Faculty of Social Sciences

Political Science

Doing Well or Doing Good?

The institutionalisation of interest organisations

Proefschrift voorgelegd tot het behalen van de graad van doctor in de Sociale Wetenschappen aan de Universiteit Antwerpen te verdedigen door Frederik Heylen.

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Antwerpen 2018

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This research was part of the project on "The organizational development of national interests groups in a European comparative perspective", financed by the Research Foundation-Flanders (FWO-V grant G032814N). This research was also supported by a grant of the European Research Council (ERC-2013-CoG 616702-iBias).

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Preface

The Ph.D. thesis you are about to read shaped me as much as I shaped it. Luckily, I was not alone in this process.

First of all, I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Jan Beyers for being very involved in this research endeavour. This research has been conducted in the context of an ambitious and carefully crafted international research project (CIG survey project). Thank you, Jan, for your guidance and having brought together such an excellent network of knowledgeable scholars.

Furthermore, I would also like to thank Prof. Dr. Peter Bursens and Prof. Dr. Daniel Naurin, the members of my committee, for their comments and continuous support even in difficult circumstances. I would also like to thank Prof. Dr. William Maloney and Prof. Dr. Wouter van Dooren for agreeing to be part of the jury. William you have been a considerable source of inspiration for this work. Furthermore, Bert and Iskander, thank you for being an example and for your guidance these past few years. Additionally, a special thanks to Peter Aspeslagh as well as the many student-coders who have aided with the data-collection.

To my closest colleagues at the university, my family and friends you have truly been invaluable in conducting this research. By means of written text I cannot emphasise how important Evelien, Babette, Inger, Eva, Joas, Meta, Michelle, Charlotte, Julie, Eddie, my parents, Ariane and Dries, as well as Jens and Lau have been.

But most of all, I would like to thank my significant other. Shirley, if it was not for you, this thesis would not have been finished. Full stop. Your unwavering encouragement, clever feedback and our profound discussions about research have shaped this thesis more than you could know.

Frederik Heylen,

Antwerpen, September 19, 2018

Introduction

'They must walk a tightrope between organisational maintenance and goal achievement, but by walking they usually lean to one side, so that, if they fall, they fall on the side of keeping the association alive.'

(J. Q. Wilson 1995: 217)

Citizen groups, labour unions, professional associations, business groups, leisure associations, and other interest organisations play a potentially vital intermediary role in society, as they mobilise, aggregate, and represent supporters, members, interests, and ideas (Halpin 2006; Jordan & Maloney 1997; Kohler-Koch & Buth 2013). Furthermore, interest organisations may also provide services to their constituencies and may aid the implementation of public policy. Yet, as argued by James Q. Wilson, 'Whatever else organisations seek, they seek to survive' (1995: 10). Striking a balance between maintaining ties to members, engaging with policymakers, and ensuring organisational survival may be difficult to achieve. One issue that has attracted considerable scholarly attention is institutionalisation. Although institutionalisation may ensure organisational survival and may enable interest organisations to engage with policymakers, institutionalisation can also lead to disrupted membership ties (Michels 1915; Olson 1965; Schmitter & Streeck 1999).

Dying another day

Interest organisations vary in the extent to which they are institutionalised. On the one hand, many interest organisations such as Greenpeace, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), or the Federation of Enterprises in Belgium are characterised by specific division of labour and employ specialised professionals, and their functioning is formalised into constitution-like statutes (Greenwood 2002; Halpin 2014; McCarthy & Zald 1973; Staggenborg 1995). These organisations are often also highly enmeshed within their political environment as they gain structural funding, participate in consultations, or are members of advisory bodies (Fraussen et al. 2015; Mosley 2011; Oliver 1991). On the other hand, other organisations are ephemeral players which are unable to structure their functioning, ensure a continued mobilisation of supporters, or follow through on rules and routines. They are not seen as stable governance partners by policymakers and can fall out of existence as easily as they appear (Baum & Oliver 1991; Gray & Lowery 1997). Yet, acquiring a formalised, professional structure and being an insider in the political system is not without controversy (Jordan & Maloney 1997; Michels 1915; Mosley 2012; Piven & Cloward 1977).

Institutionalisation is defined here as the extent to which organisational practices are routinised, professionalised, and subject to formal rules and procedures, as well as the extent to which organisations are recognised as legitimate, autonomous actors (Janda 1980; Panebianco 1988; see Chapter Two for a more detailed discussion). Institutionalised organisations, compared to transient actors, are more effective in the tasks they set out to complete (Andrews et al. 2010; Andrews & Edwards 2005; Piven & Cloward 1977; Staggenborg 1988; but see: Jenkins & Eckert 1986). In this regard, the highly institutionalised animal rights' organisation PETA, given its political clout, may be more successful at advocating against the trapping of stray cats compared to the Belgian Cat Club. So too, given its well-staffed office – which includes actual animal shelters – PETA is more than well-equipped to provide animals with specialised care.

Yet, many scholars and commentators argue that precisely because of their degree of institutionalisation, interest organisations may be less attuned to the will of their constituencies, the public, or their original goals (Froelich 1999; Maloney 2015; Michels 1915; Piven & Cloward 1977). For instance, PETA's members and the general public did not respond well to PETA's killing of 83 percent of the animals under their care, amounting to 2000 dogs and cats annually. Many argue this is difficult to rhyme with the organisation's original mission statement which is featured prominently in its name, that is, the 'ethical treatment of animals' (Huffington Post 2015; NY Times 2013). However, PETA has doubled down on advocating against so-called 'no-kill' animal shelters (PETA n.d.).

Institutionalised organisations are considered more likely to engage with to policymakers and are less likely to disband, yet institutionalisation may undermine interest organisations' relationship with their members, supporters, or constituencies. First, formalised organisations (e.g., those with formal statutes, regular meetings, specialised work committees, and standard operating procedures) might show higher levels of robustness. Yet, at the same time, this elaborate and possibly also inert organisational configuration may make members or supporters less motivated (or able) to take part in or steer the organisation's activities (Halpin 2010; Jordan & Maloney 2007; Michels 1915; yet see: Staggenborg 1988: 604). This might be especially the case for organisations that employ professionals, who tend to formalise the organisation 'to the point where primary concern with conformity to the rules interferes with the achievement of the purposes of the organization' (Merton 1968: 253).

Secondly, insiders to the political system may be better at gaining access to policymakers. However, at the same time, high degrees of political insiderness are also associated with disrupted membership ties (McCarthy & Zald 1973; Michels 1915; Olson 1965). Insiders must work closely together with policymakers and other, perhaps adversarial, interest organisations. This may inhibit the organisation's ability to directly act upon the interests of their constituency (Greenwood 2002; Schmitter

& Streeck 1999). Furthermore, organisations that receive government funding may displace the revenue drawn from their membership, which makes maintaining close ties with their membership less important (Bloodgood & Tremblay-Boire 2016; Chaves et al. 2004; Froelich 1999; Maloney 2015; McCarthy & Zald 1973).

Thus, an interesting puzzle emerges: professionalised organisations that are governed by formal rules and procedures and who are seen as part of the political furniture are less likely to disband and are more likely to engage with policymakers. However, institutionalised organisations may also be less attuned to the interests of their constituencies, thereby impeding one of their main goals. Consequently, institutionalisation may undercut organisational support, which, paradoxically, could also lead to the organisation's demise. As Knoke argues, in critical times, it is the organisational attachment, or the bond between the organisation and its members, supporters, or patrons, that may allow it to navigate through crises (1981: 154–155).

One example of this puzzle is Greenpeace. With more than 2500 permanent staff in 39 countries and extensive political ties, Greenpeace has a considerable track record in setting up successful campaigns and engaging with policymakers. Yet, in attaining these political goals and in maintaining the organisation, Greenpeace struggles to find a balance between doing what is good for the organisation and remaining attuned to its membership and mission statement. As expressed by one CEO of Greenpeace in a statement titled 'We take our members and personnel seriously':

> Employees [of Greenpeace] continuously struggle with trading off the most important values of the organisation – being careful with the environment – and the environmental footprint they make themselves. Can a director of Greenpeace achieve more for the environment at a climate conference in Rio, or is it wiser to not cause CO2 emissions and stay at home? (Greenpeace 2014)

Yet, recent scandals, one involving a director flying to work from Luxemburg to Amsterdam twice each month, led to internal discord amongst the personnel of Greenpeace, as 40 campaign leaders demanded that the CEO resign (DeMorgen 2014; Telegraph 2014). As a consequence, in just three years' time, Greenpeace Belgium lost nearly a fifth (21 000) of its members (Greenpeace 2014; GVA 2015). Meanwhile, 38 full-time staff members of Greenpeace Belgium are trying to stem this tide by continuously recruiting members on the streets (Nieuwsblad 2017). Yet, neither the CEO nor the director in question have resigned.

