clearly positioned as the main actor in the Southern cluster.

In sum, the network of consular cooperation in visa matters shows considerable continuity before and after the Eastern enlargement of Schengen but also new tendencies. The Nordic and the Benelux clusters remain intact, and the Southern seems to have been strengthened by the addition of Malta, Slovenia and Italy. Two main other post-Enlargement changes are the emergent creation of a Central-Eastern cluster, and a shift in the centre of the network towards Germany. In the next section I discuss different possible explanations of this pattern of cooperation.

Explaining the extent and pattern of cooperation

There is a wide range of theories of European integration (Rosamond 2000). Three of the main contemporary approaches are realism (Waltz 1979; Hoffmann 1966; Howorth 2001; Hill 1998), liberal intergovernmentalism (Moravcsik 1993; Moravcsik & Nicolaïdes 1999) and constructivism (Neumann 2002; Wæver 1998; Bretherton & Vogler 2006). In the following sections I use these three theories to develop a set of explanations of the visa cooperation abroad, and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the accounts.

A realist explanation

Realism is a key theory of international relations (Legro & Moravcsik 1999: 5), and is often used in studies of especially European foreign policy (Howorth 2001; Hill 1998). It is a rich and varied approach.⁸ My analytical starting-point is neo-realism and its picture of world politics as an international anarchy populated by sovereign states (Waltz 1979: 7; Keohane 1986: 7). The interest of the state is in this account defined as survival (Waltz 1979). Concerned first and foremost with securing their own continued existence the states will attempt to balance each other so that no actor becomes powerful enough to conquer the others. What determines policy is solely the overall distribution of material capabilities in the system of states – not ideologies, historical ties or domestic politics. International relations are hence highly competitive and mistrustful. Consequently, neo-realism is sceptical about the possibility of cooperation in global politics. This is especially the case for the larger and more powerful states, which are the analytical focus of the theory (Keohane 1986).

Applied to EU visa policy, this line of explanation directs our attention towards the structure and extent of cooperation between the major member states. These are France and Germany and, albeit to a lesser extent, Italy, Spain and Poland. The first

⁸ For a critical discussion of different lines of argument within realism see Legro and Moravcsik (1999).

two form the centre of the network with a range of smaller countries relying on their consular representations. This is in line with realist expectations. It is more difficult to explain why Germany makes use of some French consulates, but this might still be seen as a relatively insignificant level of cooperation. Poland does not cooperate at all, again supporting the realist account. Spain is a local centre of the Southern cluster though it also relies on Italian, French and German facilities. The latter is difficult to explain but could reflect that Spain is a less powerful state. The same would hold for Italy and its increased dependence on France and Germany. Finally, it might be an anomaly that the smaller EU-states cooperate intensively with each other, but then again they are not overall significant in international relations.

Neorealism thus offers a fairly convincing explanation of the position of the major states. It is not, however, concerned with minor states and therefore does not provide an account of their cooperation. Yet most EU countries are small and they are responsible for a substantial amount of the visas issued. Hence to understand European visa cooperation these member states should also be accounted for.

If we shift the focus to classical realism (Rose 1998; Rynning 2011) smaller states reappear as relevant objects of analysis. Moreover, the geopolitics of territory, population flows and frontiers become important (Wæver 1992a: 172; Ashley 1987; Rudolph 2003). States have a fixed location and their interests are therefore to a large extent driven by which countries they find themselves bordering. Thus, organised crime or social upheaval in a neighbour country is a security concern for a state as it could threaten the stability of the border area. This territorial dimension was largely absent in the neorealist model with its structuralist focus on global power relations (Buzan & Wæver 2003: 11).⁹

The classical, geopolitical realist explanation directs our attention to the EU states which share territorial borders with third countries. This shifts the focus to the Southern and Eastern clusters. The former have strong interests in trade and

⁹ Mouritzen (1997: 80) argues that geographical location is entirely absent from the neo-realist model because it was originally based on an analogy to the micro-economic concept of a market, an idea which does not involve territory.

