The negotiation position amid member states of the EU

Vyjednávací pozice mezi členskými státy

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Abstract: The European integration process is very important and it has been paid attention to for the last 15 years. The abstract deals with the negotiation field and position in the structure of the current expanded EU. For better orientation in this equivocal situation, a modern cartography method of relationship in the arbitrary group called dynamic sociometry was used. The method is based on classical sociometry Morena and furthermore it uses the instrument of fuzzy set, typology and structural analysis. The output of this method is a sociomap. The map holds information on the relative closeness or the distance of individual elements, their configuration but also some quality information. The graphic chart is similar to a topographic map. In our case, the sociomap was created from the data of foreign business among the member countries. The following analysis of the sociomap we detected and described characteristic features of the analysed group. It consists of formal and informal links in the group, the role and the position of each member within the group, the structure and relations in the group. In the concrete, we attained data to answer the questions about the present climate in interrelationships in the EU, which means the relationships among the members as the whole entities but also the relationships separately among members themselves. The position analysis of the Czech Republic in the system of the created sociomaps was considered as very important. According to the allocation of the Czech Republic in sociomaps, we easily defined the position of the state, the closest partners for negotiation, and also the possible problem relations which might complicate the negotiation in the EU. From the resultant sociomaps, we also tried to determine the sociometric star, i.e. the leader of the European Community. We anticipated that it would be rather an aggregation of several states than an individual state. The contribution focuses on the negotiation field and position in the structure of the current expanded EU. The sociomap created using foreign business data of member states gives the bases for answering questions about present climate in interrelationships in the EU which means the relationships between the members as whole entities but also the relationships separately between the members themselves.

Key words: position, negotiation, the EU, dynamic sociometry, sociometry

Abstrakt: Proces evropské integrace je z mnoha pohledů velmi zajímavý a v posledních patnácti letech se mu věnuje značná pozornost. Příspěvek se zabývá vyjednávacím prostorem a pozicí ve struktuře současné rozšířené EU. Pro snazší orientaci v problematice byla využita moderní metoda mapování vztahů v libovolné skupině nazývaná dynamická sociometrie. Ta vychází z klasické sociometrie Morena a dále využívá aparát fuzzy množin, topologie a strukturální analýzy. Výstupem této metody je sociomapa, Tato mapa uchovává informaci o vzájemné blízkosti či vzdálenosti jednotlivých prvků, o jejich konfiguracích, ale i o některých informacích kvalitativního charakteru. Grafické zobrazení je podobné topografické mapě. V našem případě byla sociomapa vytvořena z údajů zahraničního obchodu členských států. Následným rozborem sociomap jsme zjistili a popsali charakteristické vlastnosti analyzované skupiny, formální a neformální pojítka ve skupině, role a pozice každého člena ve skupině, strukturu a vztahy ve skupině. Konkrétně jsme tedy získali podklady k zodpovězení otázky na existující klima ve vzájemných vztazích v EU, a to navzájem mezi členy v celku, ale také odděleně mezi sebou. Za velmi důležité jsme považovali analýzu postavení České republiky v systému zhotovených sociomap. Podle umístění ČR v mapách jsme snadno definovali pozici státu, jeho nejbližší partnery pro vyjednávání, možné problémové vztahy komplikující jednání v EU. Z výsledných sociomap jsme se také pokusili určit sociometrickou hvězdu, tzn. lídra Evropského společenství. Očekávali jsme, že to bude spíše seskupení několika států, než stát jediný.

Klíčová slova: pozice, vyjednávání, EU, dynamická sociometrie, sociomapa

The extension of the European Union is one of the latest topic of all-European politic topics for the last 15 years. The extension of the EU is a phenomenon which is closely connected with the development of the European Community, later on with the Union. The European integration process is repeatedly ac-

companied with the extension of the EU and it is not just formed by the separate Act of Extension but also by all relations and aspects that go hand in hand with every single extension.

The depth and the range of the European Community integration considerably determine the character of the relationships between countries which are labouring for their integration into the complex system of the Union. The main reason for this seems to be the disruption of a relatively delicate consensus concerning the ratio of powers represented within the institutions which has represented every Community extension up to now. Searching for balance between the integration deepening and the extension has always been a fundamental question for the Community and even though during certain periods the extension was considered necessary, the dominant members of the Community preferred especially the deepening as a vital alternative in terms of maintaining the initial form of the integration. The enlargement took place only when and if the risks of disintegration within the Community were minimized by connecting the integration to new project for deepening the integration and by the requirement of affirmation on the part of future members that they would unconditionally respect the objectives and values of the European integration.