Doing well while doing good?

This puzzle boils down to a simple question: can interest organisations do well (ensure their continued survival and engage with policymakers) whilst also doing good (remaining attuned to their constituency)? These are by no coincidence the three main imperatives or goals of interest organisations (Fraussen & Halpin 2016a: 2). To answer this question, we must uncover how institutionalisation (i.e., the independent variable) affects each of these goals (i.e., the dependent variables), and systematically evaluate whether this leads to inconsistent tendencies. The first goal of organisations is organisational survival, and this is operationalised as interest organisations' perceived survival chances. The second goal of interest organisations is engaging with policymakers, which is operationalised as the intensity with which interest organisations seek access to policymakers. The third goal of interest organisations is being attentive to the will of their constituencies, which is operationalised as the degree to which members or supporters can influence the political position of their interest organisation. In this work, institutionalisation is, in accordance with recent work, sub-divided into a number of specific factors (Harmel et al. 2017; see Chapter Two).

Table 1: Research expectations.

	Goals of interest organisations		
Aspects of institutionalisation	Membership influence	Political activities	Survival
Professionalisation/formalisation	-	+	+
Membership involvement	+	-	+
Insiderness	-	+	+
Autonomy	+	-	+

This study takes each goal (the three columns in Table 1) as a dependent variable, whilst the factors associated with institutionalisation (the four rows in Table 1) act as the primary covariates. More specifically, I focus on the most-cited drivers associated with institutionalisation: the degree of formalisation and professionalisation (e.g., McCarthy & Zald 1973; Michels 1915; Mosley 2011; Staggenborg 1988), membership involvement (e.g., Olson 1965), political insiderness (e.g., Fraussen & Halpin 2017), as well as organisational autonomy (e.g., Panebianco 1988; Schmitter & Streeck 1999: 49). See Chapter Two and the theoretical sections in the subsequent empirical parts of this dissertation for a more detailed literature review and for a more elaborate description of the mechanisms.

One prevalent view among scholars is that the factors that inhibit membership influence may at the same time enhance the interest organisations' (perceived) survival chances and their propensity to engage with policymakers (Schmitter & Streeck 1999). Indeed, scholars frequently argue that the various organisational goals are in tension with each other (e.g., Michels 1915; Olson 1965; Schmitter & Streeck 1999). This is perhaps most notably captured in Schmitter and Streeck's (1999: 19) characterisation of the logic of influence and the logic of membership (see also: Bennett 2000). For the remainder of this section, I focus on the different relationships.

First of all, formalisation and professionalisation – respectively, the extent to which organisations are governed by formal rules and are internally differentiated, and the extent to which organisations employ professionals – are expected to increase the ability of organisations to engage with policymakers and also make organisations less likely to disband (Edwards & McCarthy 2004; Gray & Lowery 1997; Minkoff 1999). Yet, at the same time, as an organisation becomes more complex, members may be less willing or able to control all the organisation's activities. Furthermore, as professionals take over, a discrepancy between the members' interest and the interests of the professionals may occur (Jordan & Maloney 1997; Maloney 2015; McCarthy & Zald 1973; Michels 1915). This is perhaps best captured in Michels' influential thesis on the iron law of oligarchy (1915).

Second, the extent to which organisations are able to ensure continued support or involvement of their membership is expected to positively affect the organisations' survival and membership influence (Andrews & Edwards 2004; Gray & Lowery 1997; Halpin & Nownes 2012; Vermeulen et al. 2016). However, membership involvement is expected to be associated with a decline in interest organisations' propensity to engage with policymakers (Olson 1965). This is because members, according to Olson, will not invest their time and resources in organisations which only organise for political action (1965). This is due to the fact that political action is a collective good, to which it is irrational for members to contribute. To stave off demobilisation as a result of free-riding members, Olson recommends applying selective incentives, that is, providing certain services instead of focussing on political activities (see also, Moe 1981; Salisbury 1969).

Third, the degree of insiderness, or the extent to which organisations are members of advisory councils, participate in consultations, and give expert information to policymakers (Fraussen et al. 2015), may positively affect their tendency to engage with policymakers and also enhances their survival chances (Baum & Oliver 1991; Buffardi et al. 2015; Chaves et al. 2004; Gray & Lowery 1997; Halpin & Nownes 2012; Neumayr et al. 2015). Yet, to act as viable long-term

governance partners for policymakers, interest organisations need to be able to isolate themselves from the short-term demands of their members, which will impede members' influence (Greenwood 2002; Schmitter & Streeck 1999).

Lastly, the degree of autonomy, or the extent to which interest organisations do not dependent on external actors for organisational resources, may also impact interest organisations' functioning (Pfeffer & Salancik 1978). For instance, dependency on government funding may displace resources drawn from the organisations' own constituencies, which may make them more sensitive to the interests of policymakers, but less sensitive to the interests of their members (Maloney 2015; McCarthy & Zald 1973). Dependency on government funding (i.e., lack of autonomy) will therefore negatively affect membership influence. However, as Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) argue, organisations will interact more with their benefactors, and so it is expected that government-funded organisations will engage more with policymakers. Regarding survival, dependency on volatile resources like government funding may make organisational disbandment more likely.

The main argument of this study is that more attention should be given to how interest organisations are internally governed by rules and procedures, as well as how they are embedded within the regulatory context. For instance, few studies highlight the fact that internal by-laws may steer the behaviour of 'free-riding' members (Cf., Olson 1965) or 'oligarchic' professionals (Cf., Michels 1915; however, see: Staggenborg 1988: 604). Although strong law-like statements are sometimes posited by scholars, they are rarely systematically tested, leading to an overly road understanding of how interest organisations are structured and function in practice. In the three empirical chapters that follow, it is demonstrated that under certain conditions, stable membership relations, engaging with policymakers, and organisational survival are not in tension, and might even be compatible.

Key concept: Interest organisations

Interest organisations are defined here as all non-profit, non-governmental organisations with a constituency and which can potentially become politically active

(see Chapter Three for a more detailed discussion).[1] More specifically, the study focusses on interest organisations that perform an intermediary function, namely mobilising supporters, representing members or advocating ideas or interests (Halpin 2010: 178). This study includes constituency-based citizen groups, service/non-profit organisations, trade unions, identity groups, leisure associations, professional associations, and business associations (for a similar approach see: Binderkrantz 2009; Fraussen & Halpin 2016a). Other potentially politically active organisations like hospitals, universities, or businesses are not included, as they lack the intermediary function which is at the heart of the research problem at hand (Cf., Jordan et al. 2004). To be sure, some organisations straddle this conceptual fence, which makes it challenging to delineate the object of this study (Beyers et al. 2008; more on this in Chapter Three).

This dissertation employs a broad conceptualisation of interest organisations to minimise the risk of truncating valuable variation. In this regard, following Jordan et al. (2004: 206), it is emphasised that not all interest organisations have members in a formal sense. Therefore, interest organisations without formal members, but with a certain constituency (i.e., supporters, donors) are also included. These are sometimes called solidarity organisations as they are not groups *of* members but groups *for* a certain constituency (for an informative discussion see: Halpin 2010). Including these organisations is important, as one possible way to pacify the tension between members, engaging with policymakers, and survival is by taking the members out of the equation. This variation would be missed if only organisations with formal members were considered.

In a similar vein, unlike some previous studies (e.g., Jordan et al. 2004), interest organisations which are not primarily politically active are also included

[1] These are the organisations that populate what in Dutch is called the social mid-field (*maatschappelijk middenveld*). As social midfield has next to none resonance in the English language, scholars use labels as non-profit or civil society instead. Yet, these concept do not completely coincide. Perhaps because the Belgian and Dutch social mid-fields in the top three largest in the world, we use a specific word to denote this. The social mid-field encompasses services provision (non-profit) organisations as well as advocacy (civil society) organisations and includes not only NGOs and public/ citizen interest groups, but also business associations.

(e.g., latent service/non-profit organisations). Following Halpin (2014), I also include organisations that show little or no lobbying behaviour, but which may still interact with governments, for instance, to implement public policy or to organise campaigns. Not including these so-called 'latent' interest organisations would lead to an underestimation of organisations that traded off being politically active for a service-providing role (Cf., Schmitter & Streeck 1999; Olson 1965).

In sum, this dissertation focusses on constituency-based interest organisations. This includes both formal membership organisations, or 'groups of', and organisations without formal members, or the so-called 'solidarity organisations' or 'groups for'. Furthermore, it includes organisations which are primary politically active, as well as latent constituency-based service/non-profit organisations. However, it does not include profit-seeking organisations (e.g., companies) or non-profit organisations without a constituency (e.g., hospitals, universities).

