



HAL
open science

Harsanyi's aggregation theorem with incomplete preferences

Eric Danan, Thibault Gajdos, Jean-Marc Tallon

► **To cite this version:**

Eric Danan, Thibault Gajdos, Jean-Marc Tallon. Harsanyi's aggregation theorem with incomplete preferences. 2014. halshs-00941799

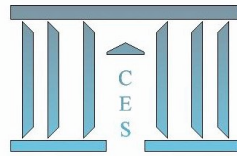
HAL Id: halshs-00941799

<https://shs.hal.science/halshs-00941799>

Submitted on 4 Feb 2014

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



Harsanyi's aggregation theorem with incomplete preferences

Eric DANAN, Thibault GAJDOS, Jean-Marc TALLON

2014.02



Harsanyi's aggregation theorem with incomplete preferences*

Eric Danan[†] Thibault Gajdos[‡] Jean-Marc Tallon[§]

January 11, 2014

Abstract

We provide a generalization of Harsanyi (1955)'s aggregation theorem to the case of incomplete preferences at the individual and social level. Individuals and society have possibly incomplete expected utility preferences that are represented by sets of expected utility functions. Under Pareto indifference, social preferences are represented through a set of aggregation rules that are utilitarian in a generalized sense. Strengthening Pareto indifference to Pareto preference provides a refinement of the representation.

Keywords. Incomplete preferences, aggregation, expected multi-utility, utilitarianism.

JEL Classification. D71, D81.

Introduction

Harsanyi (1955)'s aggregation theorem establishes that when individuals and society have expected utility preferences over lotteries, society's preferences can be represented by a weighted sum of individual utilities as soon as a Pareto indifference condition is satisfied. This celebrated result has become a cornerstone of social choice theory, being a positive aggregation result in a field where impossibility results are the rule, and is viewed by many as a strong argument in favor of utilitarianism.

*We thank two anonymous referees and an editor for their comments and suggestions. Financial support from ANR ComSoc (ANR-09-BLAN-0305-03) and ANR AmGames (ANR-12-FRAL-0008-01) is gratefully acknowledged.

[†]THEMA, UMR 8184, Université Cergy-Pontoise, CNRS, 33 boulevard du Port, 95000 Cergy-Pontoise, France. E-mail: eric.danan@u-cergy.fr.

[‡]GREQAM, CNRS, Aix-Marseille University, EHESS, 2 rue de la Charité, 13002 Marseille, France. E-mail: thibault.gajdos@univ-amu.fr.

[§]Paris School of Economics, Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, CNRS, 106 boulevard de l'Hôpital, 75647 Paris Cedex 13, France. E-mail: jean-marc.tallon@univ-paris1.fr.

Harsanyi's result sparked a rich (and on-going) debate about both its formal structure and substantive content (for an overview see, among others, Sen, 1986; Weymark, 1991; Mongin and d'Aspremont, 1998; Fleurbaey and Mongin, 2012). An important question, in particular, is how robust the result is to more general preference specifications. Most findings on this issue are negative. For instance, moving from (objective) expected utility preferences over lotteries to subjective expected utility preferences over acts results in an impossibility unless all individuals share the same beliefs (Hylland and Zeckhauser, 1979; Hammond, 1981; Seidenfeld, Kadane, and Schervish, 1989; Mongin, 1995; Gilboa, Samet, and Schmeidler, 2004; Chambers and Hayashi, 2006; Keeney and Nau, 2011). This impossibility extends even to the common belief case whenever individual preferences are not necessarily neutral towards ambiguity, as are subjective expected utility preferences (Gajdos, Tallon, and Vergnaud, 2008).

In this note we take issue with the assumption of complete preferences. There are at least two reasons why one may want to allow for incomplete preferences in social choice theory. First, individuals may sometimes be intrinsically indecisive, i.e. unable to rank alternatives (Aumann, 1962; Bewley, 1986; Shapley and Baucells, 1998; Ok, 2002; Dubra, Maccheroni, and Ok, 2004; Evren, 2008; Ok, Ortoleva, and Riella, 2012; Galaabaatar and Karni, 2013; Pivato, 2013). Second, even if individuals all have complete preferences, these preferences may in practice be only partially identified (Manski, 2005, 2011). As we shall see, Paretian aggregation remains possible when individual have incomplete expected utility preferences over lotteries, and still has a utilitarian flavor, although in a generalized sense.