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migration control towards Northern Africa. The latter shares similar concerns in relation to Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. Yet, common interests do not equal a preference for cooperation. On the contrary, where concerns run high a realist account predicts that states would opt to retain independent policy-making capabilities. This is precisely what a closer look at the data suggests. Though Southern Europe cooperates intensively they do not collaborate when it comes to their immediate North African and Middle-Eastern neighbours. Here they have independent consular representation in visa matters. The same is the case for the Eastern cluster with regards to their bordering states. Where national interests are at stake we thus, as expected, find that the states have chosen to retain their capacity to conduct independent migration control. Classical geopolitical realism can therefore explain the visa strategy of small and larger EU members located in the territorial periphery of the union towards their neighbours. Other patterns of cooperation and non-cooperation fall outside the scope of this account.

This somewhat narrow focus is itself a limitation of the explanation. What is more troubling is that movement and trade are not as tied to geographical proximity as they might have been once. Today, transport is easy facilitating flows of money and persons across large distances (Neumann & Gstöhl 2006: 13). The cooperation between EU member-states in relation to remote third countries thus needs to be accounted for. A realist reply to this criticism could be that the substantial amount of collaboration within the regional clusters concerns third countries of little relevance to state interests. But this is not the case. Within the Southern and Eastern groups states rely on each other's consulates in immigration sending countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, and Iran and key trade partners such as China and India. This questions the classical realist account.

Realism, in sum, is able to explain some of the central dynamics in the structure and extent of cooperation. Specifically, it provides an account of the position of the main players. Yet the key pattern in the data – regional clusters – is not adequately accounted for.

Liberal intergovernmentalism

Liberal intergovernmentalism is a central approach in European studies mainly developed by Moravcsik (1993, 2003). The theory models EU-politics as a two-level game (cf. Putnam 1988). In a first round of domestic politics – primarily involving economic interest groups – the preference of a member state towards a given issue is formed. In a second stage at the EU-level the state then negotiates rationally with the other EU-members to achieve an outcome as close as possible to this interest. The international bargaining process occurs in a dense net of institutional rules and norms where the member states can make credible commitments and link diverse issues to enable more players to be accommodated (cf. Keohane 1984).

A member state thus settles on its visa policy preference in the national stage of the game. Should the overall approach be liberal or restrictive? Key actors are economic interest groups – major companies, trade organizations and the tourism industry. Because of their interest in easy travel for tourists and business partners we would expect them to lobby for a liberal policy: extensive consular representation abroad and generous visa issuing practices. National politicians seeking re-election can also play a role at this level, Moravcsik emphasises (1993: 483f). When migration is a highly salient issue governments could have an interest in a restrictive policy. Thus for example in countries with strong anti-immigration parties protecting the borders could be central to appeasing popular concerns and winning votes.

In the subsequent European stage of the game the government then identifies and aligns with other member states with a similar policy preference. Countries with a liberal approach to migration control would be expected to cooperate with other liberal players. The restrictive states should similarly collaborate with each other.

The Southern cluster in the network lends some support to this explanation. In especially Greece, Malta, Spain and Portugal tourism constitute a considerable part of the domestic economies (World Bank 2010). Tourism is also significant, though to a lesser extent, in Austria. Although intra-European visits are likely to be a major part of this, especially the larger Southern countries attract guests from all over the

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world. It would therefore seem likely that the tourism industry here is able to lobby the government and work for a liberal visa policy. These member states would thereby end up pursuing a similar liberal interest. This in turn can explain why they cooperate with each other at the European level.

Yet tourism is not a major industry in the other member states and this factor therefore cannot account for the other clusters. What about bilateral trading interests? Extra-European trade constitute a considerable (above 15%, 2009 figures) share of the GDP of Belgium, the Netherlands, Hungary, Slovenia, Slovakia, Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia (Eurostat 2010, 2011). Thus, in these countries companies and trade organisations would seem likely to have a particularly strong interest in an open access policy. We should therefore expect them to push their governments in this direction. A common domestic interest in liberal visa policy could explain the significant cooperation between these states. It cannot, however, account for why there are two distinct clusters – Benelux and the Eastern group – and not just one large cluster. But the Central and Eastern members have only recently joined the common visa policy. If this trade-based liberal account is correct we should thus expect cross-cluster relations to develop in the coming years. There remains the Nordic group. These countries do not have a similarly high level of external trade. Hence it makes sense that they do not form a part of the others clusters. But in the absence of a strong external trade interest it is difficult to explain why they should cooperate intensively with each other.