Why should we care?

Studying how interest organisations institutionalise is not only relevant for our understanding of how organisations behave, function, and survive, but it also impinges upon broader societal themes. This is because interest organisations have a potential important democratic function, which includes the mobilisation, aggregation, and representation of members, supporters, interests, and ideas. This section argues that the institutionalisation of interest organisations may have potential democratic consequences.

With the decline of voter turn-out and political party membership, interest organisations are often hailed as a valuable alternative to represent citizens (e.g., Van Biezen et al. 2012). The presence of a stable and diverse set of interest organisations is often seen as one of the hallmarks of a vibrant democratic system (Halpin 2010 Chapter: 1). This has led to discussions about the absence of such communities at the sub-national (e.g., Keating 2014; Wilson 2014), national (Bartolini 2005; Beyers & Bursens 2013; Celis et al. 2012), and supra-national levels

(Beyers 2002; Broscheid & Coen 2007; Coen & Richardson 2009; Greenwood 2007; Hanegraaff et al. 2011; Mazey & Richardson 2001). Indeed, institutionalisation at the organisational level is inexorably tied to institutionalisation at the system level. To be more specific, building a viable political order requires a stable core of institutionalised organisations which can act as durable policy partners (Plotke 1996; Randall & Svåsand 2002). Yet, the presence of interest organisations in a system of interest representation does not automatically lead to outcomes that are more democratic. Interest organisations must mobilise, aggregate, and represent the interest of their constituents. In each link of this chain of transmission, potential problems could arise which may jeopardise interest organisations' potential democratic contribution (Halpin 2010).

The primary concern is the unresponsiveness of organisational leaders vis-à-vis their constituency (Michels 1915). As outlined above, institutionalised organisations might be better equipped to amplify their constituencies' voice, but it is equally likely that their voices will become distorted in this process (Maloney 2015). Even more problematically, due to the lack of internal democratic procedures, the members' voices might not even reach the organisational leadership (Jordan & Maloney 2007). For instance, Strolovitch (2006), in line with Jordan and Maloney's work, shows that interest organisations may focus their attention on recruiting more affluent strata of their constituency. Such processes would completely mute the voices of some of the perhaps more vulnerable constituencies. All of this impinges upon the lack of input legitimacy in the democratic system (Scharpf 1999). The idea is that for certain public policy to be legitimate, and thus for a representative democratic system to work, the interests of stakeholders must be heard by policymakers (Greenwood 2007). Failure to do so may lead to biased policy.

It must be noted that recent research has, to a certain extent, also qualified these concerns. First of all, there is no reason to expect that congruence can be achieved only by internally representative organisations, in that responsive organisations may be equally likely to 'keep their finger on the pulse'. Secondly,

organisations without members but who advocate for a non-human constituency (the environment or animals) or difficult-to-associate constituencies (the poor, homeless, prisoners), cannot, by logical consequence, aggregate their members (Halpin 2010). Although these organisations might have supporters, the question remains whether valuable democratic contributions can be achieved by aggregating their voices in the absence of enfranchising the constituency for whom they advocate.

Outline of the dissertation

Can interest organisations do well (ensure their continued survival and engage with policymakers) while also doing good (remaining attuned to the will of their constituency)? This research problem can be broken down into the following research questions: how does institutionalisation affect (1) membership influence, (2) the extent to which interest organisations engage with policymakers, and (3) organisational survival? The extent to which these effects are (in)consistent will give some insight into whether or not interest organisations' main goals are compatible. This dissertation includes a theoretical chapter, a methodological chapter, and three empirical chapters. The three empirical chapters focus respectively upon membership influence, the organisations' propensity to engage with policymakers, and organisational survival. In this section, a short outline of the subsequent chapters will be given.

In the theoretical chapter (Chapter Two), to arrive at a definition and operationalisation of institutionalisation, the concept is traced in three different sub-disciplines: the study of social movement organisations, interest groups, and non-profit organisations. Following recent developments in the sub-discipline of political parties, it is argued that institutionalisation should be defined as a multi-dimensional concept, comprising internal, external, and systemic dimensions. These dimensions are associated with specific mechanisms that are discussed across the different sub-disciplines, though at this point largely in isolation from each other. According to the different authors, *internal* institutionalisation is related to formalisation,

professionalisation, and membership involvement. Furthermore, *external* institutionalisation is connected with the degree of political insiderness and organisational autonomy. Differentiating between these aspects of institutionalisation helps to understand how the different elements are related. Ultimately, the mechanisms outlined here will serve as the main independent variables in the subsequent empirical chapters.

The third chapter lays out the methodological approach taken to empirically gauge the mechanisms behind institutionalisation and its effects. To this end, an online survey was conducted. Surveys are a reliable way to obtain detailed organisational data on a number of topics such as an organisation's management and membership ties and a detailed account of its political activities. This survey was conducted as part of a larger international research project (Comparative Interest Group Survey project) in which we mapped and surveyed 5,000 organisations in 10 countries. Yet, as discussed in this chapter, surveying interest organisations, certainly in a comparative manner, may encompass some pitfalls.

In the first empirical chapter of this dissertation, I explain the varying extent to which members can influence interest organisations' political positions. It is often proposed that institutionalisation both internally (i.e., the extent of formalisation and professionalisation) and externally (i.e., the extent of political insiderness) may curb membership influence. Yet, these assumptions have rarely been tested in a systematic and empirical fashion. In this chapter, I therefore test these propositions using a representative survey of some 2303 organisations across seven polities. The main findings are that the negative tone in much of the current research is largely unwarranted, as members display ample influence in the organisations under study. Furthermore, it shows that organisational rules, i.e., who gets a final say, most substantially impacts the influence of members. Lastly, it indicates that under certain conditions, professionalisation may lead to more influential members, thereby nuancing or even qualifying a substantial body of work.

The second empirical chapter focusses on the political activities of interest

organisations. Here, the effect of resource dependency upon government funding is unpacked. It is argued that such dependencies do not occur automatically, but are dependent upon two main conditions: the criticality of the provided funds (can the organisation continue to function in the absence of these resources?) and the degree of discretion (what are the requirements and rules with which the organisation must comply?). The main argument is that without specific rules and procedures (and at low levels of criticality), we expect to see little or no effect on interest organisations' political behaviour. This chapter examines the motivation that drives the Belgian sub-national and national governments to specify certain rules and procedures regarding funding. The empirical analysis finds that at high levels of criticality, interest organisations will comply with the funding governments' request to enter into a political dialogue with them on specific policy priorities, as well as restraining from contacting other governments.

The third and final empirical chapter focusses on the perceived survival chances (mortality anxiety) of interest organisations by including the independent factors discussed in the other empirical chapters. The results demonstrate that professionalisation and political insiderness do not necessarily lead to less mortality anxiety. Yet, it also shows that formalisation may offset the negative effect of membership involvement.

The main conclusion of this dissertation is that institutionalisation need not be associated with the negative consequences ascribed to it. In this regard, the importance of studying the organisational rules, procedures, and regulatory context in which organisations are embedded is highlighted. Variation in the rules and procedures may help us to understand the conditions under which membership influence, engaging with policymakers, and organisational survival may coexist. Empirically, the main contribution of this dissertation is the large-scale empirical analysis of various long-standing, but rarely tested hypotheses. Furthermore, theoretically, it is shown that a more contextualised approach to studying the internal functioning of interest organisations may be an important way forward.

The Organisational Fabric Between Citizens and the Government

Institutionalisation and interest organisations[2]

Heylen, F. (2018). 'The Organisational Fabric Between Citizens and the Government: Institutionalisation and Intermediary Organisations', in Svåsand, L. & Harmel R. (eds.) *'Institutionalisation of Political Parties: Comparative Cases'*, Rowman & Littlefield International, in partnership with ECPR Press: Forthcoming

[2] The content of this chapter has been adapted slightly to fit the dissertation. The original version features in an edited volume dedicated to the institutionalisation of political parties. The focus of the previous version was therefore more broad and looked at intermediary organisations, which included interest organisations as well as political parties. It also elaborated upon how SMOs can transform into IGs, TSOs and more particularly, political parties. The paper has been changed to focus on three types of interest organisations, and only discusses political parties in light of the integration of these different insights. Furthermore, some small textual adaptations were conducted to make this piece fit in the overall structure of the dissertation.