Statement of the theorem

Let X be a finite set of *outcomes* and P denote the set of all probability distributions (*lotteries*) over X . A *utility function* on X is an element of \mathbb{R}^X . We denote by $e \in \mathbb{R}^X$ the constant utility function $x \mapsto e(x) = 1$.

Shapley and Baucells (1998) and Dubra, Maccheroni, and Ok (2004) show that a (weak) preference relation \succsim over P satisfies the reflexivity, transitivity, independence, and continuity axioms if and only if it admits an *expected multi-utility representation*, i.e. a convex set $U \subseteq \mathbb{R}^X$ such that for all $p, q \in P$,

$$p \succsim q \Leftrightarrow \left[\forall u \in U, \sum_{x \in X} p(x)u(x) \geq \sum_{x \in X} q(x)u(x) \right].$$

These are the standard axioms of the expected utility model (von Neumann and Morgenstern, 1944), except that completeness is weakened to reflexivity (and continuity is slightly strengthened). Thus, given these axioms, \succsim is complete if and only if U can be

taken to be a singleton, i.e. a standard *expected utility representation*.

Consider a society made of a finite set $\{1, \dots, I\}$ of individuals. Each individual $i = 1, \dots, I$ is endowed with a (weak) preference relation \succsim_i over P satisfying the above axioms. Society itself is also endowed with a preference relation \succsim_0 over P satisfying these axioms. For all $i = 0, \dots, I$, denote by \succ_i and \sim_i the asymmetric (strict preference) and symmetric (indifference) parts of \succsim_i , respectively. Say that the preference profile $(\succsim_i)_{i=0}^I$ satisfies *Pareto indifference* if for all $p, q \in P$, $[\forall i = 1, \dots, I, p \sim_i q] \Rightarrow p \sim_0 q$, and *Pareto preference* if for all $p, q \in P$, $[\forall i = 1, \dots, I, p \succsim_i q] \Rightarrow p \succsim_0 q$.

Harsanyi (1955)'s aggregation theorem establishes that if \succsim_i is complete and endowed with an expected utility representation $\{u_i\}$ for all $i = 0, \dots, I$, then (a) $(\succsim_i)_{i=0}^I$ satisfies Pareto indifference if and only if $u_0 = \sum_{i=1}^I \theta_i u_i + \gamma e$ for some $\theta \in \mathbb{R}^I$ and $\gamma \in \mathbb{R}$, (b) $(\succsim_i)_{i=0}^I$ satisfies Pareto preference if and only if the same holds with $\theta \in \mathbb{R}_+^I$.¹ Thus, in the expected utility setting, Pareto indifference (resp. preference) is necessary and sufficient for the social utility function to consist of a *signed utilitarian* (resp. *utilitarian*) aggregation of individual utility functions.

More generally, let us now endow \succsim_i with an expected multi-utility representation U_i for all $i = 0, \dots, I$. This allows for preference incompleteness at both the individual and social level. We then obtain the following generalization of Harsanyi's aggregation theorem. The proof is presented in the Appendix.

Theorem. Let \succsim_i be a preference relation over P endowed with an expected multi-utility representation U_i , for all $i = 0, \dots, I$.

(a) $(\succsim_i)_{i=0}^I$ satisfies Pareto indifference if and only if

$$U_0 = \left\{ \sum_{i=1}^I \alpha_i u_i - \beta_i v_i + \gamma e : (\alpha, \beta, \gamma, (u_i, v_i)_{i=1}^I) \in \Phi \right\} \quad (1)$$

for some (α, β) - and $(u_i, v_i)_{i=1}^I$ -sectionally convex set $\Phi \subseteq \mathbb{R}_+^{2I} \times \mathbb{R} \times \prod_{i=1}^I U_i^2$.²

(b) Assume $\sum_{i=1}^I \text{cone}(U_i) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}$ is closed.³ $(\succsim_i)_{i=0}^I$ satisfies Pareto preference if and only if

$$U_0 = \left\{ \sum_{i=1}^I \theta_i u_i + \gamma e : (\theta, \gamma, (u_i)_{i=1}^I) \in \Omega \right\} \quad (2)$$

for some θ - and $(u_i)_{i=1}^I$ -sectionally convex set $\Omega \subseteq \mathbb{R}_+^I \times \mathbb{R} \times \prod_{i=1}^I U_i$.