The rate of risks connected to a perspective of the potential so-called Eastern extension of Central and Eastern European countries was for the community really unprecedented in 1989. Incidentally, considerable risks also existed for the Central and Eastern European countries which were to begin the transformation. The complexity of the Eastern extension is well documented by the fact that only after 15 years of considerations as well as concrete steps and visible improvement of many countries during the pre-entry negotiations it became clear which countries would make it to the final stage – the entry into the EU on 1st May 2004 (Fiala, Pitrová 2001).

The European Union has become the most important business partner, the biggest investor for the Czech Republic over the last fifteen years. The Czech Republic also has the longest state boundary with countries which are members of the European Union. Ever since November 1989, the entry of Czechoslovakia, then of the Czech Republic into the Community has been considered by the vast majority of the Czech society as a historically necessary step symbolizing the final and irreversible liberation from the Communist regime.

The Czech Republic sees the European Union as a strong entity which plays an important role worldwide. The European Union is a unique and open project that has succeeded in realisation of its fundamental goals – lasting peace, stability and prosperity on the European continent; and all this based on the model of the social market economy. Constant changes of the inner and outer conditions will always raise new and new challenges for the Union in the future, challenges that will have to be faced. And at the beginning of the new millennium, the challenges can be faced successfully only if Europe is strong not only economically but also politically (Zahradník 2003).

For better understanding of the problems connected with the integration of the Czech Republic into the European Union, we will use a modern method of surveying the relationship in a random group called dynamic sociometry.

AIM AND METHOLODOGY

The aim of the work is to describe the present situation inside the Union using a sociomap of relationships between member states of the EU. Primarily, we will try to find critical areas, possible threats in the negotiation with other members and ways of resolving problems that have arisen between them. A particular attention will be drawn to the relationship of the Czech Republic to other states. The created sociomap should clearly show the leader of the Community, the state or group of states with the greatest influence upon decision making concerning various activities in and outside the Union.

Dynamic sociometry or socio-surveying is a complex of methods that enables to analyse the relationships between elements of a system (objects or subjects). These relationships are formed by a range of partial relations.

Individual levels of data can be transformed into a graphic version of information, which has the form of a map. This map is called sociomap. The map contains information about the relationships of mutual closeness or distance of the individual elements, about their configuration but also about some information of a qualitative nature.

The input data for socio-surveying are recorded into the form of a contingency relationship table. The table is further processed by means of mathematical tools based on the theory of fuzzy multiples. The created sociomap is similar to a topographic map.

The sociomap created with the aim to analyse the relationships in the EU is based on data of foreign business between the member countries in 2004. The data needed were obtained from the statistical yearbooks of member countries. The missing data were filled in after consultations with a member of

the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which co-ordinates the activity of commercial representation at the embassies of the Czech Republic in member states of the EU. Out of 625 required numerical data, 620 data were obtained. The five missing data were replaced with zero factors. This did not have a great effect on the final form of the sociomap because in mathematical calculations the social position and status of each member of the map is compared with the social position and status of other members. In our case, we talk about comparison with 24 states. The social position and social status of the state with the missing data were derived from the location of other members in sociomap.

RESULTS

The sociomap indicating the mutual relationships between member states was used for the following analysis. Colours of the sociomap simplify orientation in the two-dimensional diagram because they express the relative height of the social position of each member. The colours are similar to those used in topographic maps. The lowermost members occur in blue area, with increasing importance the colours change from green to yellow and finally to brown. Generally, we can compare the colours to a landscape where blue colour represents water and brown colour represents mountains. The relationship between two members is shown by the distance between the displayed points. The distance needs to be calculated in consideration of the three-dimensional fact. The distance in a sociomap is represented by the length from one point to the other point and is calculated across the surface of three-dimensional map.

