DIVIDED GOVERNMENT AND THE RATIFICATION OF THE AMSTERDAM TREATY

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Introduction

The member countries of the European Union (EU) signed the treaty of Amsterdam on October 2, 1997. It amended the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and the three Community Treaties. The most noteworthy modifications concerned the six areas of citizenship, justice and home affairs, employment, the environment, agricultural and fishing and a common foreign and security policy (Langrish 1998, 3). Compared to the Maastricht treaty, these modifications were less ambitious on European integration, because member states excluded half of the issues of the draft proposal to find consensus at the Amsterdam intergovernmental conference (Hug and König forthcoming). According to Moravcsik and Nicolaidis (1999a, 70), governments widely circulated the draft proposal for the intergovernmental conference ". . . to minimize the possibility of subsequent ratification failures." If this is correct, the Amsterdam intergovernmental conference (IGC) provides a powerful illustration of the influence domestic ratification constraints may have on the bargaining process of international cooperation.

These effects of domestic ratification constraints on international cooperation have become increasingly under the theoretical scrutiny of scholars. According to Pahre (this book) two perspectives can be distinguished: Ever since Putnam's (1988) seminal article "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: the logic of two-level games" scholars have paid more attention to studying Schelling's (1960) "Paradox of Weakness." Authors adopting this perspective (e.g., Iida 1993 and 1996, Mo 1994 and 1995, Schneider and Cederman 1994, Milner and Rosendorff 1996, Pahre 1997) examine whether governments, which are more restricted by domestic ratification constraints, perform better in international negotiations than their domestically less restricted counterparts. For the Amsterdam intergovernmental conference, Hug and König (forthcoming) find that the closely restricted governments were more effective in eliminating from the bargaining table issues they liked less. Other scholars emphasize the relationship between

domestic ratification hurdles and the likelihood of international cooperation. On the one hand, some authors find that the presence of more restricted governments at the bargaining table makes international cooperation less likely, because their winsets will not overlap (e.g., Putnam 1988, Karol 2000). Given overlapping winsets, others suggest that restricted governments make international cooperation more likely, because such governments have fewer possibilities to renege on agreements they might reach (e.g., Martin 2000).

In many studies adopting one of these perspectives the notion of restricted governments refers to the presence of a divided government. The term divided government is usually reserved for presidential systems where the president's party does not control the majority party in the legislature. Thus, many empirical analyses focus on the effect of divided government on international agreements in the US context (e.g., Lohmann and O'Halloran 1994, Karol 2000). Fiorina (1992) notes a strong similarity, however, between divided government in presidential systems and coalition governments, which are the norm in parliamentary systems (Laver and Shepsle 1991, Alesina and Rosenthal 1995). Other scholars of divided government have investigated how bicameral systems, where the second chamber can be considered as vetoplayer (Tsebelis 1995, Krehbiel 1996, Bräuninger and König 1999), may lead to unified and divided government (Tsebelis and Money 1997, König 2001). In all these views, the party affiliations of the president and the majority of the first and/or second chamber serve as proxies for the preferences of the actors. Thus, divided government in most studies is simply a dichotomous variable. The implication then is that, for instance, divided government can make international cooperation less likely because the preferences of either the president and the legislature and/or the bicameral vetoplayer(s) differ. Often, however, the dichotomous nature of divided government is too reductionist, and Milner (1997, 38) proposes as continuous measure for divided government the distance in preferences between the vetoplayers.

In this paper we wish to assess how the notion of divided government helps us in understanding the negotiations leading to the Amsterdam treaty and the subsequent ratification of the new treaty in all EU member states. Our starting point is a generally employed definition of divided government in comparative politics (Pahre 2001, 133), namely that two or more partisan actors affect the policy game. Based on this definition we first present different criteria relying on the differences with respect to presidents, government coalitions, bicameralism and the different parties controlling these institutions. Applying these criteria to the governments having participated in the Amsterdam intergovernmental conference and having ratified the treaty, we uncover limitations of classifications relying only on such institutional and partisan criteria. Based on these results we argue that measuring the preferences of the relevant actors is crucial to assess the degree to which a government is divided. After discussing several alternatives, we propose a specific approach for measuring the actors' preferences on the Amsterdam treaty. Since we believe that measures on pro- or anti-European integration positions are too crude for the analysis of the preferences of the Amsterdam actors, we introduce our measurement of government and ratification vetoplayers' preferences based on information from mass surveys. Finally, we show the differences between classifications of divided government and the findings based on preference measures of the actors involved. Regarding the likelihood of international cooperation, the classification based solely on institutional and partisan criteria predicts either a failure of the Amsterdam intergovernmental conference because almost all 15 member states were constrained by divided government. Or, if the winsets would overlap, member state governments should have performed equally well at the Amsterdam intergovernmental conference because all governments were similarly divided according to these classifications. However, the Amsterdam treaty was adopted and ratified without attracting public attention, and member state governments significantly differed in their negotiation performance (Hug and

König forthcoming). Since the classification relying also on preference measures introduces much more variation in the degree to which governments were divided, we conclude that whenever possible such measures should be included in the definition of divided government.