Thus, in the expected multi-utility setting, Pareto indifference (resp. preference) is necessary and sufficient for the set of social utility functions to consist of a set of *bi-*

¹See e.g. de Meyer and Mongin (1995) for a rigorous proof in a general setting.

²A set $S \subseteq S_1 \times S_2$ is s_1 -sectionally convex if $\{s_2 \in S_2 : (s_1, s_2) \in S\}$ is convex for all s_1 in S_1 .

³ $\text{cone}(\cdot)$ denotes conical hull and the sum of two sets is the Minkowski sum.

utilitarian (resp. *utilitarian*) aggregations of individual utility functions. Bi-utilitarianism aggregates two utility functions u_i and v_i for each individual $i = 1, \dots, I$, the former with a non-negative weight α_i and the latter with a non-positive weight $-\beta_i$, thereby generalizing signed utilitarianism (which corresponds to the particular case where $u_i = v_i$ for all $i = 1, \dots, I$).⁴ As in Harsanyi's aggregation theorem, the constants γ in the sets Φ and Ω do not affect social preferences, so setting them to 0 yields another expected multi-utility representation of \succsim_0 .

Comments

Bi-utilitarianism cannot in general be reduced to signed utilitarianism in part (a) of the theorem, as the following example shows. Let $X = \{x, y, z, w\}$, $I = 2$, $U_0 = \{u_0\}$, $U_1 = \{u_1\}$, and $U_2 = \text{conv}(\{u_2^a, u_2^b\})$, where u_0, u_1, u_2^a, u_2^b are as follows.⁵

	u_0	u_1	u_2^a	u_2^b
x	4	1	1	-1
y	1	1	0	0
z	1	0	1	1
w	0	0	0	0

Then for all $p, q \in P$, $[\forall i = 1, 2, p \sim_i q] \Leftrightarrow p = q$, so $(\succsim_i)_{i=0}^2$ trivially satisfies Pareto indifference (consistently with the theorem, we have $u_0 = u_1 + 2u_2^a - u_2^b$). Yet there exists no $(\theta, \gamma, (u_i)_{i=1}^2) \in \mathbb{R}^2 \times \mathbb{R} \times \prod_{i=1}^2 U_i$ such that $u_0 = \sum_{i=1}^2 \theta_i u_i + \gamma e$.

The closedness assumption in part (b) is not innocuous in terms of preference: there are profiles $(\succsim_i)_{i=1}^I$ of individual preference relations satisfying the above axioms for which there exists no profile $(U_i)_{i=1}^I$ of expected multi-utility representations such that $\sum_{i=1}^I \text{cone}(U_i) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}$ is closed. But there are at least two cases where such a $(U_i)_{i=1}^I$ always exists. The first is when \succsim_i satisfies an additional *finiteness* axiom for all $i = 1, \dots, I$ (Dubra and Ok, 2002). The second is when $(\succsim_i)_{i=1}^I$ satisfies a *minimal agreement* condition. When the closedness assumption is not satisfied, U_0 can only be shown to be included in the closure of the set in the right hand side of (2) for some Ω . Details are provided in the Appendix.

As in Harsanyi's aggregation theorem, individual weights are not unique in (1) and (2). Non-uniqueness is more severe when individual preferences are incomplete because the way society selects individual utility functions out of the individual expected multi-utility representations is itself not unique. That is to say, even if U_i is fixed for all $i = 1, \dots, I$ and the minimal agreement condition holds, it may be the case that $\sum_{i=1}^I \theta_i u_i + \gamma e =$

⁴See Danan, Gajdos, and Tallon (2013) for a similar pattern in a multi-profile setting.

