

TO MOBILIZE OR NOT: POLITICAL ATTENTION AND THE REGULATION OF GMOS

Jale Tosun
Simon Schaub

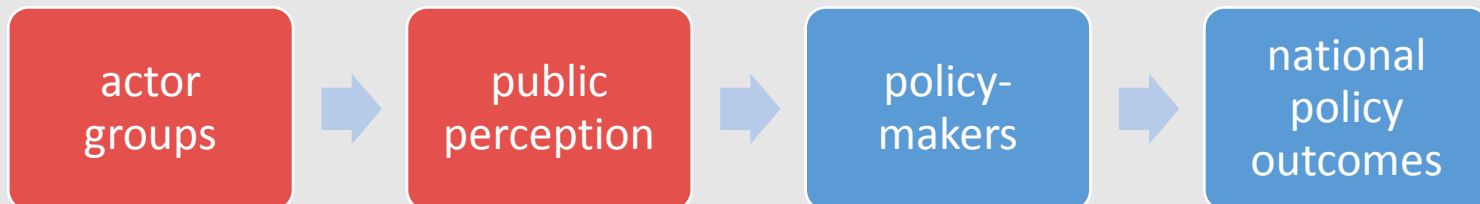


BACKGROUND

- political controversy in the EU
- EU member states are split
 - one group favors authorization
 - other group wants to maintain the strict rules

RESEARCH INTEREST

1. Can we clearly differentiate between supporters and opponents of GMOs?
2. Is there a difference in how the two groups contribute to the public discourse?



THEORY

- public opinion
 - has an influence on political competition
 - is influenced by mass media (comparative politics literature)
- actor groups
 - actors form ,advocacy coalitions‘ (Paul A. Sabatier)
 - advocate different beliefs about certain policy options
- strategies
 - politics as conflict over an outcome
 - ‘expanders‘: weaker actors expand the scope of conflict
 - ‘containers‘: stronger actors try to maintain the scope of conflict

THEORY: STRATEGIES & POLICY STATUS QUO

- actor coalition A:
 - wants to preserve the status quo
 - will act as ,container‘
- actor coalition B:
 - wants to change the status quo
 - will act as ,expander‘

HYPOTHESIS 1

GMO-supporters will seek to expand the conflict over GMOs by contributing more to the public discourse than GMO-opponents.