Divided governments in EU member countries

In recent years, except for a few periods, the party affiliation of the American president has differed from the majority party in one or both houses of Congress. Thus, the notion of divided government first appeared in the literature on the American presidential system. Many scholars argue, however, that the notion of divided government has close parallels in parliamentary democracies. The close parallels come about by the fact that in many parliamentary democracies more than one partisan actor has to approve political decisions, such as adopting a bill or ratifying a treaty. The necessity for support of other partisan actors may be the result of a President wielding some power in particular policy areas, the type of government coalition, qualified majorities in parliamentary votes, the presence of a second chamber, or particular provisions for referendums. Since the notion of divided government appeared first for presidential systems, we start by discussing the role of the president in the EU member states. Then, we move on and assess for the 15 governments the partisan compositions of the various institutional actors, including the presidency. [1]

Presidents in semi-presidential systems

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[1] The first part of our analysis resembles Stoiber and Thurner's (2000) approach combining Tsebelis' (1995) notion of vetoplayers, or more precisely vetopoints, with the partisan composition. In some aspects their analyses is more far-reaching, namely by counting the number of partisan vetoplayers in the Amsterdam treaty ratification, on the other it is more restricted, since the preferences of these partisan actors are not considered.

Even though all member countries of the EU are parliamentary democracies, some of them have a directly elected President who in some cases has wide-ranging powers. Political systems with such presidents are often referred to as semi-presidential (e.g., Duverger 1980). In his detailed study of these systems Martinez (1999) comes to the conclusion that on basis of the constitution the Presidents in Austria, Finland, France, Ireland, and Portugal all have wide ranging powers and in addition are directly elected. He demonstrates, however, that Austria and Ireland are only "seemingly semi-presidential," since the powers of the President have been severely curtailed by common agreement among the political parties (Martinez 1999, 20). The constitutions of the remaining countries, namely Finland, France, and Portugal give the President also control over foreign policy (Martinez 1999, 33). Consequently, the party membership of the President in these countries might lead to a type of divided government coming very close to the type present in the American presidential system. And the large literature on the French cohabitation, first between President Mitterand and Prime Ministers Jacques Chirac and Balladur, and presently between President Chirac and Prime Minister Lionel Jospin, indicates this important parallel.

Government coalitions

The more typical reason why more than one partisan actor is involved in the policy game in EU member states is that the support of more than one partisan actor in parliament is necessary to pass bills. This additional support is required because the government either is a coalition or only controls a minority of seats in parliament (e.g., Milner 1997, Pahre 2001). Thus, Pahre (2001, 133) suggests that many studies classify governments as divided whenever they are minority or coalition governments. In table 1 (column 1) we report for all 15 member countries the

government's partisan composition and whether it should be considered as divided according to this criterion at the time when the Amsterdam treaty was signed in 1997.

As table 1 (column 1) shows, most governments, namely 13 out of 15, were either coalition or minority governments. Only in Greece and the United Kingdom did the single government party control a majority of seats in parliament when the Amsterdam treaty was signed on October 2, 1997. The same partisan composition of the governments' still existed when the various governments were able after parliamentary and possibly referendum votes to deposit their ratification instruments with the Italian government.[2]

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[2] While several countries held elections between the signing and the ratification of the treaty (e.g., Denmark, France (change in Senate), and Netherlands) no change in government composition occurred.