⁵ $\text{conv}(\cdot)$ denotes convex hull.

$\sum_{i=1}^I \theta'_i u'_i + \gamma' e$ for some $(\theta, \gamma, (u_i)_{i=1}^I) \neq (\theta', \gamma', (u'_i)_{i=1}^I) \in \mathbb{R}_+^I \times \mathbb{R} \times \prod_{i=1}^I U_i$ in (2), and similarly in (1).

The theorem can be extended to an infinite set I of individuals, with the sums in the right-hand sides of (1) and (2) remaining finite. To this end it suffices to apply the current theorem to an artificial society made of a single individual whose preferences are endowed with the expected multi-utility representation $U = \text{conv}(\bigcup_{i \in I} U_i)$, assuming $\text{cone}(U) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}$ is closed for part (b). This provides a generalization of Zhou (1997)'s aggregation theorem to incomplete preferences (in the case where X is finite).

Social preferences can be more complete than individual preferences and, in particular, \succsim_0 can be complete even though \succsim_i is incomplete for all $i = 1, \dots, I$. In this case, endowing \succsim_0 with an expected utility representation u_0 , (1) reduces to $u_0 = \sum_{i=1}^I \alpha_i u_i - \beta_i v_i + \gamma e$ for some $(\alpha, \beta, \gamma, (u_i, v_i)_{i=1}^I) \in \mathbb{R}_+^{2I} \times \mathbb{R} \times \prod_{i=1}^I U_i^2$, and (2) to $u_0 = \sum_{i=1}^I \theta_i u_i + \gamma e$ for some $(\theta, \gamma, (u_i)_{i=1}^I) \in \mathbb{R}_+^I \times \mathbb{R} \times \prod_{i=1}^I U_i$. On the other hand, social preferences can also be less complete than individual preferences (in the extreme, the social preference relation can reduce to the Pareto-indifference or Pareto-preference relation) and, in particular, \succsim_0 can be incomplete even though \succsim_i is complete for all $i = 1, \dots, I$. In this case, endowing \succsim_i with an expected utility representation u_i for all $i = 1, \dots, I$, (1) reduces to $U_0 = \{\sum_{i=1}^I \theta_i u_i + \gamma e : (\theta, \gamma) \in \Lambda\}$ for some convex set $\Lambda \subseteq \mathbb{R}^I \times \mathbb{R}$, and (2) to the same with $\Lambda \subseteq \mathbb{R}_+^I \times \mathbb{R}$.

These two particular cases (complete social preferences with incomplete individual preferences or the other way around) have in common that $\Phi = \Psi \times W$ for some convex sets $\Psi \subseteq \mathbb{R}_+^{2I} \times \mathbb{R}$ and $W \subseteq \prod_{i=1}^I U_i^2$ in (1), and $\Omega = \Lambda \times V$ for some convex sets $\Lambda \subseteq \mathbb{R}_+^I \times \mathbb{R}$ and $V \subseteq \prod_{i=1}^I U_i$ in (2). Such a separation between weights and utilities is not always possible. This can be shown from the example above if we now let $U_0 = \text{conv}(\{u_0^a, u_0^b\})$, where $u_0^a = \frac{3}{4}u_1 + \frac{1}{4}u_2^a$ and $u_0^b = \frac{1}{4}u_1 + \frac{3}{4}u_2^b$. Then $(\succsim_i)_{i=0}^I$ clearly satisfies Pareto preference, yet any Ω satisfying (2) contains both $(\frac{3}{4}, \frac{1}{4}, 0, (u_1, u_2^a))$ and $(\frac{1}{4}, \frac{3}{4}, 0, (u_1, u_2^b))$ but neither $(\frac{3}{4}, \frac{1}{4}, 0, (u_1, u_2^b))$ nor $(\frac{1}{4}, \frac{3}{4}, 0, (u_1, u_2^a))$.