Introduction

One of the main characteristics of a well-functioning democratic society is the presence of a vibrant organisational fabric between citizens and the government. When studying this organisational fabric, scholars tend to focus separately on either social movement organisations (SMOs)/civil society organisations (CSOs), interest groups (IGs), or third-sector organisations (TSOs)/non-profit organisations (NPOs).[1] In doing so, the scholarly work on these different types of organisations remains rather disconnected, and cross-fertilization is rare (Burstein 1998; Edwards and McCarthy 2004; Fraussen and Halpin 2016). This current situation does not facilitate the accumulation of knowledge about political organisations.[2]

The extent to which institutionalisation is problematised varies across different disciplines. On the one hand, scholars studying the institutionalisation of political parties are relatively optimistic (Arter & Kestilä-Kekkonen 2014; Basedau & Stroh 2008; Randall & Svåsand 2002; yet see: Michels 1915). Indeed, the institutionalisation of political parties is often regarded as a vital contribution to the democratic consolidation of representative political systems (Randall & Svåsand 2002: 5). On the other hand, authors studying interest organisations indicate that institutionalisation could lead to goal displacement, reduced membership influence, less internal democratic structures, and even biased interest representation (Eikenberry and Kluver 2004; Froelich 1999; Maloney 2015; Skocpol 2007). However, at this moment, the theoretical reasoning and empirical evidence on institutionalisation remains scattered, leaving us with an incomplete image of how intermediary organisations institutionalise and de-institutionalise and with which consequences.

In this chapter, I seek to assess the extent to which the insights regarding institutionalisation brought forward by the different sub-disciplines can be integrated. To do so, I review some of the most influential works on the institutionalisation of interest organisations by focussing on SMOs, IGs, and TSOs. In each of these sub-sections, I define the type of organisation, review how scholars in

these sub-disciplines conceptualise and explain institutionalisation, and elaborate upon the potential consequences of institutionalisation.[3] Yet, as will become apparent, each sub-discipline highlights a different dimension of institutionalisation. By regarding institutionalisation as a multi-dimensional concept, as recently proposed by political party scholars, it is possible to integrate these insights (Harmel et al. 2017). In the last section of this chapter, I give an overview of these dimensions and connect them to specific factors which are discussed across the different sub-disciplines: professionalisation, formalisation, membership involvement, insiderness, and organisational autonomy.

Literature review: The institutionalisation of interest organisations

When reviewing the works on the institutionalisation of interest organisations, one has to span different sub-disciplines that each tend to focus on a single type of organisation. To be sure, there are substantive reasons to study the different types of organisations separately. SMO scholars, for example, focus on organisations that are by definition temporary in nature. Once an SMO has achieved the societal change for which it was striving, it has little reason to continue existing (Zald and Ash 1966). IG scholars, in contrast, focus on more established organisations with a permanent political function (Beyers et al. 2008). For TSO scholars, being politically active is not a necessary condition; instead, they focus also on service-orientated organisations (Brandsen et al. 2017). Nevertheless, when comparing the different types of interest organisations, it becomes apparent that they all share some similar features and are confronted with comparable dilemmas (Fraussen and Halpin 2016).

One common theme throughout these research agendas is how organisations tend to develop from a loosely connected set of volunteers poised at achieving a common goal to highly routinised and hierarchical undertakings run by professionals. During this process, the nature of their political actions tends to change from ad-hoc outside tactics (e.g., protest) to more conventional and routinised modes of politics (e.g., stable contacts with policymakers, participating in

consultations, and being members of advisory bodies). Furthermore, the organisation itself transforms from a tool to something that is in itself deemed important to survive and flourish. These changes are associated with institutionalisation (Scott 1995; Selznick 1957). However, the overall concern in the different sub-disciplines is that institutionalisation brings about a number of dilemmas for the organisational leadership. For instance, striving for organisational survival or political influence can distract the organisational leadership from the original goals of the organisation, or can potentially lead to the alienation of the membership or supportive constituency (Eikenberry & Kluver 2004; Froelich 1999; Maloney 2015; Mccarthy & Zald 2002).

Social movement organisations

According to Zald and Ash (1966) social movements manifest themselves through numerous SMOs. For example, the movement for LGBT rights in Europe is carried by a number of organisations that are active at the local, regional, national or European level.[4] Zald and Ash, who first introduced the term 'SMOs', differentiated them from 'full-blown bureaucratic organizations', by emphasising their temporary or transitory nature. SMOs, *'wish to restructure society or individuals, not provide it or them with a regular service'* (Zald and Ash 1966: 329). It follows that once the movement has reached its goal, the carrier organisations will dissolve as their role is spent. Another possibility is that SMOs take on a more permanent political role, yet from then on, they should be seen as fully-fledged interest organisations (Zald and Ash 1966).

In more recent work, the informality assumption is less outspoken and SMO scholars now also focus on different types of SMOs, ranging from loosely connected (international) informal networks to nationally federated structures (McCarthy 2005; Tarrow 2011). In empirical studies, movement scholars include NGOs, public-, citizens-, and environmental groups. Yet, the view that SMOs are essentially bottom-up initiatives and are inclined to use outsider-tactics (such as protest) is still prominent in this area of research. For example, Sidney Tarrow insists on

differentiating SMOs from established NGOs[5] and IGs[6] (2011). However, theoretically, there is no reason to expect that SMOs are always bottom-up initiatives or that outsiders' tactics are the only (or even most important) form of political action in their strategic repertoire (Diani and Donati 1999; Rucht 1999). As a result, even within this research area, considerable disagreement exists. Burstein, for example, argues that it is impossible or very difficult to differentiate between SMOs and IGs (1998). What makes this research area particularly interesting is that SMO scholars focus on how and when a group of like-minded people initially institutionalise their activities (Tarrow 2011). So where IG, TSO and PP scholars assume a certain degree of institutionalisation, SMO scholars do not. As a result, SMO scholars have a more fine-grained understanding of the initial steps of institutionalisation.

From movement to institution?

According to Herbert Blumer (1951), the institutionalisation of social movements was the fourth and final stage in a movement's life cycle. Institutionalisation is the stage in which the movement becomes an organic part of society and crystalizes into a professional structure (Blumer 1951; Clemens & Minkoff 2006). From this it is clear that institutionalisation has at least two dimensions, (1) externally, how movements become more integrated with society and (2), internally, how they become professional organisations (see also Kriesi, 1996). Although the two dimensions are often considered in tandem, I discuss the dimensions separately (Della Porta & Diani 2006; Rootes 1999; Thörn & Svenberg 2016).

Starting with the external dimension of institutionalisation, social movements are seen as challengers to the political system. As outsiders, they refuse (or are refused) to work within the system to strive for societal change (Gamson 1990; Jenkins and Klandermans 1995; Tilly 1978). Over time, however, social movements tend to be absorbed by the system. How this occurs can be understood both at the systemic and organisational level. At the systemic level, scholars refer to

how certain ideas and/or behaviours become taken-for-granted and can achieve a rule like status (Brodt 1997; Meyer and Rowan 2015). For instance, concerns about the environment have taken root into our everyday life. At the organisational level 'movements institutionalize their tactics and attempt to gain concrete benefits for their supporters through negotiation and compromise' (Tarrow 2011: 115). The institutionalisation of tactics includes that the movement turns away from extreme ideologies and less disruptive forms of contention (Piven & Cloward 1977; Rootes 1999; Tarrow 2011). For instance, although Greenpeace recently launched its third protest ship (the Rainbow Warrior III), they also opted to regularize their access to policy makers, participate in government consultations and bid for government subsidies (Doyle 2007; Greenpeace, online).

Some disagreement exists between authors on the effect of external institutionalisation. On the one hand, access to decision-making procedures and public funding might be seen as a success for some organisations (Della Porta & Diani 2006; Kriesi 1996). On the other hand, some authors argue that as SMOs accept the rules of the existing system, the organisers deprive their followers of one of their major powers: the power to disrupt (Piven & Cloward 1977; Rucht 1999). Institutionalisation, in this regard, is often understood as demobilization (Katzenstein 1998). This is because integration in the political system may lead to the alienation of important parts of their constituency (Della Porta & Diani 2006). Furthermore, institutionalisation may lead to goal displacement (Tarrow 2011). For instance, when organisations abandon the determination to strive for (radical) change. This might be a natural consequence of cooperation, such as meeting the government or opposing interests halfway (Rucht 1999; Tarrow 2011). However, it has to be noted that the idea that SMOs go through a natural life cycle has received some criticism and many doubt how deterministic such tendencies are (Piven & Cloward 1977; Rucht 1999). Furthermore, empirical evidence shows that some organisations are able to combine protest and more conventional modes of action (Diani & Donati 1999; Rootes 1999).