The map of relationships between member states of the European Union below may be interpreted as follows:

The major aggregation in the European Union is the trio of Germany, France and Italy (Figure 1). The closest to this trio in terms of relationships is Spain. Great Britain and Belgium are also close but with some complications. After defining the relationships in the EU, the key position between these two states has Belgium. Although it does not reach a considerable social status, it is represented with green-blue colour, for the states in the right half of the map it will represent an intermediator, so called Communication Bridge, for the leaders of the European Union headed by Germany. This status is presumably arising from the special status
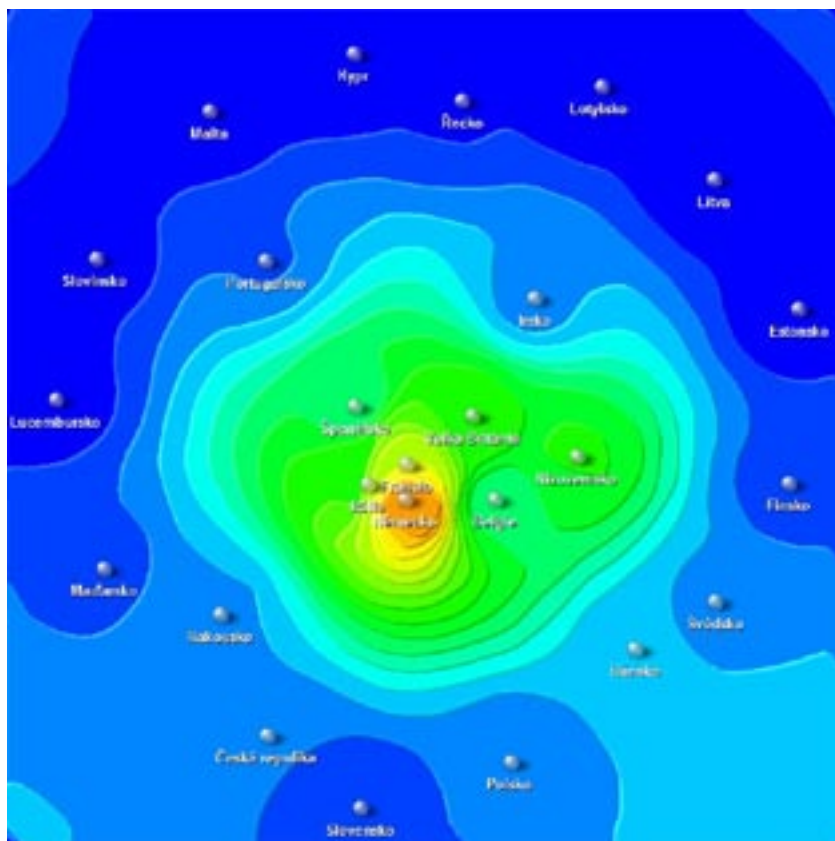

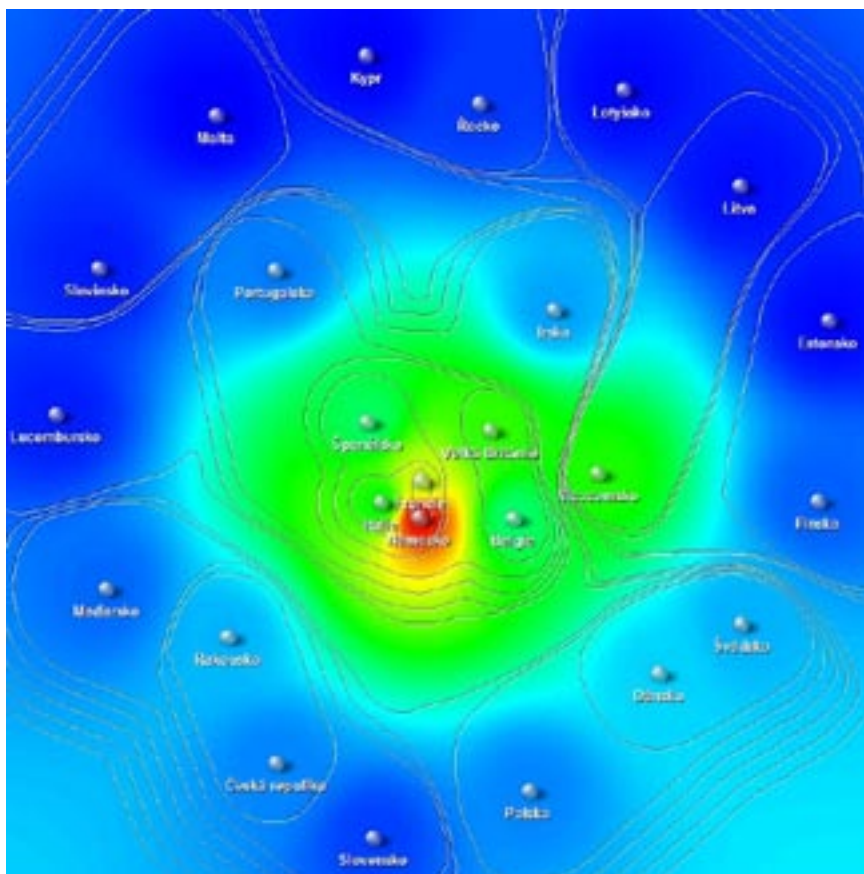Figure 1. Sociomap – contour (social position and status)