Table 1: Divided governments in EU member countries[3]

	Government	Separation of powers	referendum
Austria	c: SPÖ/ÖVP	(b)q:2/3	
Belgium	c: CVP/PSC/SP/PS	(b: regions?)	
Denmark	c: SD/RV	q: 5/6	nonrequired: 1/6 of MPs
Finland	c: SDP/KOK/SEP/VIHR/VAS	q:2/3(p)	
France	c: PC/PS/Mouvements des citoyens/Radicaux de gauche/Verts	bq:3/5p	nonrequired: government/ president
Germany	c: CDU/CSU/FDP	bq:2/3	
Greece	M: PASOK	q:3/5	
Ireland	c: FF/Progressive Democrats	(b)	required
Italy	c: PDS/PPI/UD/RI/VERTS	(b)	
Luxembourg	c: CSV/LSAP	q:2/3	
Netherlands	c: PVDA/VVD/D66	(b)	
Portugal	M: PS	(p)	nonrequired: government/ president
Spain	m: PP	(b)	
Sweden	m: SD	q:3/4	
United Kingdom	M: Labour	b	

Legend: Government: government type on October 2, 1997 (signing of Amsterdam treaty) (c: coalition government, m: one-party minority government, M: one-party majority; Separation of powers (b second chamber (in parenthesis, if controlled by same parties as lower house) q: qualified majority for passage (in parenthesis if government parties control qualified majority), p: semi-presidentialism (in parenthesis if President belongs to a party in government).
Sources: EJPR Political Data Yearbook 1998 (1999), European Union (1999), Martinez (1999), Hug and Tsebelis (2001), and Hug and König (forthcoming).

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[3] In the appendix (Table 3) we report the full names of the parties appearing in this table.

Requirements for qualified majorities in Amsterdam treaty ratification

While the criterion based on the coalition-status of governments gives us a broad indication whether a government is divided, in some ways it does not exhaust the criterion of whether more than one partisan actor is needed to pass a treaty. A first way, how additional partisan actors might be needed is induced by possible requirements of qualified majorities in support of a treaty for parliamentary ratification. We report in table 1 (column 2) for each country whether such a qualified majority requirement was present for the ratification of the Amsterdam treaty. In more than half the countries, namely eight out of 15, the constitution required qualified majorities, ranging from 3/5 to 5/6 of the votes, in parliament for the ratification of the Amsterdam treaty. In all these eight countries, this required the support of additional partisan actors than those that formed the government.

Thus, since in Greece a qualified majority of 3/5 was required to ratify the Amsterdam treaty and PASOK, the government party, controlled barely more than 50 percent of the seats in parliament, an additional party had to vote in favor of the new treaty to make a successful ratification possible. This shows that classifying governments as divided or unified) solely on the basis of their coalition status can be quite misleading for studying ratification processes. As the case of Greece illustrates, a single party may well form the government and control a majority of seats in parliament, but still need the support of an additional partisan actor to ratify an international treaty. Consequently, if we also consider qualified majorities as criterion to distinguish between divided and unified governments, we also have to rule out Greece as unified government and are left with the United Kingdom as the only case belonging to this latter category.

Bicameral votes required in treaty ratification

As the American literature suggests, however, divided government may also result from different parties controlling the House and Senate, which results in one chamber of Congress being controlled by a party different from the President's party. Given that several member countries also have a second chamber, we need to assess the effect of a possible bicameral constraint on the dividedness of governments in EU member countries. Again, a majority of countries, namely nine out of 15, required positive votes in both the lower and the upper house of parliament for the ratification of the Amsterdam treaty.[4] In some of these countries, since the upper houses have a different partisan composition, the bicameral ratification of the Amsterdam treaty required the support of an additional partisan actor to the parties represented in government.[5] Thus in France, Germany and the United Kingdom the bicameral ratification requested the support of a party outside government. Obviously, in the case of France and Germany, already the qualified majorities (either in the combined session of both French houses of parliament, or the qualified majorities in the lower house, as well as in the upper house) required a non-governmental party supporting the ratification of the Amsterdam treaty. Only in the United Kingdom, and here only in the sense that a negative vote of the House of Lords delays the ratification of a treaty, does the bicameral ratification add another partisan actor.

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[4] Here we consider the vote of the British House of Lords also as an upper house having to agree to the ratification of the Amsterdam treaty. Strictly speaking the House of Lords does only have delaying powers, in the sense that a negative vote by the upper house can be overridden by the lower house after one year (Tsebelis and Money 1997, 62)

[5] Obviously, at this stage one might also consider whether in countries with both bicameral parliaments and qualified majority requirements these additional hurdles require the support of the same additional party or parties, or whether each hurdle adds a different party.

The president's role in semi-presidential systems

Among the EU member countries we find, as discussed above, three (namely Finland, France, and Portugal) that have directly elected Presidents with considerable powers so that the political systems can be classified as semi-presidential. In all three countries the constitution also assigns a crucial role to the President in conducting foreign policy (Martinez 1999, 33). In addition, with the exception of Finland, the Presidents may trigger a referendum, either after consultation with the government (France), or after a decision by the constitutional court (Portugal), on the ratification of a treaty (Hug and Tsebelis 2001). Combined, these two sets of powers make the President also a crucial player in the ratification game. However, as table 1 (column 2) shows only in France did the President (Jacques Chirac) belong to a party not represented in the cabinet. Thus, only in France an additional partisan actor has to support a treaty to ensure ratification, but obviously, this additional support is also required because of the bicameral vote with qualified majorities.

