

From Nice to Lisbon: Czech Republic and the Decision-making Rule in the EU Council

Běla Plechanovová
Charles University Prague

Voting Systems in the Council
Prague, 13 June 2008



outline of the presentation

- short overview of the history of the change of EU Council decision-making rule
- Czech position within the EU Council – from Nice to Lisbon
- policy implications of the change of the decision-making rule

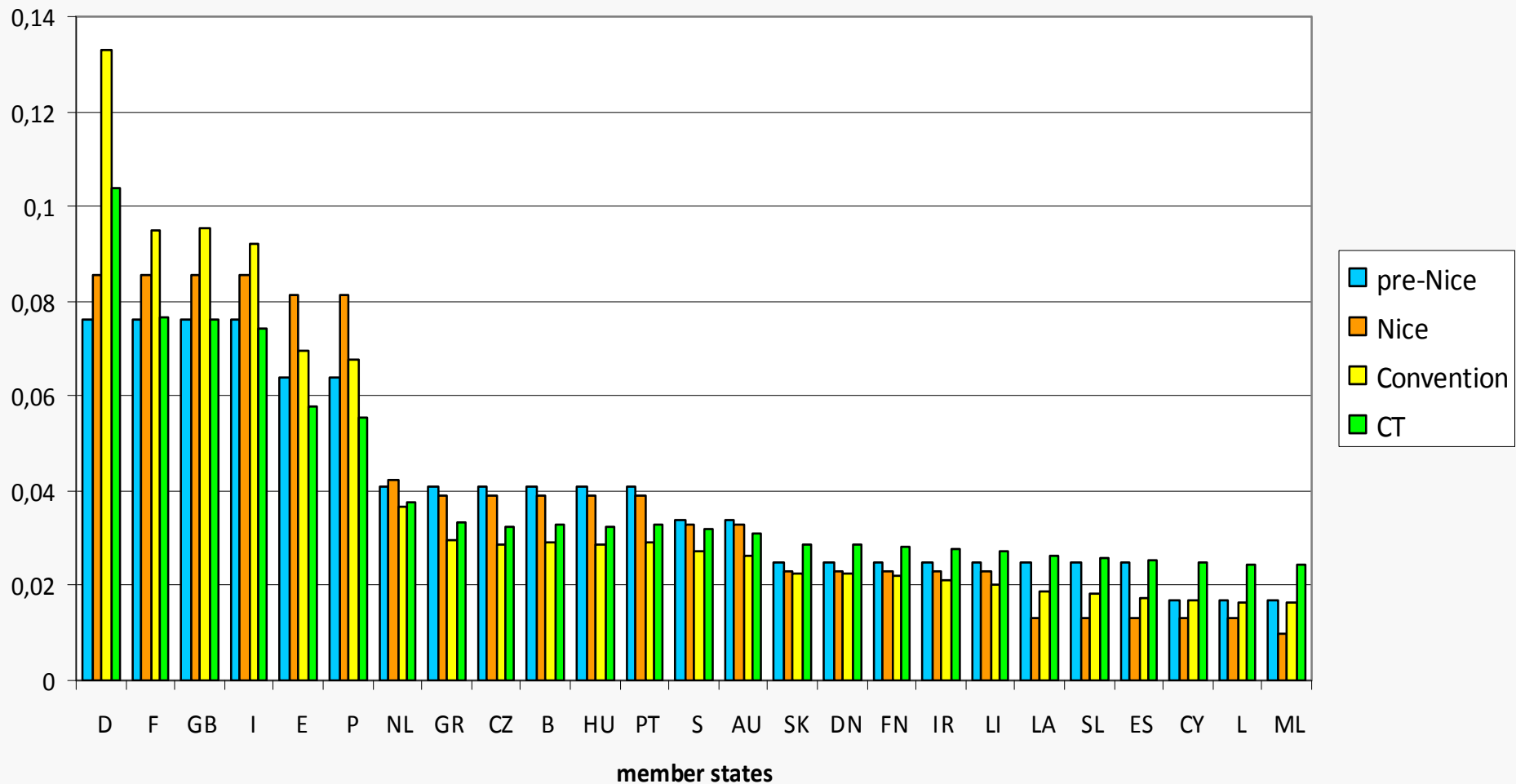
decision-making rule of the EU Council

- decision-making rule for the founding Six – balance of power between the large and small members
 - 3 large, 2 medium, 1 small
 - 4-2-1; threshold 12 of 17 (70,5%)
 - no specific principle of representation mentioned in the EEC Treaty
 - enlargements 1973-1995 – 4 rounds – 9 new members – weighted votes allotted on the basis of comparable size of the population
 - 2 large, 4 medium, 3 minor
 - 10-8-5-4-3-2; threshold 71%
 - eastern enlargement? – 12 new members
 - 1 large, 4 medium, 5 minor, 2 small
- no way of further extension of the same system → Nice Treaty + Declaration on the Future of the EU
- 29-27-12-10-7-4-3; threshold 72%; + majority of MS + 62% population