To what extent can national partisan politics supplement this explanation and account for especially Nordic alignment? Radical right-wing parties are particularly strong electorally in Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway and France (Rydgren 2008: 737f; Lubbers, Gijsberts & Scheepers 2002: 357). From the perspective of domestic electoral politics it is thus understandable that Denmark and Norway would cooperate. Their reliance on restrictive France is to be expected as well. The recent collaboration between Norway and the Netherlands equally makes sense. It is, however, difficult to see why Norway and Denmark would align with liberal Sweden. Instead, we should expect to see cooperation with Austria, while

Sweden should rely on pro-migration Spain. National partisanship thus can provide some explanation of Nordic cooperation, but face important counter evidence.

Summing up, liberal intergovernmentalism offers a convincing account of the Southern cluster and to some extent also the Eastern and Benelux groups. It is less able to explain Nordic cooperation. Nor does it account for the role of Germany and France as network centres.

A constructivist approach

Constructivism is the major alternative to realist and liberal approaches within international relations and European foreign affairs studies (cf. Smith 2001). The general starting-point is the meta-theoretical claim that the world does not have meaning independently of the language we use to describe it (Campbell 1998: 4). From this follows that we should be analytically interested in and study the ways in which different discourses and practices give significance to and allows us to interpret actions and events (Larsen 1999: 453; cf. Neumann 2002). Instead of merely assuming that state interests are objectively given we should focus on how construction of identities make interests meaningful and inform how they are defined (Weldes 1996; Ringmar 1996).

The analytical ambition of constructivist approaches varies. Hansen (2006; for a discussion see Wendt 1998) argues for the “impossibility of causality” and pleads for a sole focus on the “constitutive” effects of discourses and practices. We can thus investigate how shared constructions make events and actions meaningful, but we cannot attribute a causal role to ideas (cf. Neumann 1994). Wæver (1998) pleads for a focus on “negative predictions” emphasising that discourse analysis should not be used in attempts to explain what will happen but only to map out the field of actions that would not be meaningful and hence are unlikely to occur. Jepperson, Katzenstein and Wendt (1996; see also Finnemore & Sikkink 1998) argue that “ideational” factors can and should be included in causal analysis alongside

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“material”. Thus, for any given political situation we can investigate the independent and relative causal importance of shared beliefs in bringing about the outcome. In this paper I follow this latter causal, explanatory approach. I view discourses and practices as constitutive of shared identities. These identities, in turn, can be included as an ideational variable in causal analysis and used to explain events and actions.

The focal point for constructivist analyses of identity and international policy was initially the nation-state (Katzenstein 1996; Berger 1996; Weldes 1996; Larsen 1999; Wæver 1998; Campbell 1998). But what, from a constructivist perspective, is a nation? According to Anderson’s (1991) now classical argument the nation is an “imagined community”. In a complex historical analysis Anderson shows how a common linguistic space, the nation, was created through the development of new forms of mass-communication and state administrative practices and came to be experienced by its members as a community. Despite the impossibility of ever meeting more than a fraction of one’s compatriots, citizens feel a sense of commonality. We thus, Anderson emphasises, distinguish members from non-members and are often willing to make heavy sacrifices for a community that is seen as a sovereign political entity. Another way of putting this is that national belonging is part of our identity and shapes in crucial ways how we act and interact.

As Neumann (1994: 58) points out, however, not only nations but also regions can be seen as imagined communities. This suggests that we can push this line of argument beyond the nation state (cf. Held 1998: 19; Bellamy 2004: 31f) and apply it to policy cooperation at a regional level. In all likelihood, regions are imagined as less thick (Walzer 1994) communities than the nation. Still, they could exhibit similar features. To illustrate, let us take the case of the Nordic regional cluster.

The Nordic region is characterized by strong linguistic similarities (Wæver 1992b: 95). The Swedish, Danish and Norwegian languages are very alike, and there is a widespread assumption in the populations that it is easy to understand each other. Finnish and Icelandic differ markedly but Swedish and Danish respectively are common second languages in these two countries. Moreover, universalistic welfare states developed in all of the countries in the same period with similar administrative

practices and technologies (Miles 2010: 186). Analyses of general societal discourses show that the Nordic countries do indeed share a perception of each other as coming from stable, small, rule-of-law welfare states (Hansen & Wæver 2001). That is, they recognize in each other a certain commonality as a basis for trust. In this way the Nordic region resembles Anderson's national imagined community, although it is thinner and does not entail as strong ideas about sovereignty or patriotism.