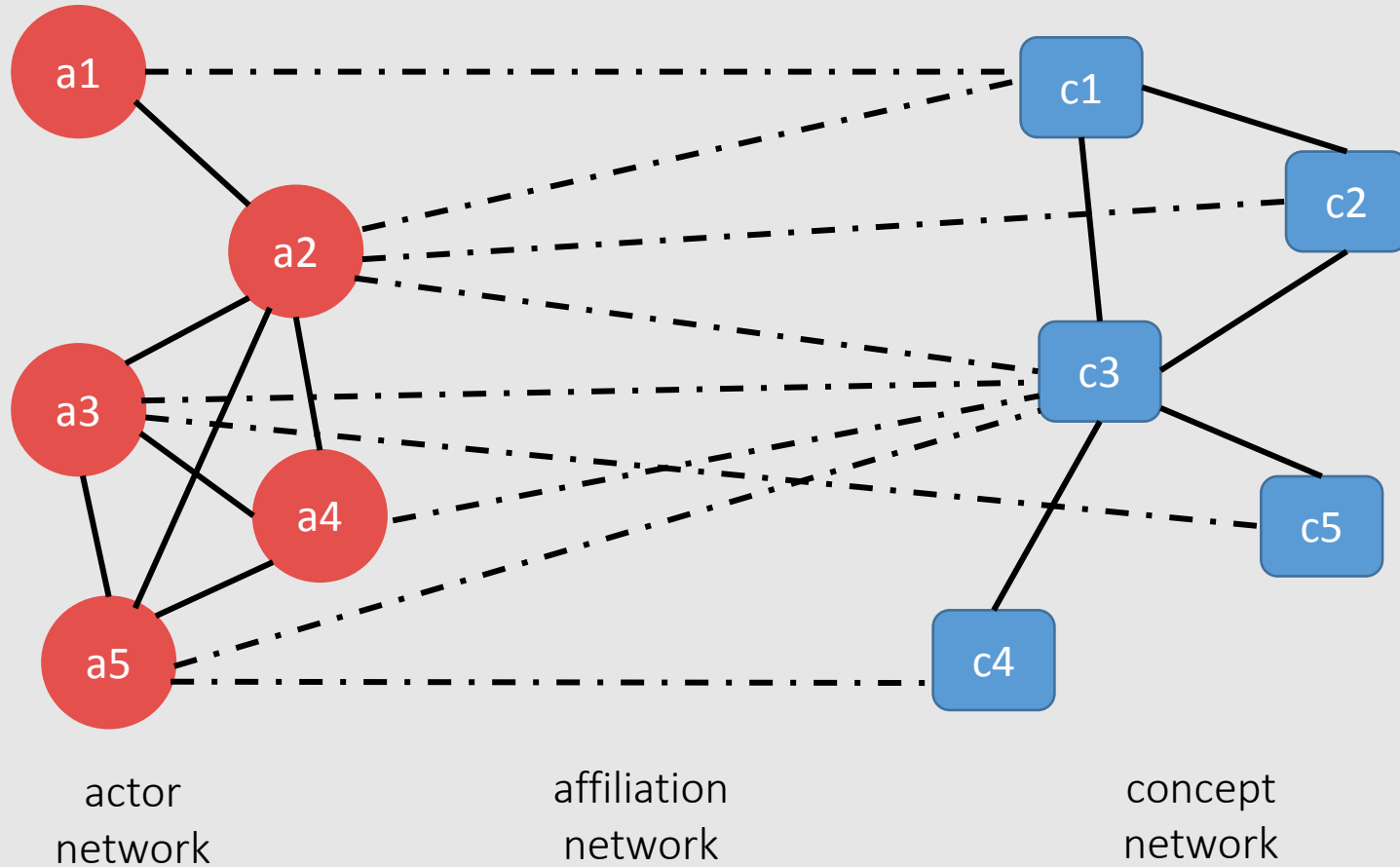
- policy status quo is widely perceived as strict
- should be endorsed by GMO-opponents

HYPOTHESIS 2

GMO-opponents will seek to expand the conflict over GMOs by contributing more to the public discourse than GMO-supporters.

- policy status quo under pressure
 - outside: WTO complaint
 - inside: Council failed to meet requirements for qualified majority vote; Commission authorizes products

