

## **Abstract**

The Council of the European Union has complex decision-making mechanisms, which are officially qualified majority or unanimity. Even in the light of the proposed changes on EU soil, which are intended to increase the EU's capacity to act and give citizens a greater voice, it is important not to forget the institution of consensus in the Council's legislative process. The aim of this paper was to analyse and describe the changes in the Council's decision-making practices, or whether the level of consensus in the Council is constant or decreasing, with additional findings concerning whether the higher public profile of a topic increases the rate of opposing proposals. A quantitative analysis of Council legislative proposals from 2009 to 2023 was used to confirm or refute the hypotheses. The number of adopted proposals that were opposed, i.e. at least one state voted against or abstained, was examined. In addition, the impact of controversy within states and a comparison of public opinion, all in the context of the Fit for 55 climate package and environmental policy itself, was examined using correlation analysis. The resulting findings then show that the level of consensus remains constant between 2021 and 2023, in line with previous years. At the same time, it has become clear that the high public profile of the issue is in no way related to the level of controversy regarding the environment and climate change.