The Nordic case suggests that the patterns of visa cooperation can be explained as a result of 'regional imagined communities'. Shared perceptions of likeness in terms of especially language and state structures generate trust which facilitates collaboration on sensitive issues. Within the regions the member states can meaningfully share and transfer sovereignty over decisions concerning which persons should be allowed or denied entry to their territory. But can this account be generalized beyond Scandinavia or do we need another approach to understand the remaining patterns?

Let us look at the other groupings in the network one by one. The Benelux cluster – which is strong and persistent – is characterized by linguistic diversity (Vanhoonaeker 2003: 14). The Netherlands and Belgium, however, share a colonial past and all three countries have a long history of state-building in the light of vulnerability to European warfare. The Southern group also has important similarities but many differences as well (Featherstone & Kazamias 2001: 3f; Heywood & McLaren 2010: 170f). There are strong commonalities between the Spanish, Portuguese and Italian languages. But the linguistic differences to Greece and Austria are considerable. The state-building trajectories of Spain and Portugal are again quite similar with an early colonial expansion, a strong Catholic church and a recent history of fascism. Greece, Italy and Slovenia exhibits some like features. But Malta and Austria are the odd ones out. The Eastern cluster displays substantial linguistic diversity, but also shares a recent history of Communism, peaceful revolution and EU-accession central to the state-building of these countries (Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier 2005: 2; Hamilton 1999: 136). All in all, the explanatory model has some purchase for the other clusters, but also limitations. It

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seems very likely that some forms of regional imagined communities do exist which facilitates cooperation, but that these are less tightly knit than the Nordic group.

What about France and Germany? Their consular facilities are made available to and used by almost all other EU-countries. The two states do not rely on the services of others. As centres of the network the region to which they belong is therefore Europe as such (cf. Wæver 2001: 39f). In the case of France this is understandable given its recent past as colonial world power which formed the making of the French nation-state. In its own understanding France is still a global actor with a civilizing mission. Only now this role is played out through a European Union shaped in the image of and revolving around France (Wæver 1998). In Germany the nation-state was fundamentally reconfigured after the Second World War. Its administration was rebuilt and discourses of German identity underwent significant changes. Only as a peaceful part of Europe could Germany redeem itself after the atrocities of the gas chambers. Offering assistance to smaller EU members can be seen as way of enacting this role of an institutionally embedded friendly regional power (Katzenstein 1997; Wæver 1998). The European Union from its earliest days has been created around an idea of a French-German centre (Cole 2010). Bureaucratic structures both within the EU and in individual member states are to large extent influenced by the traditions of these two core countries. French and German are leading administrative and diplomatic languages in the EU spoken widely in most member states, especially by officials. Taken together, this explains why so many smaller member-states avail themselves of the consulates of France and Germany.

The 'regional imagined communities' concept thus offers a very convincing explanation of Nordic cooperation and the role of EU core countries. It finds support in the remaining patterns as well. The latter, however, suggest that the account demands more commonality in language and nation-state history than can be observed.

Constructivist arguments are not solely about identity. A different strand focuses on norms (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998). This prompts us to ask if the network structure could be the result not of imagined communities but of a looser set of institutionally

embedded practices. It might be that for some reason the member states got in the habit of cooperating mainly with their neighbours and that this has gradually evolved into standard operating procedures and norms of appropriateness (March & Olsen 1989; Allison & Zelikow 1999). But this raises the question of what triggered the pattern of cooperation in the first place. The answer could be a common policy preference. As we saw in the previous sections shared interests can account for important parts of the findings. But in that case policy interests would seem to do the analytical work leaving little role for standard operating procedures. Only if norms and preferences begin to diverge and we see continued cooperation would the norms-based constructivism have purchase. The data period, however, makes it difficult to trace such potential shifts.

Another trigger could be regional imagined communities. If state officials share a sense of belonging with their counterparts in neighbour countries this could spur cooperation which would then gradually become a standard of good practice. At first, this would again seem to make the norms-argument redundant as the common identity now drives the explanation. But in the cases where the imagined community looks rather too thin to account for all cooperation, as in the case of Southern Europe for example, the norms argument could carry important weight. Some commonalities in language and history prompt initial cooperation which then becomes institutionalized. In this way the two different constructivist accounts supplement each other.