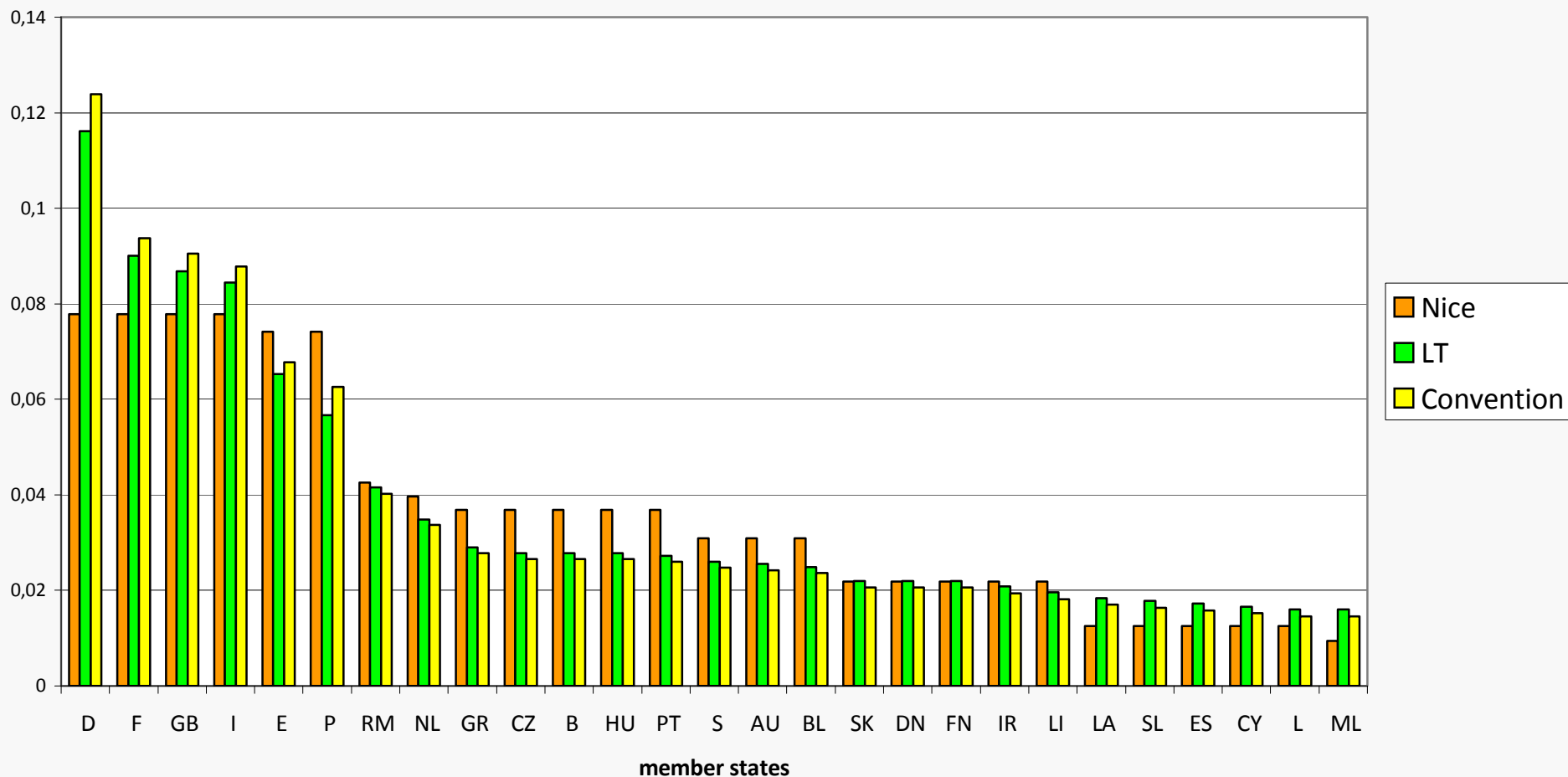
from Convention to Lisbon Treaty

- Convention – „transparency and democracy“
 - equality of citizens
 - representative democracy
 - participatory democracy
- Draft Constitution
 - dual majority
 - simple majority of MS
 - 60% of EU population
- IGC 2003-2004 – Treaty establishing the Constitution for Europe
 - dual majority
 - 55% of MS (no less than 15)
 - 65 % of EU population
 - blocking minority of 4 MS
- IGC 2007 – Lisbon Treaty (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union)
 - dual majority
 - 55% of MS (no less than 15)
 - 65 % of EU population
 - blocking minority of 4 MS
as of 2014 + 3 years