The second aspect of institutionalisation in this sub-discipline is how an organisation is internally structured. Scholarly work reaching back to Robert Michels' (1915) influential thesis relate this to the separation of leaders from rank and file. In this regard, sociologists McCarthy and Zald (e.g. 1973; 1977; 2002) introduce the notion of 'professional SMOs'. According to the authors, thanks to increased government funding, the availability of discretionary personal income, and corporate contributions, SMOs are able to broaden and diversify their resource base. As a consequence, by being able to allocate to themselves a respectable income, leaders of SMOs are fully able to commit themselves to the organisation. Working for an SMO is no longer necessarily a calling, but a viable career option. Professionals, in turn, tend to formalize and routinize the organisation for which they work (Staggenborg 1988).

The authors are rather gloomy about the effects of internal institutionalisation. To begin, when relying mostly on funding drawn from outside the membership-base (by the use of mass media or mailing-campaigns), professional SMOs are less inclined to retain strong ties with their members. As a consequence, SMOs are carried by a decreasing number of citizens, who pay donations instead of engaging in socio-political participation (McCarthy and Zald 1973; 1977; 2002). McCarthy and Zald's contributions speak to the broader academic debate on the waning levels of socio-political engagement in the United States. Theda Skocpol (e.g. 2004) and Robert Putnam (e.g. 2001) have been the most prominent voices in this debate (also see, Walker et al. 2011). According to Skocpol (2003), professional SMOs started to displace the traditional voluntary grass-root organisation. These *'bodyless heads',* as the author calls them, have little potential to socialize citizens as they lack incentives to provide members with hands-on-experience in decision-making structures (Skocpol 2003: 163).

To be sure, even in the 1960's this phenomenon was not new (for instance see Michels 1915), nor did it represent the critical juncture as proposed by the authors (Minkoff et al. 2013). Furthermore, the work of Skocpol also received some

criticism, as evidence on the link between participation and political socialization is mixed (Saurugger 2012; Wollebaek & Selle 2002). Furthermore, Minkoff (2002) finds little empirical evidence supporting the claim that professional SMOs are displacing traditional SMOs. Instead, she finds evidence for the emergence of hybrid organisational forms, which combine features of professional and traditional SMOs (see also: Minkoff et al. 2013; Walker et al. 2011).

Interest groups

IGs are commonly defined as organisations which (1) are organised to a certain degree (excluding broad social movements or waves of public opinion), (2) primarily aim to influence public policy and (3) do so informally, without participating in elections (Beyers et al. 2008). Organisations that show little or no political activity are not regarded as IGs. [7] Yet, this does not mean that all politically active organisations are IGs.[8] Take, for example, companies, cities, think tanks, universities, or hospitals, who are often important players in the policy process. Scholars prefer to differentiate these organisations from IGs because they do not stand to represent a group or collective. For example, the political action by chemical companies is but a mere by-product of their main activities. To exclude these entities, authors emphasise the presence of a membership component or the aspirations to represent a constituency (see also Halpin and Thomas 2012; Jordan et al. 2004; Lowery 2007).

This definition includes NGOs, public interest groups, citizen groups, trade unions, environmental groups, business associations, profession groups and chambers of commerce. The overlap with SMOs is apparent. Essentially all SMOs that are politically active and organised to a certain degree are included (Burstein 1998). However, IG scholars are the only authors under review who include business associations and professional groups. Compared to the scholars studying SMOs, IG scholars focus more on how, when and why organisations engage in particular types of advocacy activities and to what effect. By studying advocacy activities in more detail, IG scholars can bring forward interesting insights on what happens when intermediary organisations move closer to the government.

Institutionalising interest group relations

Institutionalisation in this sub-discipline is rarely used with reference to the organisational level. Indeed, at this moment, little is known about how an IG loses its character as a tool and becomes valuable in and of itself. In this sub-discipline, institutionalisation is studied at the system level and is related to how the relationship between IGs and governments becomes routinized, structured and regularized. Mazey and Richardson (2001: 80), define institutionalisation as (1) the '*Evolution of some formal, but more often, informal, behavioural rules, codes and norms*' and (2) the *'Formation of structures/sites/venues where intermediation can take place at various stages of the policy process.'*

Recently, the institutionalisation of systems of interest representation and their effects on the strategies and functioning of IGs have received a lot of academic attention. Examples include the development of an European system of interest representations and EU's democratic deficit (e.g. Beyers 2002; Broscheid and Coen 2007; Coen and Richardson 2009; Greenwood 2007; Mazey and Richardson 2001), how patterns of federalisation threaten to 'hollow out' the national system of interest representation (e.g. Beyers and Bursens 2013; Celis et al. 2012), the re-scaling of regional interest (cf. regions with regionalism) (e.g. Keating 2014; Wilson 2014), the lagging development of Eastern European systems of interest representation and its implications for democratic consolidation (e.g. Frentzel-Zagorska, 2007; Howard 2002; Ost 1993), and advocacy at transnational venues (Hanegraaff 2015; Hanegraaff et al. 2017). Whereas in many Western (European) countries, the national government used to be the sole focal point for IGs, polities are increasingly becoming more multilevel (Princen & Kerremans 2008). Institutional complexity coincides in many countries with governments taking on an active role in managing (or institutionalising) the mobilisation of interests. For instance, by setting rules and procedures for advocacy and by granting privileged access and funding, governments draw IGs into an interdependent relationship (see, for instance, Fraussen 2014).

The consequences of systemic institutionalisation are disputed. On the one hand, some authors welcome the actions by governments to structure relations with IGs, as this may help make these relationships more stable and predictable. Also, government funding may give a voice to the voiceless (Greenwood 2007). Furthermore, as systems of interest representation institutionalises at multiple levels of government, this multiplies the access points or opportunities for IGs to gain access (Beyers et al. 2008). On the other hand, scholars argue that institutionalisation may also negatively affect the functioning and behaviour of IGs which may lead to representational bias. First of all, when moving closer to government, organisations have to find a balance between being influential (logic of influence) and respecting the will of their members (logic of membership) (Greenwood 2002; Olson 1965; Schmitter & Streeck 1999).

Secondly, authors argue that the capture of IGs by government could create a closed circuit of elite actors who are increasingly distant from those they seek to represent (Jordan and Maloney 2007; Kohler-Koch and Buth 2013). In this regard, Jordan and Maloney (1997) describe the rise of 'protest businesses'. These are defined as organisations which increasingly aspire to greater effectiveness and efficiency by applying business principles in their activities. Professional IGs are steered by highly educated and trained staff members, who previously worked for the government or the private sector (Jordan & Maloney 1997; Maloney 2015; Saurugger 2012). In the corporate logic ushered by these professional managers, members are seen as checkbook participants, credit card members or cash cow supporters, who command little or no internal democratic rights (Eberwein & Saurugger 2013; Maloney 2015).[9] Furthermore, professional IGs are more able and willing to pursue government funding, hereby potentially displacing membership contributions (Maloney 2015). Third, previous research has shown that the reliance on government funds may jeopardize the organisation's independent position (Fraussen 2014; Warleigh 2001). Fourth, the drive for organisational survival might

lead to the perverse effect of organisations focusing solely on the demands and grievances of the more affluent strata of their supporters (Strolovitch 2006).

To conclude, when comparing the study of SMOs with the study of IGs we see important similarities. This is largely due to the fact that empirically these sub-disciplines often focus on similar organisations. It should therefore come as no surprise that scholars across these sub-disciplines are confronted with similar puzzles. However, in contrast to SMO scholars, IG scholars focus on how governments shape interest mobilisation by institutionalising the system of interest representation. And instead of goal displacement and lack of participation, IG scholars point to the risks of a biased system of interest representation.

Third-sector organisations

According to Salamon and Anheier (1992), the third sector is defined as a collection of entities that are (1) organised, (2) private as opposed to public, (3) not profit-seeking, (4) operating with the help of voluntaries and (5) self-governing. The name 'third-sector' originates from the fact that this type of organisation is to be differentiated from public sector organisations (government institutions) and private sector organisations (market). Empirically, this definition includes a broad set of organisations, including (but not exclusively) charity organisations, foundations, NGOs, trade unions, religious and environmental groups and mutualities. Again, the empirical overlap between TSOs, IGs and SMOs is apparent. However, two notable differences are that (1) in contrast to IGs, TSO scholars do not include business and professional associations (2), while SMO and IG scholars primarily study organisations which fulfil a political goal, TSO scholars allow for more variation on the goals of the organisation. For example, they also focus on organisations that organise philanthropic activities or provide services to the wider public. By doing so, TSO scholars are able to notice how the organisational goals of intermediary organisations have shifted from gaining political influence to providing services (Bode & Brandsen 2014; Eikenberry & Kluver 2004; Hustinx 2014; Bram Verschuere et al. 2014).