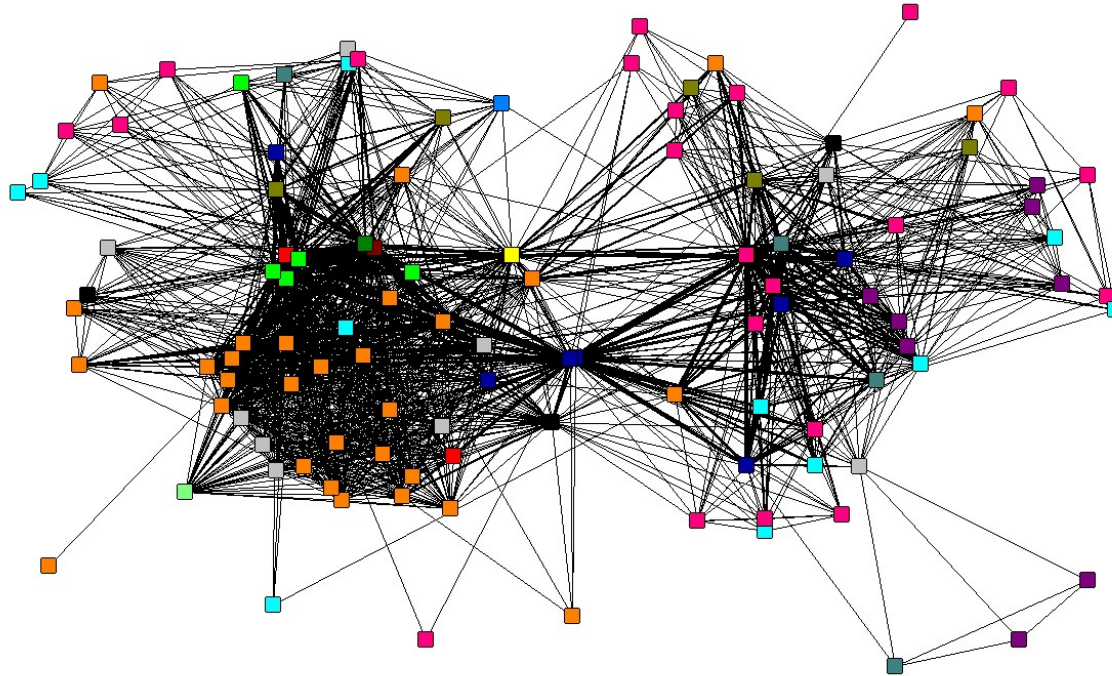
METHODOLOGY: DISCOURSE NETWORK



	Concepts	GMO-Supporters	GMO-Opponents
<i>Principles</i>	Precaution Polluter pays Transparency	Yes	No
	Scientific risk assessment	No	Yes
<i>Definition of regulation</i>	Scientific uncertainty Negative effects on public health, the environment or traditional agriculture	Yes	No
	Co-existence impossible 'No to GMOs' Very strict regulation	Yes	No
	Cultivation of GMOs Placing on the market as food or feed	No	Yes
	Negative effects of regulation on the economy, internal market or trade	No	Yes
<i>Implementation of regulation</i>	Authorization at the national level Simply majority-voting for authorization requests	Yes	No
	Authorization at the EU level	No	Yes
	Moratorium National bans GMO-free zones Liability rules Facilitate co-existence	Yes	No