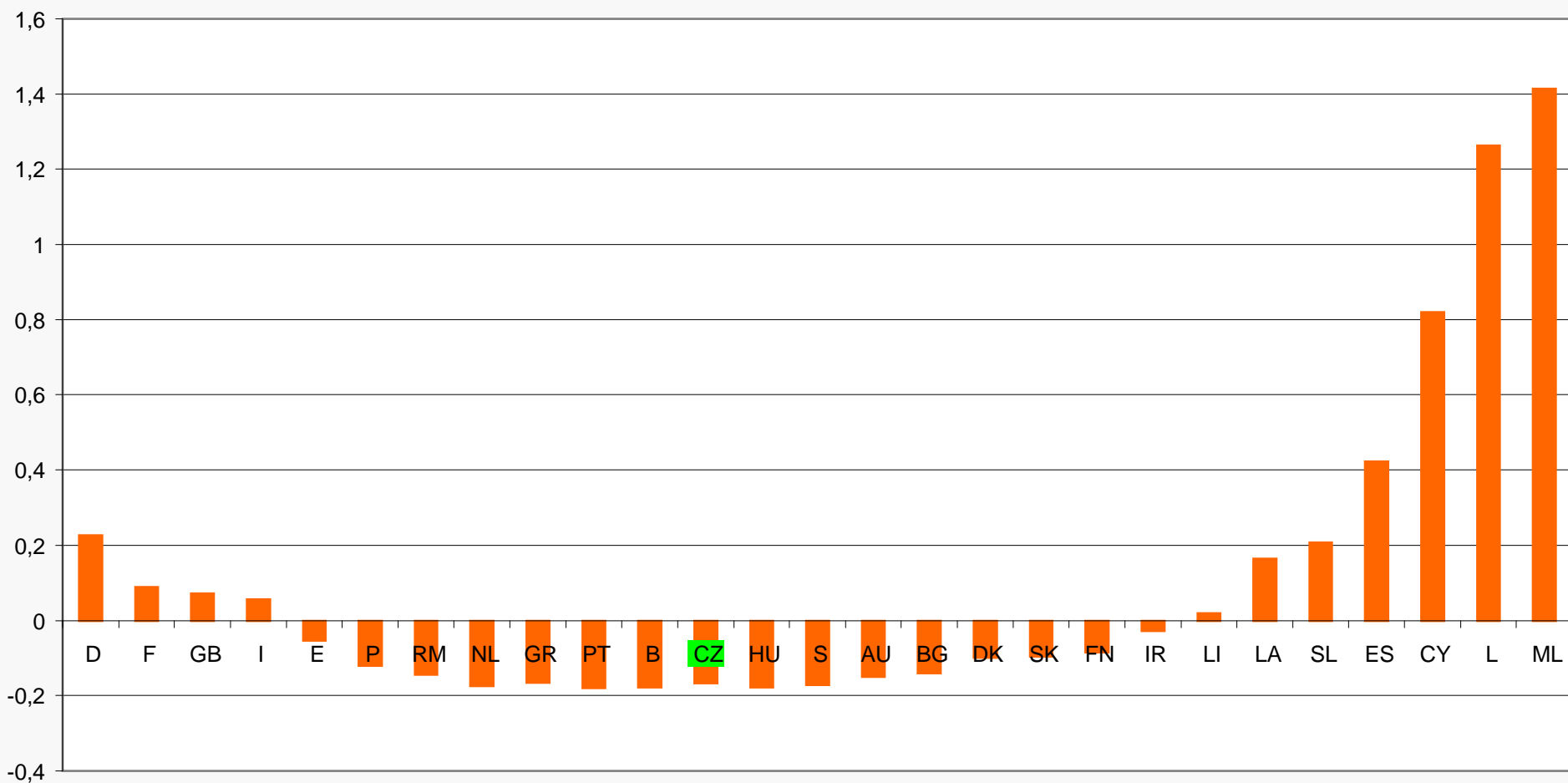
Voting power position EU 25 - pre-Nice rule, Nice, Convention and Constitutional Treaty