Institutionalisation of business-like principles

Although not widely used as a concept in its own right, institutionalisation in this sub-discipline is usually used to denote how certain procedures or practices become dispersed and part of the organisation's standard repertoire of action (Meyer and Rowan 2015). Recently, a burgeoning literature has emerged on how TSOs have shifted from a political role to a service provision role and how they institutionalised a number of business-like techniques when performing this role (Maier et al. 2016; Wood et al. 2000; Bode and Brandsen 2014; Eikenberry and Kluver 2004; Hustinx 2014; Verschuere et al. 2014). These business-like elements include for instance, installing a human resources department (e.g. Pynes 2004), agreeing to accounting standards (e.g. Verbruggen et al. 2011), utilising performance indicators (e.g. Kanter and Summers 1994), and setting up marketing departments (e.g. Bennett and Savani 2004).

The question of why TSOs become more service orientated and business-like has been explained by a wide variety of explanations (for a full review see Maier et al. 2016). One interesting strand of literature employs institutionalist explanations to account for this transformation. The Neo-institutionalist approach emphasises that in order to survive and derive legitimacy, by a process called isomorphism, organisations adapt and adhere to procedures and standards that are dominant in the field (Dart 2004; Dimaggio & Powell 1983). Dimaggio and Powell (1983) identify three mechanisms through which isomorphism can occur: (1) mimetic isomorphism (2) coercive isomorphism and (3) normative isomorphism. Mimetic isomorphism, explains how uncertainty will lead organisations in the same field to mimic each other (Dimaggio & Powell 1983). Coercive isomorphism suggests that organisations have to abide by certain rules and procedures, making their behaviour similar. In many cases, the government is the main coercive actor who sets and enforces rules. The government is in many cases also the most important funder (or costumer) for these organisations (Maier et al. 2016).

Some scholars have therefore fruitfully linked coercive isomorphism with resource dependency, which can explain the extent to which and how organisations adapt as a response to their most important actors (e.g. Pfeffer and Salancik 1978; Bloodgood and Tremblay-Boire 2016; Dolnicar et al. 2008; Verbruggen et al. 2011; Verschuere et al. 2014). In this regard, scholars note how the New Public Management paradigm (NPM) in the 70s and 80s – which opted for a smaller, more business-like government - also trickled down into the TSO-sector. From an NPM perspective, in exchange for subsidies, the government increasingly expects proven performance, measured by business indicators (Bode and Brandsen 2014; Brandsen et al. 2017; Brandsen 2009; Hustinx 2014). Finally, normative isomorphism is related to professionalization, and how professionals, which enjoy similar socialization procedures, create networks that span organisations and therefore spread practices (Dimaggio & Powell 1983). To cope with a more competitive environment, TSOs start to hire professional managers, lawyers and marketing experts (Hustinx et al. 2014). As professionals take the steering wheel, they introduce a *'managerial culture in organisations that were previously dominated by a softer culture'* (Brandsen et al. 2017: 6).

The introduction of outsourcing, contracts, monitoring, and even competition with companies has an impact on the functioning and strategic behaviour of TSOs. To begin with, as governments increasingly work with contracts (for which these organisations must compete with each other), TSOs become less political involved, as they do not want to 'bite the hand that feeds them' (Bloodgood and Tremblay-Boire 2016; Chaves et al. 2004; Mosley 2010; Verschuere and De Corte 2013). Similarly, as TSOs move closer to the market, they do not want to scare away potential 'customers' by affiliating to a certain ideology or political cause (Eikenberry & Kluver 2004; Froelich 1999). Both instances lead to the de-politicization of the third sector. Furthermore, the professional fundraising techniques (carried out by marketing specialists) could have an alienating effect on members. This is exemplified by the recent public consternation at the fact that the Think Pink

Campaign spends more money on marketing than on actual research for breast cancer (King 2004). As Saxton (2004) claims, 'charities should never get caught marketing.' In this regard, organisational survival and maintenance can become more important than the original goals (Brandsen et al. 2017; Eikenberry and Kluver 2004; Ogliastri et al. 2015).

In conclusion, although TSO scholars focus on organisations with different roles, the puzzles which they study are strikingly similar to what has been discussed in the previous two sections. It therefore seems that the mechanisms behind institutionalisation are not necessarily tied to a certain political role, but also apply more broadly. Yet, what is particularly interesting is that TSO scholars also show how these roles can transform over time in accordance with the underlying relations between TSOs and the government.

Concluding remarks

It seems that with regard to institutionalisation, the different sub-disciplines talk past each other. Amongst SMO scholars, institutionalisation is the process by which organisations (1) regularise contacts with policymakers by using more conventional political tactics and (2) how organisations themselves become more structured and professionalised. IG scholars describe institutionalisation primarily as a systemic process, that is, how governments shape IG relations by setting rules and procedures regarding advocacy, and by granting access and funding. Lastly, TSO scholars use institutionalisation to denote how certain practices and procedures spread, becoming common and taken for granted.

The institutionalisation of interest organisations

In this section, I seek to arrive at a more integrated understanding of the institutionalisation of interest organisations. First, I assess the possibility of bringing together the various sub-disciplines under the header of 'interest organisation'. Second, by applying recent insights brought forward by political party scholars, I argue that institutionalisation is a multi-dimensional concept. As each sub-discipline

highlights a particular dimension, but also discusses similar organisational properties, there is some leeway for integration.

Interest organisations

One of the main conceptual messages of this literature review is that, empirically, the organisational universe of authors studying SMOs, IGs, and TSOs overlaps. Regardless of how scholars define the boundaries of their studies, certain organisations (e.g. NGOs) will be included in the empirical studies across the different research agendas. For instance, SMO scholars, IG scholars, and TSO scholars will all add anti-poverty advocacy groups to their set of organisations to be studied. This leads to the expectation that the boundaries proposed by the various research agendas might not coincide completely with the empirical reality of the organisational fabric. This may be problematic, as conceptual boundaries are sometimes (implicitly) based on normative assumptions (Beyers et al. 2008; Halpin 2010: 36). For example, business associations – as their conduct is motivated by gaining profits – are often not regarded as SMOs or TSOs. Yet, this should not disguise the fact that empirically, NGOs and business associations are sometimes very similar in how they are structured or how they operate.

Truncating valuable variation by only focussing on one specific type of organisation when studying institutionalisation is therefore an important concern. Indeed, as argued by Andrews and Edwards (2004:483), 'we maintain that a broader focus on all advocacy organisations should be used to test arguments about institutionalisation rather than an a priori categorical division of organisations.' In line with Minkoff et al. (2013), I argue for an approach that regards features such as goals, strategies, and organisational form as variables to be studied and not a way of *a priori* demarcating a sample.

In light of this, I define interest organisations as all non-profit, non-governmental organisations with a constituency and which can potentially become politically active. It is vital that these organisations have a certain intermediary function. This definition is similar to the broad definition proposed by IG scholars,

with one notable difference: namely, organisations that are not primarily politically active are also included.

In sum, when it comes to studying institutionalisation, SMOs, IGs, and TSOs can be recategorised under the broader term of 'interest organisations'. To be sure, some organisations are bound to straddle the fence. For instance, SMOs could lack a minimum level of organisation and some TSOs may highly resemble companies, without any members or supporters (See Chapter Three for a detailed account of the operationalisation of interest organisations and sampling strategy).

Institutionalisation as a multidimensional concept

The study of institutionalisation is not limited to the research on interest organisations. An overview of the concept's scholarly history would bring us to scholars such as Weber (1946), Selznick (1957), Parson (1960), Stinchcomb (1965), Moe (1981), Olson (1965), and March and Olson (March & Olsen 1984) (for an excellent overview, see Scott 1995). Reviewing this literature is beyond the scope of this study; instead, this section focusses on the most recent insights regarding organisational institutionalisation brought forward by political party scholars (Harmel et al. 2017; Randall & Svåsand 2002).

In the work on political parties, institutionalisation is seen as a process by which organisations are 'instilled with value' (Levitsky 1998) and become 'solidified' or 'routinized' (Panebianco 1988), as well as 'reified in the public imagination' (Janda 1980). Institutionalisation can be seen both as a process and a collection of properties. One difficulty with regarding institutionalisation as a process is that institutionalisation may entail contradicting tendencies which may not be compatible (Morlino 1998); for example, highly routinised organisations may be incompatible with maintaining certain values (like responsiveness). I therefore follow Harmel et al. (2017), who regard institutionalisation as a multi-dimensional concept that can be studied in the systemic, organisational internal, and organisational external dimensions. These authors associate each dimension with certain properties. And thus, the more these properties are present, the more the

organisation is institutionalised. Yet, not all the properties need be present, and certain properties can be inversely related to each other.