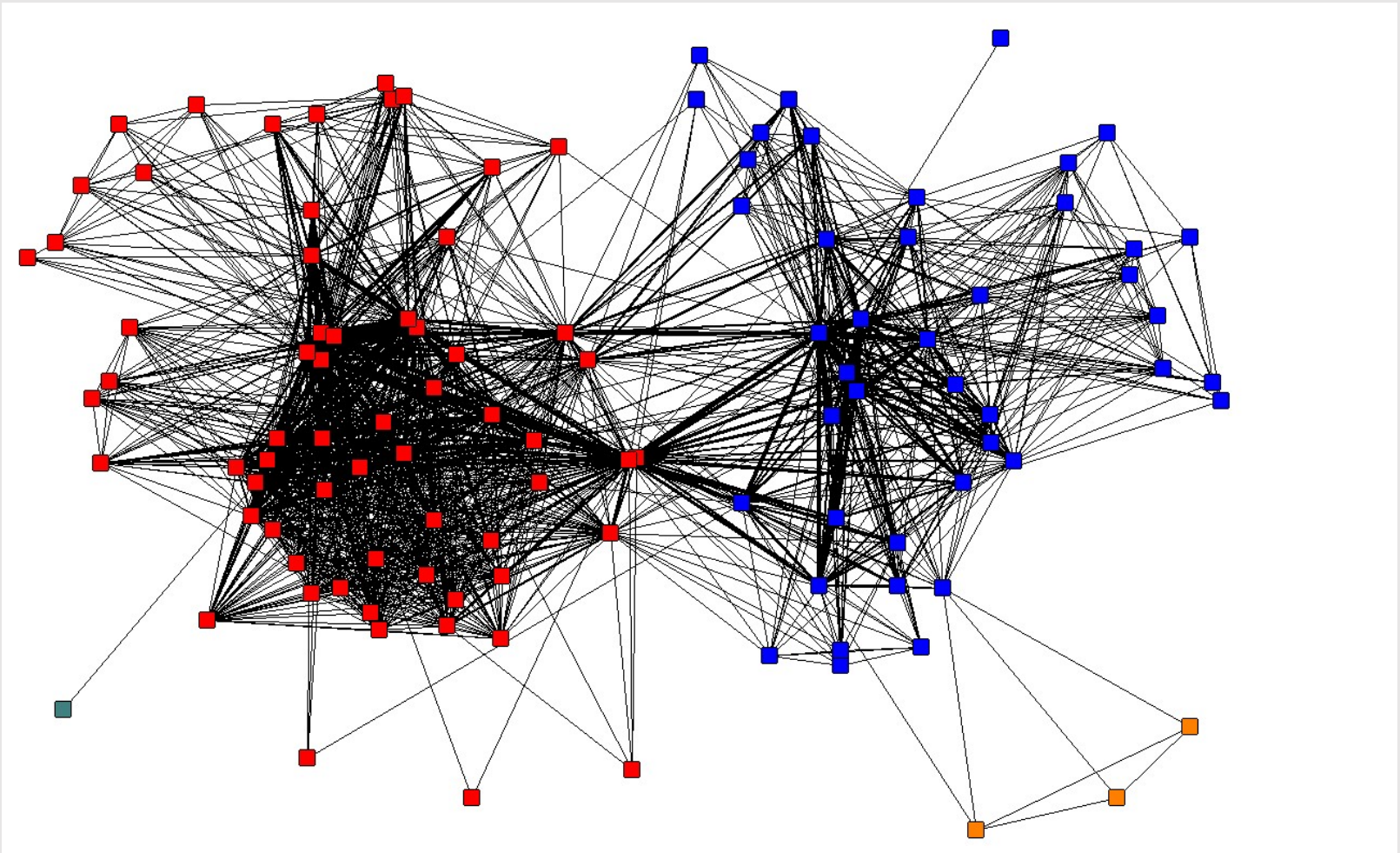
No.	Actors	Absolute number	Share in%
1	Environmental protection organizations	108	23,8
2	Business and business associations	84	18,5
3	EU governments	72	15,9
4	European Commission	47	10,4
5	Green parties	25	5,5
6	Farmer association	19	4,2
7	Other	17	3,7
8	Science	16	3,5
9	Non-EU governments	15	3,3
10	Think tanks	14	3,1
11	Liberal parties	8	1,8
12	Social democratic parties	8	1,8
13	Socialist parties	8	1,8
14	Conservative parties	7	1,6
15	EU agencies	3	0,7
16	Consumer protection organizations	2	0,4
	Total	453	100