Regional patterns of cooperation have also been identified as a component of the legislative decision-making process of the European Union, and identity-driven factors have been put forward as important in explaining these (Naurin 2008; Kaeding & Selck 2005; Mattila & Lane 2001; Elgström et al. 2001). This could, on the one hand, suggest that visa collaboration is an 'isomorphism' (DiMaggio & Powell 1983) from more well-established practices. If member-states cooperate regionally in one area this could inspire the same behaviour in other fields. With some administrative practices established broadening the cooperation would be comparatively easy. On the other hand, the presence of regional cooperation across a

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diverse range of issues and arenas suggests that some form of imagined community is at play. Again, if countries see their neighbours as more like themselves than other member-states and hence more trustworthy this would account for why these norms of appropriateness arise in the first place.

In sum, the concept of regional imagined communities provides a good account of the structures in the network. Especially if combined with a norms-based constructivism it provides the most extensive explanation of the patterns.

Conclusion

In this paper I have investigated the structure and extent of the consular cooperation in visa matters amongst the Schengen-members in the period from 2005 to 2010. The aim was to further our understanding of intensive transgovernmentalism – the main type of policy-making in the area of interior and foreign affairs. I did this by investigating what patterns of cooperation has been established between the member states in this selected sovereignty sensitive policy area. To carry out the analysis I utilized a new dataset of consular visa representation agreements, and a network analytical approach to investigate the patterns in the data.

I showed, firstly, that the member states strongly rely on cooperative arrangements. To a large extent they use each other's consular services abroad in the visa-issuing process. The average Schengen member is independently represented in approximately 50 countries, via a cooperative agreement in 50 and not represented at all in 70.

The network analysis showed, secondly, that cooperation throughout the period was structured in distinct clusters: a Nordic, Benelux, Southern-European and an emergent Central-Eastern. France and Germany were at the centre of the network. There were few ties across the clusters. Northern and Southern Europe, in particular, did hardly cooperate at all.

Drawing on three main theories within European and international studies I discussed what could explain this pattern of cooperation. I focused on assessing the merits of realist, liberal intergovernmentalist and constructivist perspectives.

Realism emphasises the difficulties of cooperation in inter-state affairs. This provided an explanation of the position of the larger member states. Realist theory could also account for why smaller border-states are independently represented in neighbouring third countries. But the overall regional patterns remained puzzling.

The liberal intergovernmentalist account focused on the national formation of preferences about migration control, and predicted that the member states would cooperate with others sharing a similar liberal or restrictive approach. This argument found particular support in relation to the Southern cluster where the importance of tourism constitutes a likely significant common interest. The liberal account also found some support in the rest of the patterns, but faced important counter-trends.

The constructivist argument explained cooperation as rendered feasible by the existence of shared identities owing to regional commonalities in language and state-building histories. These constructions make it possible for the member states to trust and cooperate with each other. I proposed the term 'regional imagined communities' to capture and explain the geographical clusters of cooperation. This concept was particularly well-suited to account for Nordic collaboration and the central role of Germany and France. It could also go some way in explaining the remaining relations. But here the commonalities were weaker. This suggested the need for a supplementary norms-based constructivism working in conjunction with thin imagined communities.

The case of visa policy was selected as an example of EU-cooperation spanning interior and foreign policy. As an area where the member states have established particularly widespread cooperation it is an 'extreme case'. It enables us to identify patterns and dynamics which are likely to be at play in other sovereignty sensitive areas, albeit in more inchoate and therefore less easily observable form. The case of visa cooperation suggests that ideational factors such as regional imagined

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communities are important in facilitating cooperation, but that common interests are of some relevance as well. Further studies of, for example, judicial and diplomatic collaboration could throw additional light on the relative explanatory potential of preferences and identities in explaining patterns of interaction between the member states. This could also help to establish the extent to which regional groupings characterize the intensive transgovernmentalism of foreign policy and justice and home and affairs cooperation.