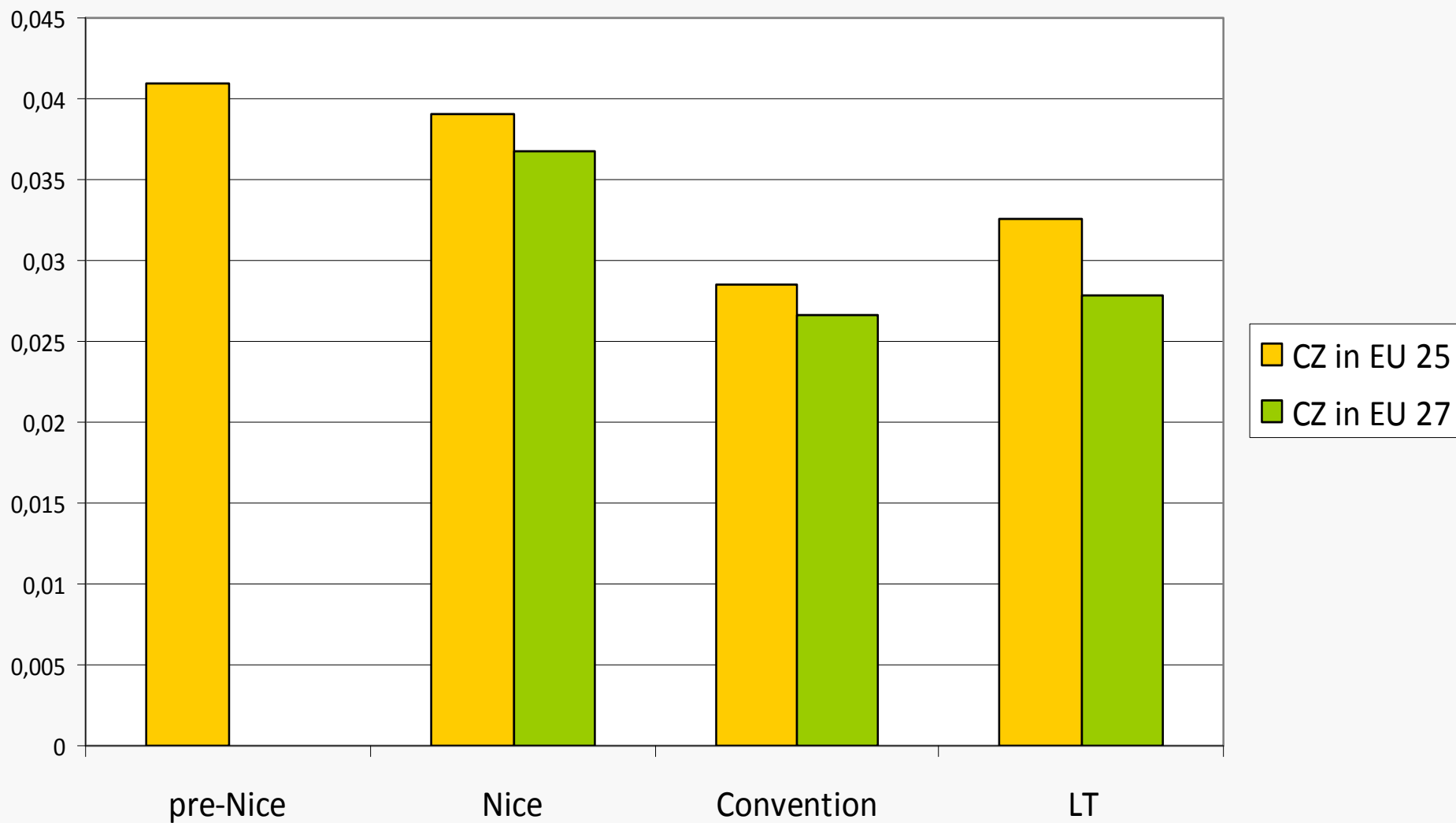
Voting power position EU 27 - Nice, Convention and Constitution/Lisbon Treaty



Lisbon Treaty - equitability of the representation of the EU member states' citizens/voters



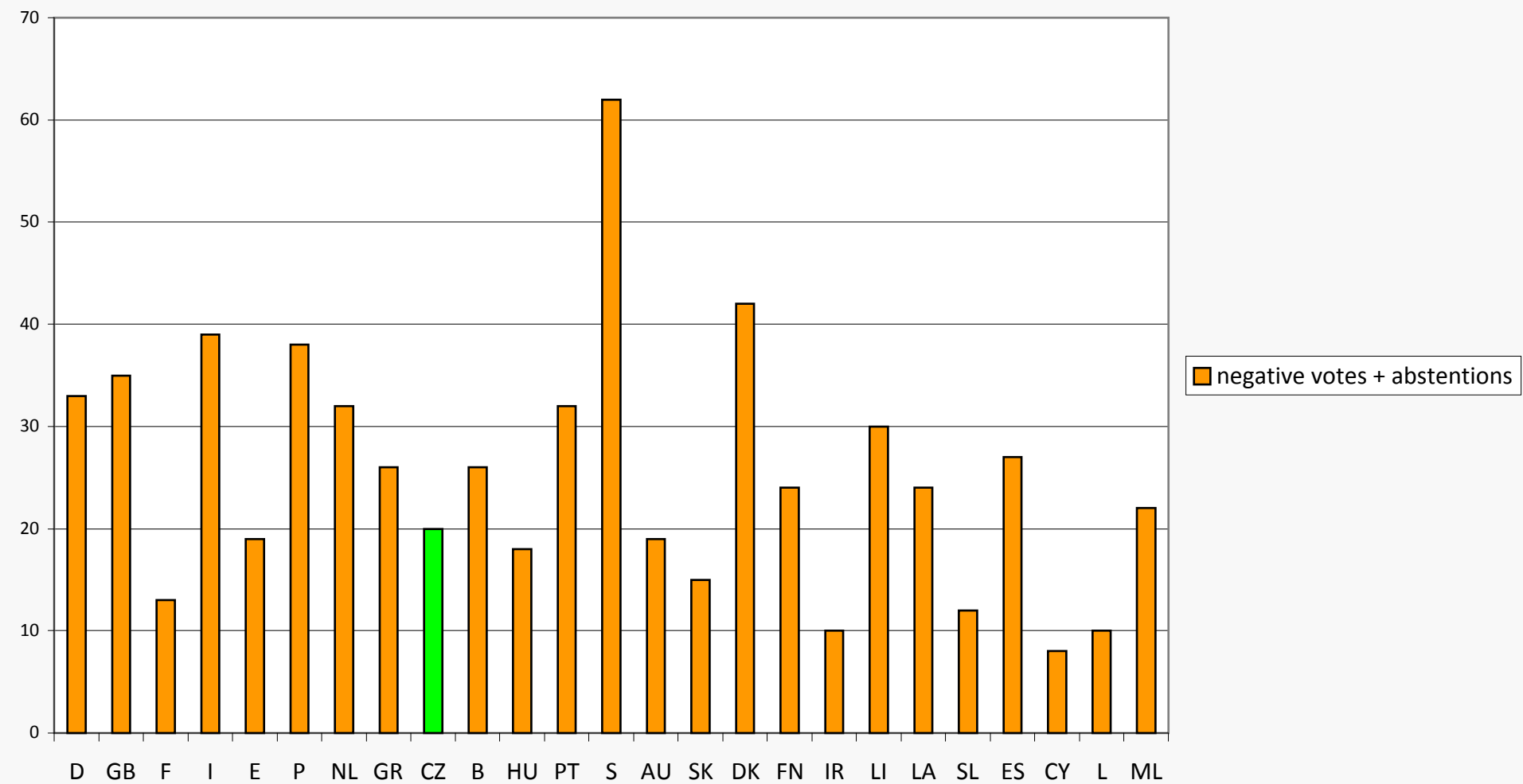
Czech voting power position in EU Council - EU 25 and EU 27