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

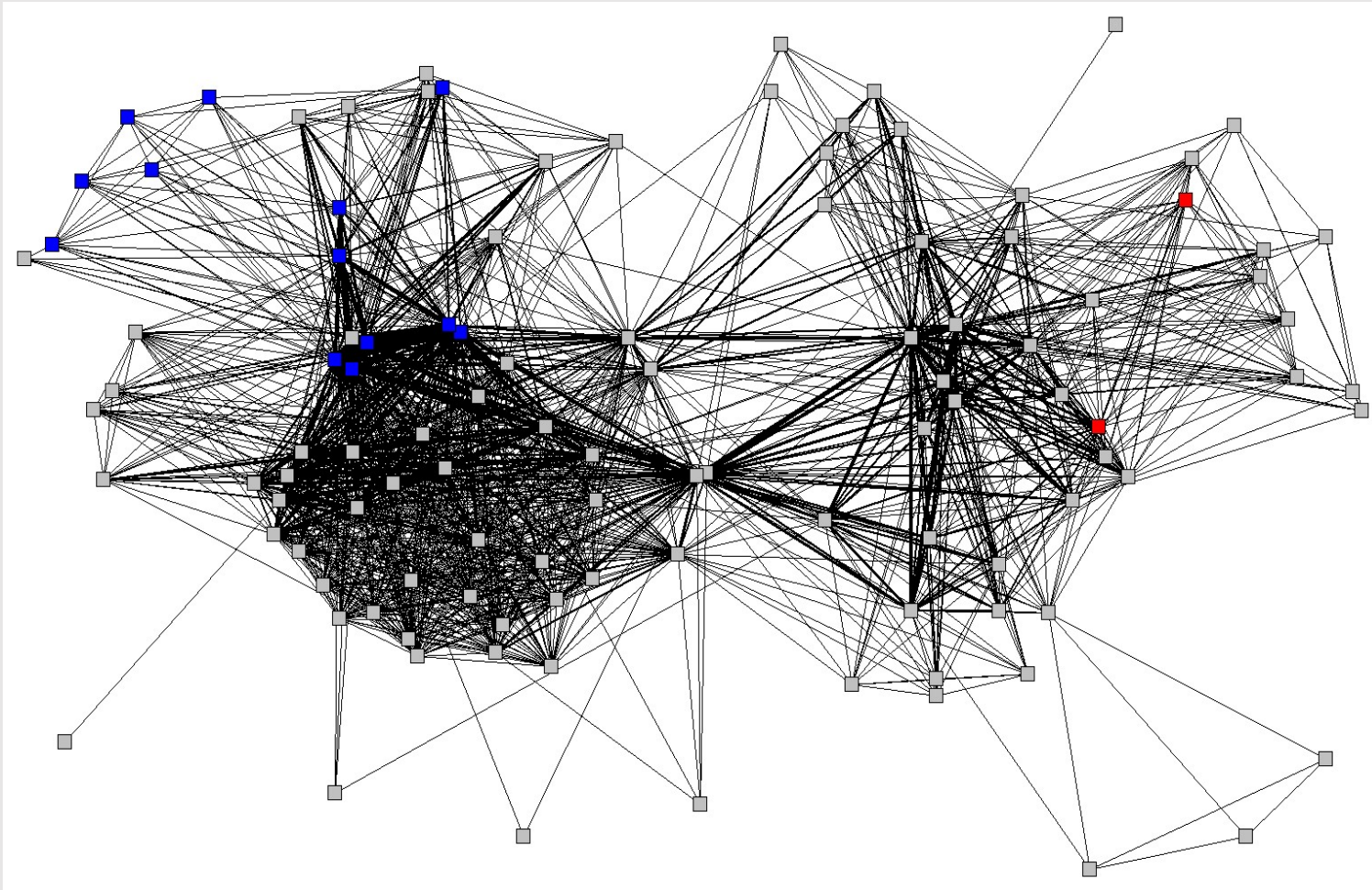


- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| ■ European Commission | ■ Green parties |
| ■ EU agencies | ■ Conservative parties |
| ■ EU governments | ■ Liberal parties |
| ■ Non-EU governments | ■ Social democratic parties |
| ■ Farmer association | ■ Socialist parties |
| ■ Consumer protection organizations | ■ Science |
| ■ Environmental protection organizations | ■ Think tanks |
| ■ Business and business associations | ■ Other |