The main advantage of this approach is that institutionalisation is not regarded as a 'natural process', i.e., something that is bound to happen as time progresses, nor is it expected that it will occur in similar ways. Instead, it questions the so-called life-cycle approaches that are at the basis of much of what we know about organisational life. Furthermore it enables and also urges researchers to systematically and empirically test the relations between the various properties. Additionally, the properties outlined by Hamel et al. (2017) align with the current literature on interest organisations, entailing that integrating the various insights highlighted by SMO, IG, and TSO scholars may be possible.

First of all, Harmel et al. (2017) distinguish between institutionalisation at the system level (the party system) and institutionalisation at the organisational level (party institutionalisation). In a similar vein, one could distinguish the institutionalisation of the system of interest representation from organisational institutionalisation. Systemic institutionalisation refers to the broad set of institutional rules and practices that make up the system interest representation, i.e., the overall level of mobilisation, access/influence of interest organisations, and the regulatory framework within which organisations operate (e.g., rules on transparency and registration of lobbying) (Gray & Lowery 1997; Lowery & Gray 1995).

The distinction between systemic and organisational institutionalisation is insightful because it allows us to assess to what extent and how institutionalisation at the system level contributes to (or inhibits) institutionalisation of individual organisations (and vice versa). It has to be noted that although one might presume a relationship between systemic and organisational institutionalisation, one should not necessarily expect an unidirectional path, namely that a strongly institutionalised system of interest representation would also automatically lead to strongly institutionalised interest organisations (Randall and Svåsand 2002). For instance,

stringent rules regarding the acquisition and use of government funding may stifle organisations' activities, leaving organisations highly dependent on one type of sponsor, which may contribute to organisational de-institutionalisation.

At the organisational level, similar to SMO scholars, Harmel et al. (2017) make a distinction between the internal and external aspects of institutionalisation. Internal institutionalisation, they argue, has at least two components: routinisation and value infusion. Routinization is defined as the 'increasing scope, density and regularity of the interactions that constitute the party as a structure' (Randall & Svåsand 2002: 12). In this regard, 'regularity implies a degree of routinization, and the development of prevalent conventions guiding behaviour' (*ibid.*). It must be remarked that party scholars strongly emphasise the de-personalisation of the (charismatic) momentary leadership (Randall & Svåsand 2002). The second aspect, value infusion, refers to the 'behaviour of internal party actors – including members and public office-holders – indicative of attaching value to the party rather than just to temporary leaders or ambitions of the moment' (Harmel et al. 2017: 11). For party scholars, institutionalisation is associated with concerns for self-maintenance, the increasing extent to which the organisation's 'preservation and survival become a "goal" for a great number of its supporters' (Panebianco 1988: 49).

As demonstrated in the literature review, in the study of interest organisations, internal institutionalisation is associated with similar properties. The degree of **professionalisation** is highly salient in this regard. In all the sub-disciplines, it is discussed how interest organisations employ professional staff members (Hustinx 2014; Jordan & Maloney 1997; McCarthy & Zald 1973). Furthermore, Staggenborg highlights how professionals tend to formalise the organisations for which they work in an attempt to make organisational processes more predictable (1988). Yet, **formalisation** could make the organisation more inert and could negatively affect the members' willingness and ability to participate in the activities of the organisation (Michels 1915).

Students of interest organisations are in this regard less pre-occupied with the charisma of momentary leaders, but more with the 'momentary ambitions' or issues which lead to the initial mobilisation of members and supporters. This is discussed in the rest of this work as (the lack of) **membership involvement**. According to Olson (1965), de-mobilisation will occur in the absence of selective incentives, and the main concern is the 'risk of running out of steam in the absence of selective incentives that might bind in a broad membership base once the heat goes out of the initiating issue' (Halpin 2014: 23, discussing Cigler 1986). In this case, professionals whose livelihood is considerably intertwined with the survival of the organisations may be more concerned with the continued existence of the organisation compared to its members or supporters (Staggenborg 1988). When the initiating issue has fizzled out, and thus when the members de-mobilise, it is often stated that professionals may remain a driving force behind the organisational survival (McCarthy & Zald 1973).

It is important to note that with regards to membership involvement, there is an important difference between the study of political parties and interest organisations. Political party scholars associate institutionalisation with growing levels of involvement by the leadership *and* the membership, who can both perceive the continued existence of the party as a vital and legitimate goal, even when the initiating issue has lost its salience. However, scholars focussing on interest organisations associate institutionalisation solely with concerns of self-maintenance by the organisational leadership, and not the members of the organisation, who have a tendency to de-mobilise. This has prompted a focus amongst students of interest organisations on how organisational leaders may tweak the incentive mix to keep members involved. Therefore, unlike political party scholars, they see the shift from membership involvement to a professional workforce as a sign of organisational institutionalisation. I expect that both the extent to which members are involved and the extent to which organisations have a professional workforce may indicate higher

levels of institutionalisation. Yet, how these two indicators are related and how they affect the goals of interest organisations should be empirically tested.

It is relevant to emphasise that internal institutionalisation could be, but is not necessarily associated with organisational growth. While routinisation and value infusion might be associated with more 'developed' organisations (in terms of financial resources or a larger membership), size in itself is not equated with institutionalisation. Although more resources could stimulate the process of institutionalisation, small organisations with limited resources might be institutionalised if they are able to develop well-established internal decision-making processes (Randall and Svåsand 2002).

Lastly Harmel et al. (2017) discuss the external component of organisational institutionalisation, which is related to how organisations have perceived political relevance or are reified in the public imagination. 'As it [the party] becomes increasingly a taken-for-granted feature of the political horizon, individuals and institutions, including other parties, will more or less consciously adjust their expectations and aspirations accordingly' (Randall & Svåsand 2002: 14). This is, according to Panebianco (1988), also tied to autonomy. Organisations that cannot make autonomous decisions vis-à-vis their external environment cannot be regarded as institutionalised.

In this regard, external institutionalisation can be fruitfully combined with the degree of institutionalised access, or 'insiderness' as discussed by IG scholars (Beyers 2002; Fraussen et al. 2015). **Political insiderness** is here defined as the degree to which interest organisations are granted regular access to policymakers or political institutions (Fraussen et al. 2015). Insiders are often formally incorporated in the decision-making process (e.g., advisory councils). Yet, it is important to point at the ambivalence of political ties. High degrees of insiderness may also coincide with a lack of **autonomy**, for instance, high degrees of dependency on government funding. In this regard, SMO, IG, and TSO scholars have fruitfully applied resource dependency theory (Beyers & Kerremans 2012; Hager et al. 2004; McCarthy 2005).

Although, in many cases one would expect that higher levels of internal institutionalisation is related to higher levels of external institutionalisation, this is not always the case. For instance, organisations that lack perceived influence or lasting power (external institutionalisation) might still be able to establish routinised procedures (internal institutionalisation). For example, in the European Union, the associations representing tobacco firms rarely gain direct access to policymakers, yet they are strongly internally institutionalised. Vice versa, some organisations may lack strong internal routines and procedures, but may still represent a force to be reckoned with. One example is how local environmental organisations in Antwerp have successfully stalled and are subsequently shaping the infrastructural plans for the ring road in Antwerp (Wolf & Van Dooren 2017).

In conclusion, institutionalisation is defined here as the extent to which organisational practices are routinised, professionalised, and subject to formal rules and procedures, as well as the extent to which organisations are recognised as legitimate, autonomous actors. It is studied here not as a process but as a collection of factors or properties that can be studied in the organisational internal and external, as well as the systematic dimensions. The properties discussed by political party scholars resonate with discussions regarding professionalisation, formalisation, membership involvement, political insiderness, and the organisational autonomy of interest organisations.

Conclusion

This chapter started with the observation that interest organisations are studied separately in sub-disciplines focussing either on SMOs, IGs, or TSOs. As direct comparison and cross-fertilisation are rare, the current situation does not facilitate the accumulation of knowledge about interest organisations.

In this chapter, I therefore sought to assess the extent to which the insights regarding institutionalisation brought forward by the different sub-disciplines can be integrated. This was done by conducting a literature review of the most influential works on the subject. Here, I showed that empirically and theoretically speaking, the

different sub-disciplines are compatible. Empirically, students of SMOs, IGs, and TSOs often draw from the same sample of organisations. This may be problematic, as conceptual boundaries are sometimes (implicitly) based on normative assumptions. Theoretically, students of SMOs, IGs, and also TSOs are occupied with the same puzzles and make similar conclusions. Yet, regarding institutionalisation, the different sub-disciplines seem to talk past each other as they highlight separate dimensions of institutionalisation.