voting in the EU Council after eastern enlargement 2004-2006

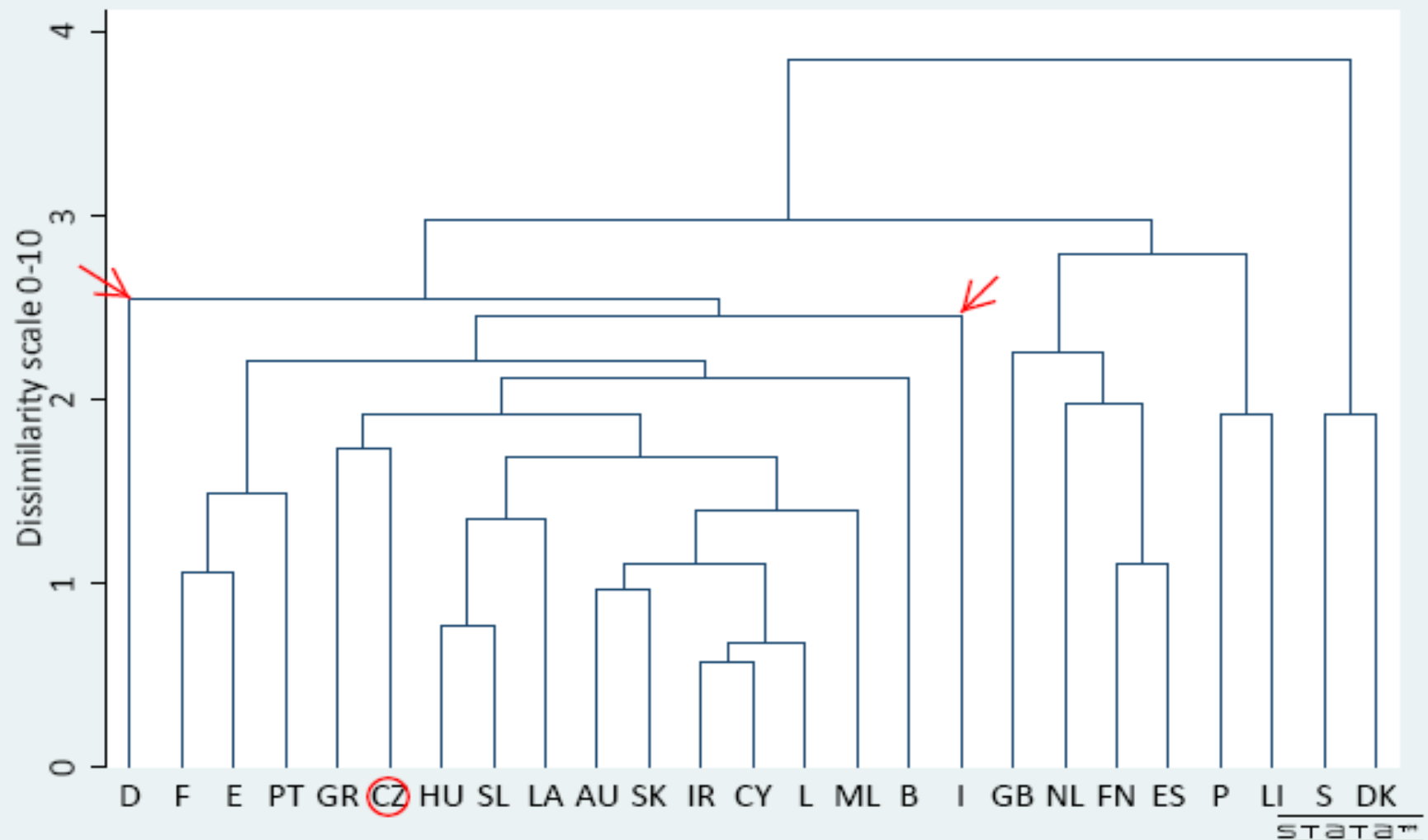
- app. 3500 proposals decided upon
- on 207 proposals which were openly contested positions of individual member states' positions are available
- 124 contested legislative acts
- 638 dissenting votes (353 against + 285 abstentions)
- 77 singletons
- average size of dissenting coalition – 3
- average number of the dissenting votes/member state – 26
- CZ – 20 (4 against; 16 abstentions; 7 legislative acts)