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

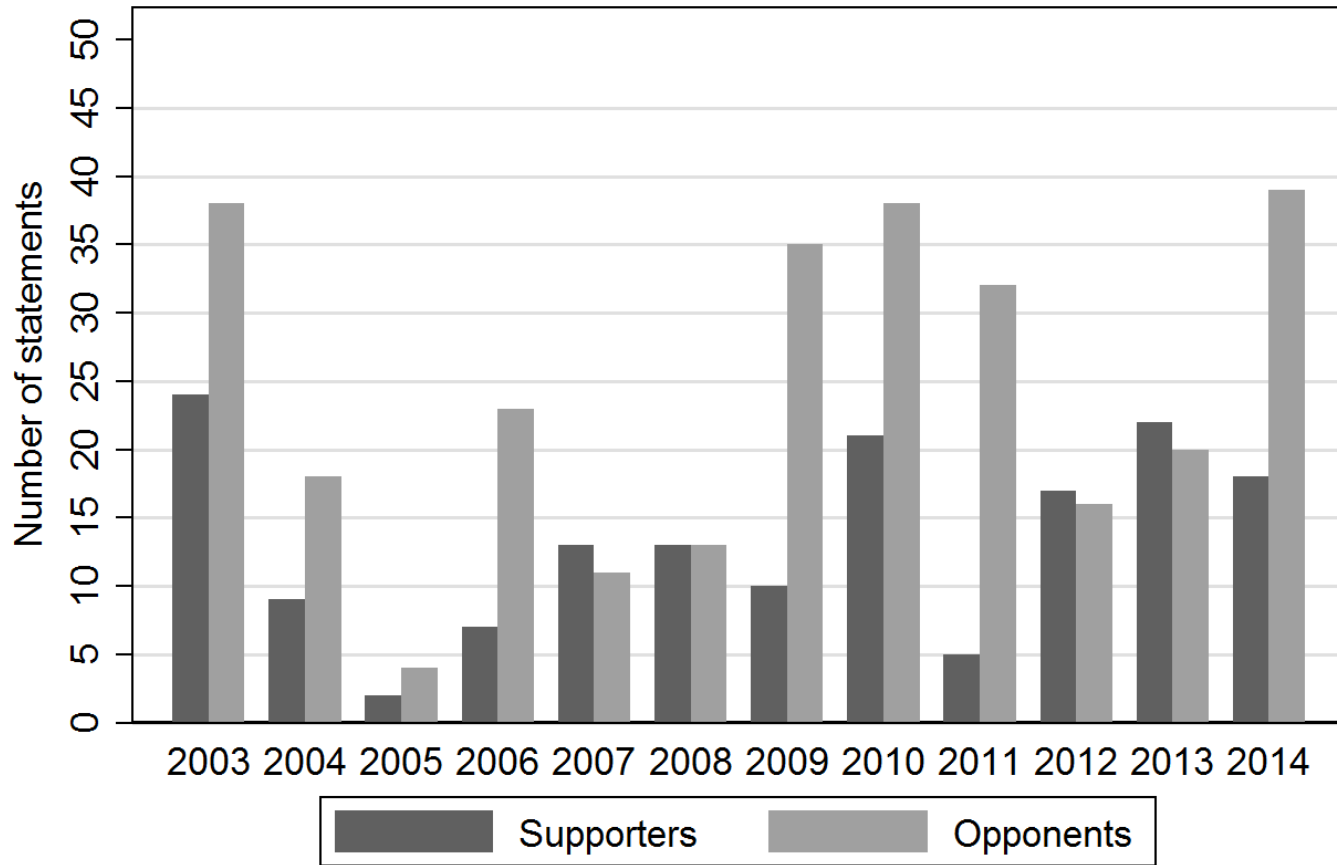


EMPIRICAL FINDINGS



Concept: facilitate co-existence

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS



CONCLUSION

- actor groups can be differentiated due to their policy preferences on GMOs
- Opponents of GMOs participate more often in the public discourse

BACKUP

METHODOLOGY

- discourse network analysis
 - assumption: set of actors A can be assigned to a set of concepts C
 - statements are bundled under concepts
 - statement: text proportion which indicates an actors policy preferences on a given issue
-
- what policy preferences are formulated?
 - which actors participate in the discourse?
 - which actors formulate which preferences?
 - which actors share the same preferences?

DATA

- source: EurActiv
 - EU-related issues are debated
 - wide range of actors
- 190 articles selected
 - search words: genetically, GMO, GM, biotechnology, biotech
 - articles manually encoded
- number of statements: 453
- number of actors: 111
- period: 2003 - 2014