Seeking a general characterization, in terms of the preference profile $(\succsim_i)_{i=0}^I$, of the possibility of separating weights and utilities in the above sense does not seem a promising avenue of research. Such a separation can be obtained in a multi-profile setting, by means of an additional *independence of irrelevant alternatives* condition linking distinct profiles $(U_i)_{i=0}^I$ with one another (Danan, Gajdos, and Tallon, 2013). This latter principle, however, also implies that $W = \prod_{i=1}^I U_i^2$ in (1) and $V = \prod_{i=1}^I U_i$ in (2). It is an open problem to find weaker conditions allowing society to make a selection within the individual sets of utility functions (thereby reducing social incompleteness) while retaining the separation between weights and utilities.

Appendix

On expected multi-utility representations

The following lemma gathers useful properties of expected multi-utility representations. For a proof see Shapley and Baucells (1998, pp. 6–11) or Dubra, Maccheroni, and Ok (2004, pp. 128–131).

Lemma. A preference relation \succsim over P admits an expected multi-utility representation if and only if there exists a closed and convex cone $K \subseteq \mathbb{R}^X$, $K \perp \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}$, such that for all $p, q \in P$, $p \succsim q \Leftrightarrow p - q \in K$. Moreover, K is unique, and a convex set $U \subseteq \mathbb{R}^X$ is an expected multi-utility representation of \succsim if and only if $\text{cl}(\text{cone}(U) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}) = K^*$.⁶

Proof of the theorem

The “if” statements of both parts of the theorem are obvious. We only prove the “only if” statements.

We start with part (b), so assume $\sum_{i=1}^I \text{cone}(U_i) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}$ is closed and $(\succsim_i)_{i=0}^I$ satisfies Pareto preference. It is sufficient to show that for all $u_0 \in U_0$, there exist $\theta \in \mathbb{R}_+^I$, $\gamma \in \mathbb{R}$, and $u_i \in U_i$ for all $i = 1, \dots, I$ such that $u_0 = \sum_{i=1}^I \theta_i u_i + \gamma e$. Indeed, if this claim is correct then the set

$$\Omega = \left\{ (\theta, \gamma, (u_i)_{i=1}^I) \in \mathbb{R}_+^I \times \mathbb{R} \times \prod_{i=1}^I U_i : \sum_{i=1}^I \theta_i u_i + \gamma e \in U_0 \right\}$$

satisfies (2) by construction and is θ - and $(u_i)_{i=1}^I$ -sectionally convex since U_0 is convex.

To prove the claim, let K_i be the closed and convex cone corresponding to \succsim_i in the lemma above, for all $i = 0, \dots, I$. We then have $\cap_{i=1}^I K_i \subseteq K_0$ by Pareto preference and, hence, $K_0^* \subseteq (\cap_{i=1}^I K_i)^* = \text{cl}(\sum_{i=1}^I K_i^*)$ (Rockafellar, 1970, Corollary 16.4.2). Moreover, again by the lemma above, $K_i^* = \text{cl}(\text{cone}(U_i) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}})$ for all $i = 0, \dots, I$. Hence

$$\begin{aligned} U_0 &\subseteq \text{cl}(\text{cone}(U_0) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}) = K_0^* \subseteq \text{cl} \left(\sum_{i=1}^I K_i^* \right) \\ &\subseteq \text{cl} \left(\sum_{i=1}^I \text{cl}(\text{cone}(U_i) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}) \right) \\ &= \text{cl} \left(\sum_{i=1}^I (\text{cone}(U_i) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}) \right) \\ &= \text{cl} \left(\sum_{i=1}^I \text{cone}(U_i) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}} \right) \end{aligned}$$

⁶ \perp denotes orthogonality, $\text{cl}(\cdot)$ denotes closure, and K^* denotes the dual cone of K , i.e. $K^* = \{u \in \mathbb{R}^X : \forall k \in K, \sum_{x \in X} k(x)u(x) \geq 0\}$.

$$= \sum_{i=1}^I \text{cone}(U_i) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}},$$

where the last equality follows from the assumption that $\sum_{i=1}^I \text{cone}(U_i) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}$ is closed. Hence for all $u_0 \in U_0$, there exist $\gamma \in \mathbb{R}$ and $u'_i \in \text{cone}(U_i)$ for all $i = 1, \dots, I$ such that $u_0 = \sum_{i=1}^I u'_i + \gamma e$. Moreover, for all $i = 1, \dots, I$, since U_i is convex we also have $u'_i = \theta_i u_i$ for some $\theta_i \in \mathbb{R}_+$ and $u_i \in U_i$ and, hence, $u_0 = \sum_{i=1}^I \theta_i u_i + \gamma e$.

