

There are different conclusions one can draw regarding the intergovernmental or supranational character of the Council's communication network. First of all, one has to realise that informal communication is intense among working groups, who also enjoy a common leadership by core members. One can say that in general, non-state institutional actors are clearly leading in this process. It is also interesting to note that in the negotiation process, a common attitude to different partners seems to have been adopted. Second, non-state institutional actors are recognised as the partners to deal with, alongside 'big' Member States representatives (British, French and Germans). One can distinguish between the core members (interacting above average with everyone or at least other core members) and peripheral members (interacting poorly and with just about everyone).

The communication pattern can be described as a spider's web, the hub of which is occupied by institutional actors. This makes us think that communication in the working group adopts a supranational model. However, the so-called big states are also part of that hub, which undermines this supranational character. Moreover, some members are selected according to their national characteristics as opposed to their personal ones. The authors remind us that it remains a negotiation process between nations after all. Also, geographical and cultural proximity still plays a great role. Note that the authors use the concept of nationality for descriptive purposes, pointing out the need to give a more semantic meaning to the concept and even to get rid of it altogether, if possible, for explanatory purposes. Despite the prevalence of national characteristics, supranationalism has developed more than one could expect in the process. According to the authors (writing in 2002), the qualified majority voting system should also enhance supranationalism in the communication network.