

On 1 November 2014, the Treaty of Lisbon introduced a new system of weighting votes in the Council of the European Union (i.e. the double majority system). However, under the *Protocol on Transitional Provisions*, each Member State between 01 November 2014 and 31 March 2017 may request that in the adoption of an act by a qualified majority the Nice system of weighting votes in the Council be applied. The introduction of the double majority system has resulted in a significant flow of the voting power toward the four largest countries, and significantly prevented blocking coalitions from being built. Decisions in the Council are in the vast majority taken through informal negotiations. In the period referred to above, EU countries wanting to increase their negotiation power by forming a blocking coalition will do it on the basis of the Nice system of weighting votes, using which it is easier to build a blocking minority. At the same time, decisions worked out in negotiations in the Council will be accepted without an official reference to the provisions of the *Protocol on Transitional Provisions*. This means that the full effects of changes in the system of weighting votes in the Council, introduced in the Lisbon Treaty, will become apparent only after 31 March 2017. This will probably have a significant impact on the decision-making process in the EU, and especially the ordinary legislative procedure. In particular, the change in the system of weighting votes will influence the agenda-setting power of the Commission, building winning and blocking coalitions in the Council, and the time needed to reach agreement in inter-institutional negotiations.

While in the light of the existing studies there are no doubts that the entity setting an agenda can affect the shape of the decisions taken, a research technique, including a synthetic indicator, which would determine the possible magnitude of this impact, depending on the adopted institutional solutions, has not been developed as yet. In the non-cooperative game theory, the existing procedures and positions adopted by the players are taken into account, however, only individual decisions are generally analyzed in this way, and the ability to make generalizations regarding the agenda-setting power is limited. In turn, in the cooperative game theory, such factors as procedures and positions are not taken into account. As a result, in this respect, the project will be very innovative, since it advocates the adoption of a "third way" between the research perspectives determined in this way. The ability of Member States to create small, minimal blocking coalitions, assuming that not all possible coalitions in the Council are equally likely, will be analyzed in the proposed research project for the first time. This will be also the first research showing how the support or opposition of selected countries towards a submitted initiative affects the ability to create the aforementioned coalitions by the other states.

The aim of the project is to fill gaps in our knowledge about the decision-making process in the Council of the European Union, and the verification of a number of hypotheses will be used to find answers to the questions posed.