Now for part (a), assume $(\succsim_i)_{i=0}^I$ satisfies Pareto indifference. As in part (b) it is sufficient to show that for all $u_0 \in U_0$, there exist $\alpha, \beta \in \mathbb{R}_+^I$, $\gamma \in \mathbb{R}$, and $u_i, v_i \in U_i$ for all $i = 1, \dots, I$ such that $u_0 = \sum_{i=1}^I \alpha_i u_i - \mu_i v_i + \gamma e$. To prove this, define the preference relation \succsim'_i over P by $p \succsim'_i q \Leftrightarrow p \sim_i q$, for all $i = 1, \dots, I$. We then have $p \succsim'_i q \Leftrightarrow p - q \in K_i \cap (-K_i)$, and $(\succsim_0, (\succsim'_i)_{i=1}^I)$ obviously satisfies Pareto preference, so by the same argument as in the proof of part (b) we obtain $K_0^* \subseteq \text{cl}(\sum_{i=1}^I (K_i \cap (-K_i))^*) = \text{cl}(\sum_{i=1}^I \text{cl}(K_i^* - K_i^*)) = \text{cl}(\sum_{i=1}^I (K_i^* - K_i^*))$ (Rockafellar, 1970, Corollary 16.4.2). Hence

$$\begin{aligned} U_0 &\subseteq \text{cl}(\text{cone}(U_0) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}) = K_0^* = \text{cl}\left(\sum_{i=1}^I (K_i^* - K_i^*)\right) \\ &\subseteq \text{cl}\left(\sum_{i=1}^I (\text{cl}(\text{cone}(U_i) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}) - \text{cl}(\text{cone}(U_i) - \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}))\right) \\ &= \text{cl}\left(\sum_{i=1}^I (\text{cone}(U_i) - \text{cone}(U_i) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}})\right) \\ &= \text{cl}\left(\sum_{i=1}^I (\text{cone}(U_i) - \text{cone}(U_i)) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}\right) \\ &= \sum_{i=1}^I (\text{cone}(U_i) - \text{cone}(U_i)) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}} \\ &= \sum_{i=1}^I \text{cone}(U_i) - \sum_{i=1}^I \text{cone}(U_i) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}, \end{aligned}$$

where the before-last equality follows from the fact that $\text{cone}(U_i) - \text{cone}(U_i)$ and $\{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}$ are subspaces of \mathbb{R}^X . Hence for all $u_0 \in U_0$, there exist $\gamma \in \mathbb{R}$ and $u'_i, v'_i \in \text{cone}(U_i)$ for all $i = 1, \dots, I$ such that $u_0 = \sum_{i=1}^I u'_i - v'_i + \gamma e$. Moreover, for all $i = 1, \dots, I$, since U_i is convex we also have $u'_i = \alpha_i u_i$ and $v'_i = \beta_i v_i$ for some $\alpha_i, \beta_i \in \mathbb{R}_+$ and $u_i, v_i \in U_i$ and, hence, $u_0 = \sum_{i=1}^I \alpha_i u_i - \beta_i v_i + \gamma e$.

On the closedness assumption in part (b) of the theorem

As can be seen from the proof of part (b), the closedness assumption ensures that each social utility function can be expressed as a non-negative linear combination of some indi-

vidual utility functions (plus a constant function). Without this assumption, each social utility function can only be expressed as the limit of a sequence of such combinations.