Dissenting votes in the EU Council - 2004-2006

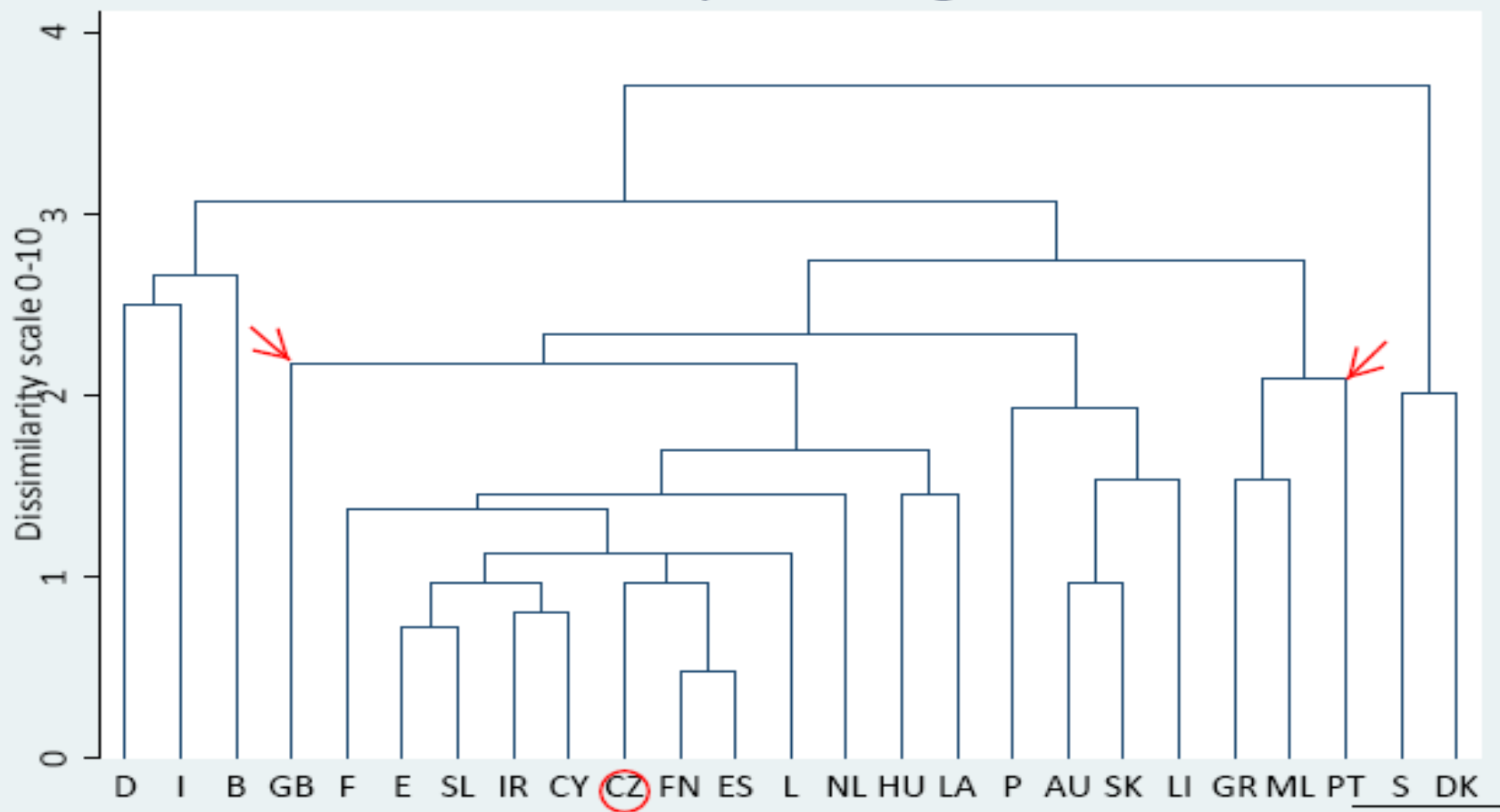


coalitions in the Council after the eastern
enlargement

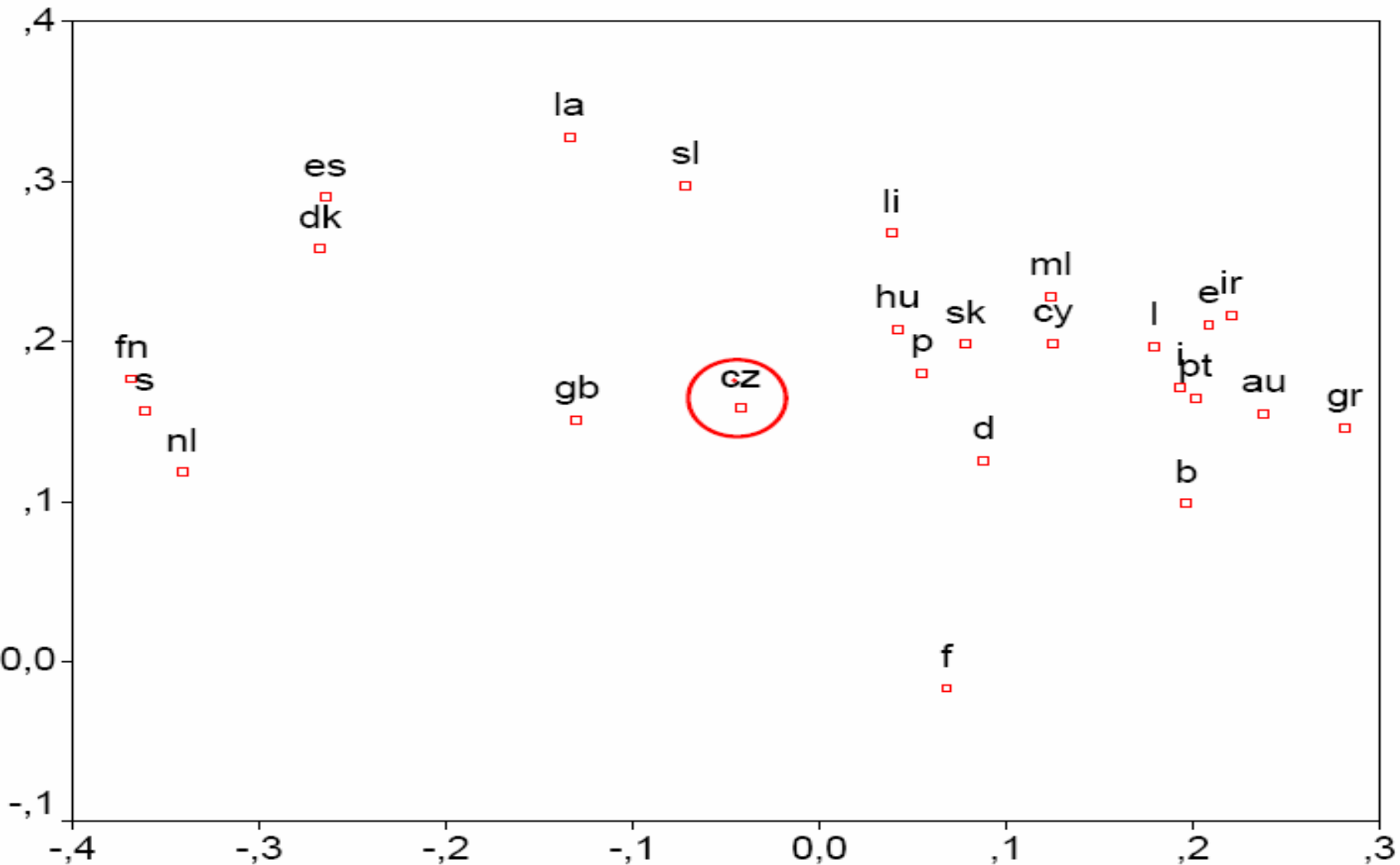