Referendums

As the discussion of semi-presidential systems shows, the possibility of calling a referendum may enhance the powers of an actor. As Hug and Tsebelis (2001) demonstrate, the power to trigger a referendum and the power to formulate the question posed to the voters are the crucial elements distinguishing different forms of constitutional provisions allowing for referendums. In the case of treaty referendums, we must distinguish between required and nonrequired referendums and among the latter determine who triggers the popular vote. As table 1 (column 3) shows, only Ireland can be considered as a country requiring referendums on international treaties related to

the EU.[6] On the other hand, the Danish constitution envisions a referendum being triggered by a minority of 1/6 of the members of parliament, if a treaty involves transfers of powers.[7] In some countries, the constitution contains precise provisions allowing particular actors to trigger a referendum. Often the actors empowered to do so are the governments themselves. Unsurprisingly, provisions for such referendums have little notable effects on outcomes (e.g., Hug and Tsebelis 2001). In addition, even if the constitution does not explicitly envision referendums triggered government, the referendums having occurred in the United Kingdom, for instance, demonstrate that all governments could probably trigger a referendum on an international treaty.[8] Thus these government-triggered referendums hardly increase the dividedness of government. For this reason we do not consider the referendums triggered by government as additional ratification constraint.

Summary

In sum, we can consider divided governments in parliamentary democracies on the basis of either the coalition-status of the government, or, more precisely, in terms of whether the support of a single partisan actor is sufficient in all institutional settings to insure the ratification of a treaty. According to the first and simpler criterion we find that only Greece and the United Kingdom were unified governments during the signing and ratification of the Amsterdam treaty. If we use the second and more accurate criterion, we either find all governments being divided, or only the

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[6] Strictly speaking only international treaties implying the transfer of some powers to a supranational organization fall in this category (Hug forthcoming).

[7] As the ratification of the Nice treaty showed, the government has some leeway in determining whether a treaty involves such transfers. To the protests of a vocal but small opposition, the Danish government decided that the treaty could be ratified under a simplified procedure, which did not allow for a referendum being triggered by 1/6 of the MPs. The Irish government, on the other hand, believed that the Nice treaty required a change in the constitution, which can only be adopted after a referendum vote, which had a negative outcome.

[8] Exceptions to this are obviously countries in which the constitution explicitly prohibits referendums on international treaties (e.g. Italy).

United Kingdom remaining as unified government, since a negative vote of the House of Lords can only have delaying effects. Independent of this distinction we observe that there is very little variation in terms of divided governments in parliamentary democracies. Either governments in such democracies have to be considered as divided because of their coalition-status, or they are divided because constitutional rules for ratification require qualified majorities, bicameral votes, presidential approval or referendums.

Identifying Policy Positions of Partisan Actors

The systematic classification of divided government has shown little variation among the 15 member states having participated in the Amsterdam intergovernmental conference. In a strict sense, with the exception of the United Kingdom, all member states had a divided government when applying a simple partisan and institutional definition of a divided polity to the ratification process of the Amsterdam treaty. This, however, assumes that political parties diverge in their opinions on the topic of European integration, or, more specifically, of the Amsterdam treaty. To uncover whether the parties really diverged we would need measures of their preferences covering all the issues discussed at the Amsterdam intergovernmental conference. Laver and Hunt (1992) discuss three possible instruments for measuring such preferences. The first instrument relies on document analysis of party manifestos, the second uses expert interviews, and the third explores mass surveys.

Measures on European Integration

For the identification of actors' preferences a major problem concerns the trade-off between the validity and reliability of the data. Reliability refers to the degree to which the instrument can appropriately measure an underlying factor, while validity refers to the degree to which this factor relates to the theoretical concept in question (e.g., Holsti 1968 and Ray 1999, 288). The Party Manifesto Group has collected data on preferences on various items for most European countries and political parties (Budge et al. 1987, Volkens 2001). The instrument has the advantage that it directly relies on the statements of the political parties. Although the quantitative content analysis of party manifestos is highly contingent on the coding scheme, the results are extremely reliable. However, among the items of the Party Manifesto Group's coding scheme, there is only a single item, which indicates whether a party is in favor or against European integration, and some parties do not mention the issue of European integration in their manifestos.