For an example in which the assumption is not satisfied and (2) does not hold for any Ω , let $X = \{x, y, z, w\}$, $I = 2$, $U_0 = \{u_0\}$, $U_1 = \{u_1\}$, and $U_2 = \{u_2(s, t) : s, t \in \mathbb{R}, s^2 + t^2 \leq 1\}$, where $u_0, u_1, u_2(s, t)$ are as follows.

	u_0	u_1	$u_2(s, t)$
x	1	-1	1
y	-1	1	s
z	1	0	t
w	-1	0	$-1 - s - t$

Then $\sum_{i=1}^2 \text{cone}(U_i) = \{u \in \mathbb{R}^X : u(x) + u(y) \geq 0, u(z) = 0 \text{ or } u(x) + u(y) > 0, u(x) + u(y) + u(z) + u(w) = 0\}$ and, hence, $\sum_{i=1}^2 \text{cone}(U_i) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}} = \{u \in \mathbb{R}^X : u(x) + u(y) \geq u(z) + u(w), 3u(z) = u(x) + u(y) + u(w) \text{ or } u(x) + u(y) > u(z) + u(w)\}$. This latter set is not closed, and indeed u_0 does not belong to it but belongs to its closure. Hence u_0 cannot be expressed as a non-negative linear combination of u_1 and some $u_2(s, t) \in U_2$ even though $(\succsim_i)_{i=0}^2$ satisfies Pareto preference. The same conclusion would be reached with any other expected multi-utility representation of \succsim_i for all $i = 0, 1, 2$.

A sufficient condition for the existence of a profile $(U_i)_{i=1}^I$ satisfying the closedness assumption is that $\sum_{i=1}^I K_i^*$ be closed, where K_i is the closed and convex cone corresponding to \succsim_i in the lemma above (one can then take $U_i = K_i^*$, for instance). There are at least two cases where this sufficient condition is always satisfied.

The first case is when each K_i is polyhedral (Rockafellar, 1970, Corollary 19.2.2, Corollary 19.3.2). This can be characterized by a *finiteness* axiom on \succsim_i (Dubra and Ok, 2002).⁷ Note that no closedness assumption is needed in part (a) because $\text{cone}(U_i) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}$ is replaced with $\text{cone}(U_i) - \text{cone}(U_i) + \{\gamma e\}_{\gamma \in \mathbb{R}}$, which is a subspace of \mathbb{R}^X and, hence, falls into this case.

The second case is when all K_i 's have a common point in their relative interiors (Rockafellar, 1970, Corollary 16.4.2). This can be characterized by the following *minimal agreement* condition: there exist $p, q \in P$ such that $p \succsim_i^* q$ for all $i \in I$, where $p \succsim_i^* q$ is defined by for all $q_i \in P$ such that $p \succsim_i q_i$, there exist $q'_i \in P$ and $\lambda_i \in (0, 1)$ such that $p \succsim_i q'_i$ and $q = \lambda_i q_i + (1 - \lambda_i) q'_i$. Note that if all \succsim_i 's are complete then this condition boils down to the usual minimal agreement condition, where $p \succsim_i^* q$ is replaced with $p \succ_i q$.⁸

⁷In this case an alternative proof of the theorem consists in considering each extreme point of each individual's expected multi-utility representation as an expected utility representation of an artificial individual with complete preferences and applying Harsanyi's aggregation theorem to the artificial society.

⁸This is a slight refinement, when preferences are incomplete, of the usual minimal agreement condition stating that some lottery is unanimously preferred to some other lottery.