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Annex: Socio-metrical overviews

Sociometric 1. Consular visa representation agreements in 2005

	AT	BE	DE	ES	FR	IT	NL	PT	LU	DK	FI	NO	SE	EL	IS
AT		5	25	14	32	1	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BE	1		14	5	23	1	29	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
DE	0	1		1	16	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ES	0	2	14		40	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FR	0	0	5	1		1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
IT	0	1	8	2	18		1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
NL	0	8	14	5	23	1		1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
PT	1	0	19	26	44	1	1		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LU	1	76	14	5	23	1	32	1		0	0	0	0	0	0
DK	2	0	5	0	10	0	4	0	0		4	10	12	0	0
FI	1	2	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	5		2	6	0	0
NO	0	1	10	0	13	2	9	1	0	8	4		4	0	0
SE	2	1	7	4	13	5	7	1	0	4	4	5		0	0
EL	2	2	10	17	38	7	2	7	0	0	0	0	0		0
IS	0	0	3	0	17	1	4	0	0	51	6	16	10	0	

SOURCE: The General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, Council (2004). Data from 2004.10.11.

NOTES: Reading the table from the rows it can be identified which partners a member state relies on. Germany, for example, (DE) used France's (FR) consular services in 16 locations abroad. Similarly, Sweden relied on Netherlands in 7 cities. Starting from the columns it can be found which partners relies on a member states. The column with Sweden (SE) shows, e.g., that IT, DK, FI, NO and IS use Swedish consular services in varying degrees. Please note that member states not participating in any agreements at all are not shown.

Sociometric 2. Consular visa representation agreements in 2006

	AT	BE	DE	ES	FI	FR	IT	NL	PT	LU	DK	NO	SE	EL	IS
AT		5	27	14	1	32	1	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
BE	1		16	5	0	24	1	28	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
DE	0	1		1	0	17	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
ES	0	2	15		0	40	2	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0
FI	2	1	9	4		0	2	13	2	0	5	2	6	0	0
FR	0	0	5	1	0		1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
IT	0	1	9	2	0	18		1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
NL	0	10	15	5	0	23	1		1	1	0	0	0	0	0
PT	1	0	19	26	0	50	1	1		0	0	0	0	0	0
LU	1	81	16	5	0	24	1	31	1		0	0	0	0	0
DK	2	0	6	0	4	10	0	5	0	0		10	12	0	0
NO	0	1	11	0	4	14	2	9	1	0	8		4	0	0
SE	2	1	7	4	5	13	5	7	1	0	4	5		0	0
EL	2	3	12	17	0	39	8	2	7	0	0	0	1		0
IS	0	0	4	0	6	17	1	4	0	0	57	17	11	0	

SOURCE: The General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, Council (2005). Data from 2005.11.07.

NOTES: See sociometric 1.

Sociometric 3. Consular visa representation agreements in 2007

	AT	BE	DE	ES	FI	FR	IT	NL	PT	LU	DK	NO	SE	EL	IS
AT		6	27	14	1	30	1	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
BE	1		16	5	0	25	1	28	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
DE	0	1		1	0	17	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
ES	0	1	13		0	42	2	2	3	0	1	0	0	0	0
FI	2	1	11	4		0	2	13	2	0	5	4	10	0	0
FR	0	0	5	1	0		1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
IT	0	2	9	2	0	19		1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
NL	0	10	16	5	0	23	1		1	1	0	0	1	0	0
PT	1	0	17	26	0	51	1	2		0	0	0	0	0	0
LU	1	81	17	5	0	24	1	30	1		0	0	0	0	0
DK	2	0	6	0	4	11	0	5	0	0		10	13	0	0
NO	0	1	10	0	3	11	2	8	1	0	9		8	0	0
SE	1	1	9	4	4	12	5	7	1	0	4	6		1	0
EL	1	2	11	17	0	39	8	2	7	0	0	0	1		0
IS	0	0	4	0	5	17	1	4	0	0	55	18	12	0	

SOURCE: The General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, Council (2006). Data from 2006.10.16.

NOTES: See sociometric 1.