A similar level of information is provided by Ray (1999) who conducted an expert survey on the preferences of political parties on the dimension of European integration. Experts were identified by the ECPR handbook of political scientists who indicated to have specialized in either the domestic political system of their nation or European politics. Luxembourg's low response rate forced the opening of the survey to newspaper editors. The experts were asked, which position a political party has on European integration, what importance the issue has for the party, and to what degree there is internal dissent within each political party on the issue. The last question is helpful for assessing the unitary actor assumption on political parties because the degree of internal dissent can be used to indicate the probability for a party's vote on European integration.[9]

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[9] The response rate of the survey was about 45% and the findings show that the meaning of European integration does not vary over time and across national contexts, but political parties become increasingly pro-European over the period 1984-1996.

In the context of our analysis both instruments provide a similar level of information on a single dimension of European integration. For two reasons, however, such information can hardly uncover the preferences of the actors involved in intergovernmental conferences. First, while intergovernmental conferences and the resulting treaties mark cornerstones of European integration, we can hardly conclude that the Amsterdam treaty necessarily promoted European integration. Some progress has been achieved in particular policy domains and in procedural transparency by simplifying the range of possible legislative procedures. Except for monetary policy provisions, the cooperation procedure has been largely abolished, and the European Parliament has obtained a veto right under the (modified) co-decision procedure. However, the Amsterdam treaty did not fulfill the expectations of many observers and participants alike. A preparatory Reflection Group had stated that a major aim would be to prepare the European Union's institutions for enlargement, but an agreement on the number of Commissioners, the Council's voting thresholds, and the member state's voting weights could not be reached. By contrast, the protocol made enlargement dependent on the European Union's ability to reform its institutions and notes compensation for member states that have to give up their second Commissioner. That the European Union could not find a solution is best illustrated by the treaty's provision stating that another intergovernmental conference has to carry out a "comprehensive review" of its institutional provisions a year before the EU will exceed twenty members. For this reason, we cannot assume that proponents of enlargement (integration) were supporting the Amsterdam treaty.

Second, the analysis of Hug and König (forthcoming) illustrates another ambiguity of the Amsterdam treaty. They find that consensus among the 15 member states was reached by excluding half of the policy issues of the draft proposal of the Amsterdam treaty. This means that the Amsterdam treaty produced many so-called "leftovers," which can even lead to European

disintegration. In this case, the indication on European integration cannot reveal whether a pro-integrationist political party would vote for or against the Amsterdam treaty. This implies that European integration is a broad concept, which is captured by Party Manifesto document analysis and expert interviews in a reliable manner. However, these preference measures have considerable drawbacks regarding their validity for analyzing the Amsterdam treaty. Another problem relates to the uni-dimensionality of these data, which is constructed by design of both instruments. The Amsterdam treaty encompasses a large number of issues which can hardly be reduced to a single dimension. König and Hug (2000) show, however, that considering the Maastricht treaty in a one-dimensional policy space may mislead us in our understanding of the ratification process.

Measures on the Amsterdam treaty

Ideally, our analysis would start with preference measures on the issues of the Amsterdam treaty of all actors involved, such as the preferences of governments and the MPs in each country. Wessels, Kielhorn and Thomassen (1996) collected data on national MPs, but this dataset fails to cover all 15 member countries, and inferring the party's positions based on responses by the responses of MEPs proves haphazard. Another instrument is provided by mass surveys allowing us to identify the positions of political parties' electorate. Using the electorates' positions as proxies for the positions of the political parties raises the question of the reliability of this instrument. Gabel and Huber (2000) show that inferring the parties' position based on the positions of their sympathizers leads to very similar results as those obtained with other instruments.

We expect to increase the validity of the data because the Eurobarometer asked for positions on specific issues related to the Amsterdam treaty. By calculating the mean positions of the

sympathizers of a particular party we aggregate these positions of respondents to the level of the

political party. The Eurobarometer survey does not allow us to have preference measures for each

and every issue negotiated at the Amsterdam intergovernmental conference, but we nevertheless

find a series of questions in the Eurobarometer 47, that relate to six broader issue areas of the

Amsterdam treaty (Langrish 1998, 3).[10] Table 1 shows the issue areas and preference measures

which are available for the exploration of the parties' policy positions on the Amsterdam treaty.

issue area	questions in Eurobarometer 47 (March-April 1997)
citizenship	- right to vote for foreigners (q22.7)
	- right to be candidate (q22.8)
interior	- EU responsible for matters not dealt with at national regional local level (q22.4)
employment	- workers' right (q23g)
	- unemployment (q23i)
environment	- protection of environment (q23b)
new policies	- agriculture and fishing policies (q23j)
foreign/security	- common foreign policy (q22.2)
	- defense policy (q22.3)