References

- AUMANN, R. J. (1962): “Utility theory without the completeness axiom,” *Econometrica*, 30(3), 445–462.
- BEWLEY, T. F. (1986): “Knightian decision theory: Part I,” Discussion Paper 807, Cowles Foundation Discussion Papers, published in *Decisions in Economics and Finance* (2002), 25, 79–110.
- CHAMBERS, C. P., AND T. HAYASHI (2006): “Preference aggregation under uncertainty: Savage vs. Pareto,” *Games and Economic Behavior*, 54(2), 430–440.
- DANAN, E., T. GAJDOS, AND J.-M. TALLON (2013): “Aggregating sets of von Neumann-Morgenstern utilities,” *Journal of Economic Theory*, 148(2), 663–688.
- DE MEYER, B., AND P. MONGIN (1995): “A note on affine aggregation,” *Economics Letters*, 47, 177–183.
- DUBRA, J., F. MACCHERONI, AND E. A. OK (2004): “Expected utility theory without the completeness axiom,” *Journal of Economic Theory*, 115(1), 118–133.
- DUBRA, J., AND E. A. OK (2002): “A model of procedural decision making in the presence of risk,” *International Economic Review*, 43(4), 1053–1080.
- EVREN, Z. (2008): “On the existence of expected multi-utility representations,” *Economic Theory*, 35(3), 575–592.
- FLEURBAEY, M., AND P. MONGIN (2012): “The utilitarian relevance of the aggregation theorem,” mimeo.
- GAJDOS, T., J.-M. TALLON, AND J.-C. VERGNAUD (2008): “Representation and aggregation of preferences under uncertainty,” *Journal of Economic Theory*, 141(1), 68–99.
- GALAABAATAR, T., AND E. KARNI (2013): “Subjective Expected Utility With Incomplete Preferences,” *Econometrica*, 81(1), 255–284.
- GILBOA, I., D. SAMET, AND D. SCHMEIDLER (2004): “Utilitarian Aggregation of Beliefs and Tastes,” *Journal of Political Economy*, 112(4), 932–938.
- HAMMOND, P. J. (1981): “Ex-Ante and Ex-Post Welfare Optimality under Uncertainty,” *Economica*, 48(191), 235–250.
- HARSANYI, J. C. (1955): “Cardinal welfare, individualistic ethics, and interpersonal comparisons of utility,” *Journal of Political Economy*, 63(4), 309–321.

- HYLLAND, A., AND R. ZECKHAUSER (1979): “The impossibility of Bayesian group decision making with separate aggregation of beliefs and values,” *Econometrica*, 47, 1321–1336.
- KEENEY, R. L., AND R. NAU (2011): “A theorem for Bayesian group decisions,” *Journal of Risk and Uncertainty*, 43(1), 1–17.
- MANSKI, C. F. (2005): *Social choice with partial knowledge of treatment responses*. Princeton University Press.
- (2011): “Policy choice with partial knowledge of policy effectiveness,” *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 7(2), 111–125.
- MONGIN, P. (1995): “Consistent Bayesian aggregation,” *Journal of Economic Theory*, 66(2), 313–351.
- MONGIN, P., AND C. D’ASPREMONT (1998): “Utility theory and ethics,” in *Handbook of Utility Theory*, ed. by S. Barberà, P. J. Hammond, and C. Seidl, vol. I, pp. 233–289. Kluwer, Dordrecht.
- OK, E. A. (2002): “Utility representation of an incomplete preference relation,” *Journal of Economic Theory*, 104(2), 429–449.
- OK, E. A., P. ORTOLEVA, AND G. RIELLA (2012): “Incomplete preferences under uncertainty: Indecisiveness in beliefs versus tastes,” *Econometrica*, 80(4), 1791–1808.
- PIVATO, M. (2013): “Risky social choice with incomplete or noisy interpersonal comparisons of well-being,” *Social Choice and Welfare*, 40(1), 123–139.
- ROCKAFELLAR, R. T. (1970): *Convex analysis*. Princeton University Press.
- SEIDENFELD, T., J. B. KADANE, AND M. J. SCHERVISH (1989): “On the shared preferences of two Bayesian decision makers,” *Journal of Philosophy*, 86(5), 225–244.
- SEN, A. K. (1986): “Social choice theory,” in *Handbook of Mathematical Economics*, ed. by K. J. Arrow, and M. D. Intriligator, vol. III, chap. 22, pp. 1073–1191. North-Holland.
- SHAPLEY, L. S., AND M. BAUCCELLS (1998): “Multiperson utility,” Discussion Paper 779, UCLA Department of Economics.
- VON NEUMANN, J., AND O. MORGENSTERN (1944): *Theory of games and economic behavior*. Princeton University Press.
- WEYMARK, J. A. (1991): “A reconsideration of the Harsanyi-Sen debate on utilitarianism,” in *Interpersonal Comparisons of Well-Being*, ed. by J. Elster, and J. E. Roemer, pp. 255–320, Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.

ZHOU, L. (1997): "Harsanyi's Utilitarianism Theorems: General Societies," *Journal of Economic Theory*, 72(1), 198–207.