Contested proposals All 2004-2006 (Abst, Agst combined) Complete linkage



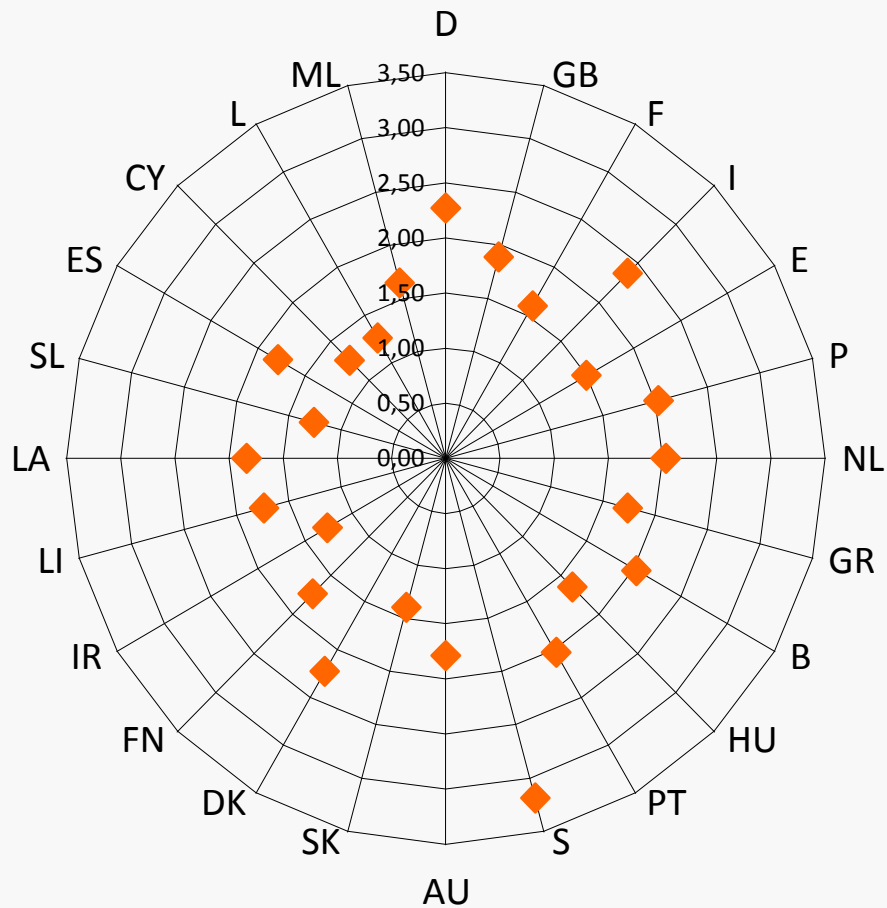
Contested proposals Leg. acts 2004-2006 (Abst, Agst combined) Complete linkage