For the identification of the policy positions of political parties in these areas, we use the mean

position of their respective electorates. Since all these preferences are normalized to a scale from

0 to 1 (against, respectively in favor), and 1 indicating the most "integration"-prone position,

values below 0.5 suggest that the party prefers no integration in a particular issue area. Hence, we

are able to check whether the parties of a coalition government, the president's party, the

bicameral majority or even the popular vote of a referendum would commonly vote for or against

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[10]In the appendix we reproduce the exact question wording for the variables employed in this study and explain our analysis in more detail.

an issue area of the Amsterdam treaty. This allows us to consider the interplay of actors'

preferences and ratification provisions in all 15 member states.[11]

Preferences and partisan induced divided government

As discussed above Table 1 uses as only information institutions and the partisan composition of

the various actors intervening in the ratification of an international treaty like the Amsterdam

treaty. Obviously, this partisan and institutional induced classification of divided government

neglects the possibility that partisan actors might have identical preferences. Thus, a two-party

coalition government would appear as a divided government even though its two member parties

might have identical preferences with respect to the key issues of a treaty. The same obviously

might occur with respect to partisan actors whose support is necessary because of bicameralism,

semi-presidentialism or qualified majorities.

One way to assess the restrictiveness of the partisan and institutional induced divided government

classification is to assess on the basis of our preference measures whether the members of a

coalition government, a president or the bicameral parliament disagree on the key issues of the

Amsterdam treaty. Since our preference measure is scaled to an interval between 0 and 1, and 0

can be likened to the position of the status quo and 1 corresponds to the location of the

Amsterdam treaty,[12] a government is most clearly divided if the ideal-points of two parties whose

approval is necessary for the ratification are on opposite sides of the mid-point of this interval

(i.e., 0.5). We use this criterion to assess whether the 15 member countries are divided over the

Amsterdam treaty. Approaching Milner's (1997) claim that divided government is a matter of

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[11] In fact, this instrument also allows for comparing how much these actors favor or oppose on the particular issue areas. However, since this instrument has certainly a lower reliability, we only consider their pro- or con- attitudes.

[12] Hug and König (forthcoming) discuss in much more detail the methodological problems of these implicit assumptions.

degree and not a qualitative difference, we count the number of issues where the relevant partisan actors have ideal-points which are on opposite sides of the 0.5 mid-point. Since we have eight such issues, the degree of dividedness can vary for each country between 0 and 8.[13]

Table 2 presents our results. In the first two columns we report in a succinct manner whether a member country would appear as divided according to two simplistic classification exclusively based on the institutions and partisan composition. As discussed above, very little variation appears in that case among the 15 EU member countries. In column 3 of table 2 we report the number of issue areas over which there was disagreement in the government coalition.[14] According to this preference-based indicator of divided government, we find much more variation than with the simple institutional and partisan indicator. First, we note that many countries with coalition governments can hardly be considered as divided, since the government parties shared their views about the Amsterdam treaty. Germany and Luxembourg, for example, both had coalition governments at the time of signing and ratifying the Amsterdam treaty, but on no issue was there disagreement among the coalition partners. On the other hand, in Denmark, Finland, and France, on at least three issues there was disagreement among the government partners. This preference baseddividedness, and, especially its degree, can obviously not be assessed with simple institutional and partisan indicators.

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[13] While Milner's (1997) continuous measure refers to distances between ideal-points on a single dimension, such a measure becomes more problematic in multidimensional spaces with more than two actors.For this reason we refrain from relying on distances between ideal-points to assess the degree to which a government is divided.

[14] Obviously, by definition there can be no disagreement in one-party governments, since we cannot assess the dividedness of a particular issue inside a single party. As Milner (1997) discusses, this can be a considerable simplification in some instances.