Figure 2. Sociomap – grid (the closest relationships)

of Belgium as a state with the seat of the European Union and most of its institutions.

Around the centrally aggregated states, there are the remaining countries of the current "twenty-five"; we can say that they are on the periphery of the map. Their status in the EU is insignificant and we cannot expect that they could fundamentally influence the processes within the EU. To do so, they will need at least the alliance with the closest countries. If we look closely at the possible alliances, we can anticipate several possible alternatives (Figure 2). In the right bottom corner, we can identify the alliance of Austria, the Czech Republic and Hungary, we can also add Slovakia. This group has historical bonds which date back to the Austria-Hungary times. Poland is a state that is close to the group of Scandinavian states such as Denmark and Sweden. Estonia has a close relationship with Finland; their relation is stronger than the relation of Estonia to the remaining Baltic Republics, the former parts of the Soviet Union. From the economic-commercial view, the relationship between Latvia and Lithuania is very close; thanks to this relation, they are also linked to the Netherlands. Cyprus has the closest relation with Greece, Slovenia with Malta, which

corresponds with the closeness of these states on a geographical map.

Complicated relationships are represented by the relation of Ireland to the centrally situated countries of the Union. This relation is mediated by the Great Britain; but there is a large gap between these two states. This gap is expressed with seven contours. We can find the same type of relationship between Portugal and Spain. Their gap is also big – six contours.

Luxemburg represents the most interesting position and location on the sociomap. It lies separately in the left part of the map far away from Belgium and the Netherlands – the other states of the business coalition Benelux. We can interpret this as Luxemburg's attempt to change its business orientation.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of extension is an integral part of the development of the EU, likewise, the progressing effort to deepen the European integration is a very important constituent element. Two simultaneously running processes are characteristic for the European

Community and later on also for the European Union: the process of deepening and the process of extension. However, these two processes cannot be regarded as a continual and qualitative development but as a very complicated and by many factors influenced form of development, the dynamics of which is variable and oscillates from rapid development to stagnation or recession. It is important that both processes are characterized by a certain degree of mutual interconnection and dependency. They are interlocked and the ratio of cohesion is different in various historical periods (Pajas, Rossiter 2001).

One of the factors that influence the relation between the member states of the European Union is their mutual foreign business. The European Union is above all an economic subject, which considerably interferes in the global business. The reciprocal business within the Union will certainly form the relation between the members of Community.

The data about foreign business were used as input data for forming the sociomap of the European Union. The group of states that form the European Union basically forms an uncommon shape of delineated relations – central aggregation. The result of this is that the orientation of the member countries of the European Union is fundamentally determined by Germany and France. Nowadays, these two countries determine the priorities of the Union. All processes within the Union are influenced by the opinion of these two countries. If there is a negative attitude of one of these countries towards a key question in the EU, we could not expect a shift in its resolution. We have to take this aspect into consideration.

The position of the Czech Republic in the European Union corresponds with the size and importance of our republic. The Czech Republic will not be successful in advocacy of principal changes in the EU, unless it takes advantage of a close co-operation and in searching for partners. The easiest co-operation seems to be with Austria and thanks to this relation also the co-operation with Hungary. The traditional partner of the Czech Republic is Slovakia. The co-operation with Poland might cause problems. The relation with Germany is complicated (represented with 13 contours), despite the fact that the relation of the Czech Republic to Germany is closer than the relation to the Great Britain.

In conclusion, we would like to mention that the created sociomap shows that the whole European Union is based on very delicate foundations. We could not expect deepening of the integration efforts and existence of newly created Europe unless all the member states endeavour for the maintenance of positive relations and if Germany, France, Italy, Great Britain and the Netherlands prefer their own concerns to the concerns of the Union. In our opinion, to ensure effective functioning, it is necessary to create and accept a quality form of the European constitution, which should be based on the requirements and needs of all current member states.

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