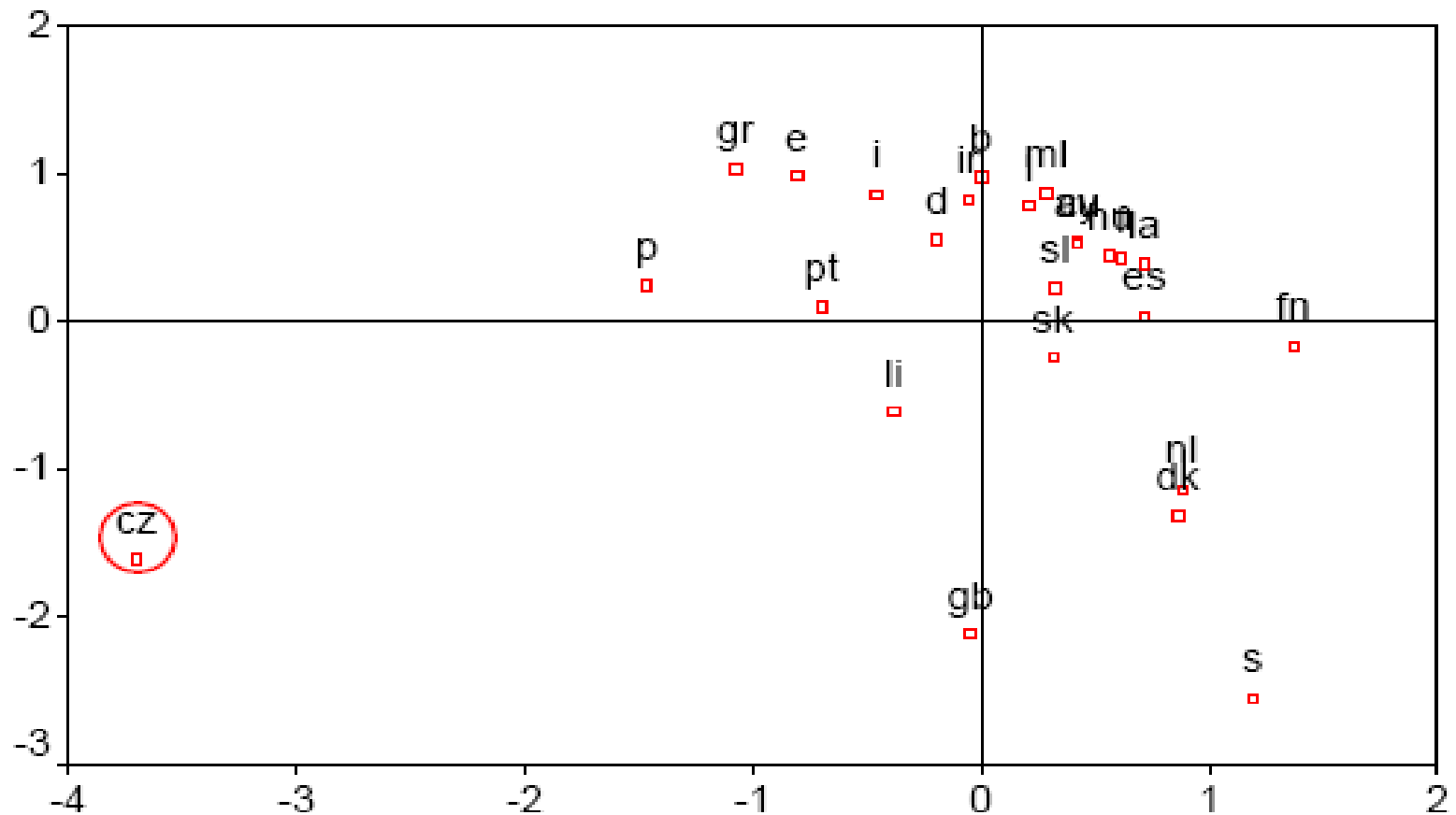
Czech position in the EU Council – contested proposals 2004-2006



Distances of the positions of EU member states from the Czech position on contested proposals 2004-2006



proposals contested by CZ



concluding remarks

- CZ would gain in absolute voting power by the LT rule – as every other member state – but would lose significantly in relative terms - almost 25 percent
- CZ is among the group of 16 member countries which are underrepresented under the LR rule – equitability deficit app. 17 percent
- CZ during the period 2004-06 was among the less discontented member states → was among the group forming the most probable core of the winning coalition, both across all the agenda and the legislative proposals
- with LT rule the countries of the core would lose power – app. 9 percent (E)
- → blocking capacity of the large countries would grow, as well as the coalition building potential

Thank you for your attention.