Table 2: Divided government as a function of coalition status, separation of powers, and policy preferences

	party and institution induced divided government		degree of policy preference induced divided government			
	coalition status	separation of powers	government	government and president	government, president, and bicameralism	plus referendum
Austria	D	D	2	2	2	n/a
Belgium	D	D	1	1	1	n/a
Denmark	D	D	4	4	4	+0
Finland	D	D	5	5	5	n/a
France	D	D	3	4	4	n/a
Germany	D	D	0	0	0	n/a
Greece	U	D	0	0	0	n/a
Ireland	D	D	2	2	2	+0
Italy	D	D	2	2	2	n/a
Luxembourg	D	D	0	0	0	n/a
Netherlands	D	D	2	2	2	n/a
Portugal	D	D	0	0	0	n/a
Spain	D	D	0	0	2	n/a
Sweden	D	D	0	0	2	n/a
United Kingdom	U	U	0	0	0	n/a
(+ Lords)		D	0	0	2	n/a

Legend: D denotes divided governments, while U denotes unified governments. The numbers 0-9 reflect the number of nine issues related to the Amsterdam treaty on which partisan actors in government, parliament or the president had opposing views.
Sources: as table 1, Eurobarometer 47.1

In columns four and five we also take into account whether the president in semi-presidential systems or the parliamentary ratification requirements, for instance bicameralism and qualified majorities, increases the degree of preference induced dividedness. These analyses suggest that in France, for instance, President Chirac of the RPR differed with respect to one issue on which the government was unified. The only other two countries that are affected in their degree of dividedness are Spain and Sweden. In the case of Spain the minority status of the Popular Party led to two issues on which the majority in parliament opposed the government's view. In Sweden,

the coalition government which was unified preference-wise, faced division in parliament on two issues, because of the qualified majority requirement of 3/5 of all MPs.

Finally, in the last column of table 2 we report for the two countries that have held a referendum on the Amsterdam treaty, namely Denmark and Ireland, whether the population at large held a position different from government on the issues where government was unified. Interestingly enough, in both countries the presence of the population as an additional vetoplayer did not affect the degree of dividedness.

Our analysis comparing institutional and partisan derived dividedness and the preference-based degree of divided government suggests the following conclusions. First, at least with respect to the ratification of the Amsterdam treaty, most of the disagreements over the different issues dealt with were already well represented in governments of the various member states. Since by definition one-party governments are not divided with respect to their preferences, this lends some credence to the institutional partisan approach to classify coalition governments as divided. However, as the cases of Germany and Luxembourg demonstrate, coalition governments are not a sufficient condition for divided government. Similarly, majority governments, like Greece and Britain are obviously unified if we only take into account the government level. However, if we only consider the government level, then minority one-party governments, like the ones in Spain and Portugal for instance, are obviously also unified. Second, our analysis suggests that even one-party majority governments may be divided. For instance, if we consider the delaying powers of the House of Lords in the British parliament, the fact that the Conservatives controlled the upper house leads to divisions in government on two issues. Vice-versa, we also find that a minority government, like the one in Portugal, may be unified on the basis of preferences, since it shares its views with the President and the majority in parliament.

Thus, studying divided government on the basis of preferences provides a much more detailed view of possible divisions in a country. Relating our measure of divided government with the gains and losses that the various governments made at the Amsterdam intergovernmental conference suggests that the degree of dividedness is positively related to bargaining gains (Hug and König forthcoming). Thus, France, Denmark and Finland are among the top gainers. These three countries are all heavily divided compared to the remaining countries when our preference-based measure is used. The same three countries do not differ from most of the other 15 member countries, however, when we consider a strictly institutional and partisan measure for divided government. This very tentative exploration suggests that divided government defined at the level of preferences provides a much better indicator.

Our preference-based measure also goes some way towards providing a quantitative indicator for divided government as suggested by Milner (1997). Obviously, given the continuous preference measure we use to construct this indicator, we might also provide a much more fine-grained assessment by measuring distances between the ideal-points of the relevant partisan actors. This, in our view, would put too much of a burden on our preference measures and suggest a false sense of preciseness. Nevertheless, if more precise preference measure are available with an easy way to assess the location of the status quo and the treaty proposals, this endeavor would be extremely fruitful.

Conclusion

The literature on the effects of domestic institutions on internationl cooperation relies on the notion of divided government, which is often measured only on the basis of institutional and partisan criterion. The main focus of these studies is to assess whether divided governments (or governments with higher ratification hurdles) perform better in treaty negotiations, and whether

such governments make international cooperation more likely. The theoretical literature has come up with contradictory answers to these two important questions. The empirical literature, not surprisingly, has also come to ambiguous conclusions (e.g, Evans, Jacobson, and Putnam 1993).

In this paper we eschewed the theoretical debate and focused on the way in which divided government is operationalized in empirical research. Starting off by employing the traditionally used criterion to distinguish between divided and unified governments we found that almost all EU member states participating in the Amsterdam intergovernmental conferences were divided. Given that the negotiations, as well as the ratification, of this treaty succeeded, this might be taken as indication, that divided government does increase the likelihood of international cooperation, as suggested by Martin (2000). On the other hand, the fact that almost none of the negotiating governments was unified suggests that no country could exploit its weakness as Schelling's (1960) conjecture would predict. However, Hug and König (forthcoming) show that issues dropped from the Amsterdam treaty benefited some countries much more than others.