Sociometric 4. Consular visa representation agreements in 2008

	AT	BE	DE	ES	FI	FR	HU	IT	NL	PT	SI	LU	DK	NO	SE	EL	IS	LV	MT
AT		5	28	14	1	28	1	1	3	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BE	1		16	6	0	25	0	1	27	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DE	0	1		1	0	18	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ES	0	1	11		0	41	0	2	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FI	2	1	11	4		0	0	2	13	2	0	0	6	4	10	0	0	0	0
FR	0	1	5	2	0		0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HU	4	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
IT	0	2	9	2	0	19	0		1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
NL	0	9	15	5	0	23	0	1		1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
PT	1	1	17	27	0	44	0	3	2		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SI	17	3	11	0	0	0	6	11	0	11		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LU	1	69	15	5	0	24	0	1	31	1	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DK	2	0	13	0	4	11	0	0	5	0	0	0		10	15	0	0	0	0
NO	0	1	10	0	4	11	0	2	8	1	0	0	10		8	0	0	0	0
SE	1	1	8	4	5	12	0	6	7	1	0	0	5	5		1	0	0	0
EL	1	2	11	17	0	38	0	7	2	7	0	0	0	0	1		0	0	0
IS	0	0	4	0	5	17	0	1	4	0	0	0	48	18	11	0		0	0
LV	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
MT	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	47	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

SOURCE: The General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, Council (2007). Data from 2007.12.17.

NOTES: See sociometric 1.

Sociometric 5. Consular visa representation agreements in 2009

	AT	BE	DE	ES	FI	FR	HU	IT	NL	PT	SI	LU	DK	NO	SE	EE	LV	EL	LT	IS	MT	PL
AT		5	28	14	1	28	1	1	3	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BE	1		16	6	0	25	0	1	27	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DE	0	1		1	0	18	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ES	0	1	10		0	35	0	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FI	2	1	13	4		0	0	2	13	2	0	0	5	4	9	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
FR	0	2	5	2	0		0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HU	4	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	0
IT	0	2	9	2	0	19	0		1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NL	0	9	15	5	0	23	0	1		1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PT	1	2	17	27	0	43	0	3	2		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SI	17	3	11	0	0	8	6	12	12	11		0	3	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	4
LU	1	69	14	5	0	24	0	1	31	1	1		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DK	2	0	14	0	3	10	1	0	5	0	1	0		19	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NO	0	1	10	0	4	11	0	2	8	1	0	0	13		17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SE	1	1	9	4	4	10	1	5	7	1	0	0	11	14		0	1	0	0	0	0	0
EE	0	0	15	0	11	0	6	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0		3	0	0	0	0	0
LV	0	0	14	0	0	1	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
EL	1	2	10	17	0	37	0	7	2	7	0	0	0	0	1	0	0		0	0	0	0
LT	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0
IS	0	0	4	0	5	16	0	1	4	0	0	0	39	22	18	0	0	0	0		0	0
MT	27	0	0	10	0	0	0	51	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
PL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

SOURCE: The General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, Council (2008). Data from 2008.12.01.

NOTES: See sociometric 1.

Sociometric 6. Consular visa representation agreements in 2010

	AT	BE	DE	ES	FI	FR	HU	IT	NL	PT	SI	SZ	LU	DK	LT	NO	SE	EE	LV	EL	IS	MT	PL
AT		5	27	14	1	28	2	1	3	6	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BE	1		15	7	0	28	0	1	22	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DE	0	1		1	0	18	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ES	0	1	10		0	30	0	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FI	1	1	13	4		0	2	2	13	2	0	0	0	4	0	4	8	2	0	0	0	0	0
FR	0	2	5	3	0		0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
HU	4	2	12	0	3	0		0	4	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
IT	0	2	9	2	0	19	0		1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NL	0	9	14	5	1	24	1	1		1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
PT	0	2	16	26	0	42	0	3	2		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SI	17	3	12	10	0	13	8	11	11	8		0	0	3	0	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	4
SZ	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LU	1	69	14	5	0	25	1	1	31	1	1	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DK	1	0	14	0	3	12	1	0	4	0	1	0	0		1	20	16	0	0	0	0	0	0
LT	4	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	1	0	0	1		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NO	0	1	10	0	4	11	1	2	8	1	0	0	0	13	1		14	0	0	0	0	0	0
SE	0	1	9	4	4	10	1	5	6	1	0	0	0	11	0	17		0	1	0	0	0	0
EE	2	0	15	14	11	0	7	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0		4	0	0	0	0
LV	0	0	16	0	0	1	14	0	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0
EL	1	2	10	17	0	34	1	7	2	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0		0	0	0
IS	0	0	4	0	4	16	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	40	0	22	16	0	0	0		0	0
MT	26	0	0	10	0	0	0	47	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
PL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

SOURCE: The General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, Council (2010b). Data from 2010.04.30.

NOTES: See sociometric 1.

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