This suggests that a strictly institutional and partisan based classification by unified and divided government is hardly sufficient. A government may well be formed by two different parties and not be divided, since both parties are ardent supporters of issues discussed at the Amsterdam intergovernmental conference. Thus, classifications relying solely on institutions and partisan distinctions can be seriously misleading.[15] We were able to demonstrate this by resorting to information on preferences over issues discussed in Amsterdam gleaned from survey responses of party identifiers. Using this information suggested that much fewer governments deeply divided over the Amsterdam treaty than the simple partisan and institutional classifications suggested. Under this angle, the international cooperation achieved at Amsterdam seems to have relied much

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[15] To a large degree this difference echos the crucial distinction between "veto-points" and "veto-players," which is often misunderstood in the literature.

less on the presence of divided governments. Similarly, the variation in the degree of divided government across countries relates closely to the gains achieved in the negotiations. Hence, a more preference-based analysis indicates that Schelling's (1960) "paradox of weakness" explains the outcome of the Amsterdam treaty negotiations (Hug and König forthcoming).

These more nuanced insights are only possible because we assessed, whether a government was divided or unified, on the basis of preferences over issues discussed at the international conference. This shows that preference measures permit much better informed assessments of the effect of divided government on international cooperation and on advantages at the bargaining table.

Appendix

Below we first report in Table 3 the full names of the parties appearing in Table 1. Then we report the exact question wording of the questions we used to infer the positions of the political parties. We also provide some additional detail on the procedures employed to calculate these positions

Table 3: Party abbreviations

Country	Party abbreviaion	Party name
Austria	SPÖ	Austrian Socialist Party
	ÖVP	Austrian People's Party
Belgium	CVP	Christian-democratic Party (Flemish)
	PSC	Christian-social Party (Francophone)
	SP	Socialist Party (Flemish)
	PS	Socialist Party (Francophone)
Denmark	SD	Social-democratic Party
	RV	Liberal Party
Finland	SDP	Social-democratic Party
	KOK	National Rally
	SEP	Swedish People's Party
	VIHR	Green Party
	VAS	Left League
France	PC	Communist party
	PS	Socialist Party
	Mouvements des citoyens	Citizen's movement (left)
	Radicaux de gauche	Leftist radicals
	Verts	Green Party
Germany	CDU/CSU	Christian-democratic/Christian-social Union
	FDP	Liberal Party
Greece	PASOK	Socialist Party
Ireland	FF	Fianna Fail
	Progressive Democrats	Progressive Democrats
Italy	PDS	Social-democratic Party
	PPI	Italian People's Party
	UD	Democratic Union
	RI	Italian Renewal
	VERTS	Green Party
Luxembourg	CSV	Christian-social Party
	LSAP	Labour Party
Netherlands	PVDA	Labour Party
	VVD	Liberal Party
	D66	Democrats 66
Portugal	PS	Socialist Party
Spain	PP	People's Party
Sweden	SD	Social-democratic Party
United Kingdom	Labour	Labour Party

Q.22.   What is your opinion on each of the following proposals? Please tell me for each proposal, whether you are for it or against it.
2. The Member States of the European Union should have one common foreign policy towards countries outside the European Union
3. The European Union Member States should have a common defence and military policy   4. The European Union should be responsible for matters that cannot be effectively handled by national, regional and local governments
7. Any citizen of another European Union country who resides in (OUR COUNTRY) should have the right to vote in local elections
8. Any citizen of another European Union country who resides in (OUR COUNTRY) should have the right to be a candidate in local elections

Q.23.   Some people believe that certain areas of policy should be decided by the (NATIONAL) government, while other areas of policy should be decided jointly within the European Union Which of the following areas of policy do you think should be decided by the (NATIONAL) government, and which should be decided jointly within the European Union?
b) Protection of the environment
g) Workers' rights vis-à-vis their employers
i) The fight against unemployment
j) Agriculture and Fishing policy

Source: Melich (1999)

To infer the positions of the political parties we selected all individuals who responded to the questions listed above and who stated a preference for a political party. Weighting the observations according to the weights provided for the national samples, we then calculated the mean position the sympathizers of all political parties. We report the resulting mean positions for all parties (as well as the number of seats the parties controlled in the upper and lower house at the time of signing the Amsterdam treaty in a file at http://uts.cc.utexas.edu/~simonhug/dgov/

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