Following the literature review, to minimise the risk of truncating variation and as suggested by Minkoff et al. (2013) and Andrews and Edwards (2004), I endorsed a broad conceptualisation of interest organisations. In this conceptualisation of interest organisations, features such as goals, strategies, and organisational form remain variables to be studied and not a way of *a priori* demarcating samples. The main advantage of this conceptualization is that it makes it less likely to perpetuate or reinforce differences between different types of organisations.

The main finding in this chapter is that, as proposed by political party scholars, institutionalisation is a multi-dimensional concept, comprising organisational internal, external, and systemic dimensions. Each dimension can be associated with a specific set of properties: professionalisation, formalisation, membership involvement, political insiderness, and autonomy. Institutionalisation is studied here as collection of properties instead of a process. The more interest organisations display these properties, the more they are institutionalised.

The main advantage of this definition is that it does not see institutionalisation as something that inevitably occurs as organisations develop, nor does it suggest that organisations will always follow the same path of institutionalisation. Furthermore, this framework allows us to disconnect the various properties of institutionalisation. More specifically, according to this framework, organisations that exhibit high levels of, for instance, professionalisation or formalisation need not experience high levels of political insiderness. This enables us

to study how the underlying aspects of institutionalisation are related to each other and allows but also necessitates empirical scrutiny.

Comparing how students of political parties and interest organisations regard institutionalisation can be informative in one final way. While the institutionalisation of political parties is frequently seen as a positive evolution, as it contributes to the consolidation of political systems, this view is not shared amongst the authors studying interest organisations. To the contrary, the institutionalisation of interest organisations is associated with a host of negative consequences. Although both tones may give relevance to the research topic, it must be noted that both optimism and pessimism may obscure vital insights, as both may introduce a subtle, but nevertheless potential bias.

Methodology

The Comparative Interest Group Survey project

Introduction

Analysing how institutionalisation affects organised interests' political activities, membership influence, and organisational survival is vital to obtain a better understanding of interest organisations' potential democratic contribution. However, to systematically test the generalisability of the strong theoretical claims that are often posited, comprehensive organisational data are needed, covering different types of interest organisations, varying organisational configurations, and also spanning different institutional contexts.

In this chapter, I discuss the methodology of this dissertation, which was conducted as part of the Comparative Interest Group (CIG) survey project (www.cigsurvey.eu). The aim of this project was to obtain detailed data on various organisational aspects from national interest organisations in a set of European political systems. We conducted 10 country surveys covering Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden, Lithuania, Slovenia, Spain, Italy, Poland, the Czech Republic, and one on a European level. In total, about 15 000 organisations were invited to participate, of which, on average, 38 percent responded.

In the field of interest organisations, survey research has been profusely and successfully conducted in a number of projects, producing ground-breaking insights (e.g., Dür & Mateo 2012; Gray & Lowery 1997; Jordan & Maloney 2007). Despite its widespread use, however, the practical and technical side of surveying remains under-emphasised in this sub-discipline. Although administering online surveys is a reliable way to get organisation-specific data from a substantial set of organisations, there are many practical pitfalls (Dillman et al., 2014: 301).

This chapter focusses on the overall setup of the study. In the first section, the choice of a quantitative large-N, cross-sectional survey design is explained. The second section discusses how interest organisations are conceptualised and how a representative sample was established. The last section elaborates how the respondents were identified, approached, and motivated to take part in the survey. This chapter specifically emphasises the technical challenges associated with

surveying interest organisations and focusses more specifically on the Belgian Interest Group (BIG) project.

Research methods

This research was conducted as part of the CIG survey project, which focusses on nationally organised interest organisations. To empirically analyse the institutionalisation of interest organisations, I opted for a large-N, quantitative data analysis. The primary reason for this is that the current scholarly work has brought forward a number of hypotheses, which have rarely been systematically tested. For instance, there was simply no systematic empirical data on how exactly professionalisation and formalisation affects membership influence.

Although numerous case studies have been conducted on this subject, it remains difficult to assess the generalisability of these findings (e.g., Jenkins & Eckert 1986; Staggenborg 1988). Furthermore, most empirical studies that have been conducted draw on data from the United Kingdom or the United States, while data from other national contexts is limited (Jordan & Maloney 1997, 2007; McCarthy 2005; Skocpol 2003). So, to weigh in on the debate regarding institutionalisation, and thus to confirm or reject some long-standing hypotheses, detailed data on various organisational features was needed from a broad set of organisations, spanning multiple institutional contexts. Furthermore, as I define institutionalisation as a collection of properties, and not as a process, a cross-sectional design was deemed most appropriate.

When it comes to large-N quantitative research on organised interests, we can roughly distinguish three different methods for data collection. First, much interest organisation research relies on observational data drawn from registries, often supplemented with information from organisations' websites. One advantage of using such unobtrusive data is that it can be rather easily collected and that chances of respondent-induced bias are minimal. Indeed, much ground-breaking work in our field relies on registries of interest organisations (e.g., Hannan & Freeman 1977; Lowery & Gray 1995; Minkoff 2002). Yet, this approach strongly relies

on public availability, which differs across countries and across organisations. Moreover, public sources usually lack contextualised information, especially on the internal functioning and the organisational development of organisations, and have their problems with reliability. For instance, organised interests may present themselves on their website in a biased way.

Secondly, in order to obtain more contextualised data on interest organisations, scholars have also developed projects in which a substantial number of experts are interviewed face to face (e.g., Baumgartner et al. 2009; Beyers et al. 2014: 176). Much information that is not available via public sources – such as organisational processes, perceptions, and political strategies – can be collected via such expert interviews. This approach is especially useful for policy-centred research. Yet, despite its advantages, the method has its own drawbacks. The data collection is more obtrusive and is prone to various sources of bias, such as acquiescence or self-presentation bias. Importantly, it is a costly method – in terms of time and resources – and interview projects are difficult to plan, as researchers have to abide by the experts' schedules.

Third, many scholars have collected observational data via large-scale, web-based surveys. It can be argued that administrating online surveys takes the middle ground, as it combines the advantages of the two other approaches whilst minimising the disadvantages. With online surveys, researchers can reach a high number of interest organisations, whilst still being able to extract highly contextualised information about the internal functioning, political activities, management, and relation with members. Furthermore, numerous measures can be taken to ensure the respondent's full confidentiality, which may ease the inhibition to participate and make socially desirable answers less likely. Furthermore, the 'breadth of coverage of many organisations means [surveys are] more likely than some other approaches to obtain data based on a representative sample, and can therefore be generalizable to population' (Kelley et al., 2003: 262). Additionally,

every step of the survey can be planned in advance. To be sure, survey research entails overcoming many practical pitfalls (see below).

Therefore, to obtain detailed, contextualised organisational information covering a broad set of organisations, it was decided to administer online surveys. However, we also utilised the former two methods to acquire additional data, albeit to a limited extent. In this regard, we supplemented survey data with observational data from the organisations' websites (e.g., organisational type coding). As the respondents were often not familiar with the various organisational types of interest organisations, it was not possible to enquire about this information via a survey. Furthermore, in the second empirical chapter, a limited set of in-depth interviews were conducted to attain a more fine-grained understanding of certain mechanisms (e.g., the effect of government funding).

Sampling interest communities

The fuzzy boundaries of systems of interest representation and the ambiguous identity of some organised interests can greatly obfuscate the sampling procedure. In contrast to surveying consumers, businesses, citizens, or voters, comprehensive registers of the full population of interest organisations are rarely available. Furthermore, the absence of registries make the use of standard sampling techniques like stratified sampling difficult and limits the researcher in the certainty with which (s)he can grasp and determine the representativeness of the sample obtained. This means that we first had to invest considerable time and resources in constructing a representative list of interest organisations. In this section, I briefly outline the main methodological challenges in mapping and sampling interest communities.

Defining interest organisations

One commonly used definition of organised interests includes three requirements: namely, that they are organised, primarily aim to influence public policy, and achieve their goals by the means of informal contacts (Beyers et al. 2008; see also Jordan et al. 2004 for a detailed discussion). First, 'organised' refers to the

fact that a minimal level of organisation is required, thus excluding broad movements and waves of public opinion. Second, these organisations should show some level of political activity or articulate a public policy interest, which implies that they aim to influence the policy process. Thirdly, 'informality' refers to the fact that these organisations do not formally seek office through elections like political parties, but try to achieve their goals by the means of informal interactions with policymakers.

Based on this definition, the population of interest organisations includes a heterogeneous collection of actors, as many organised actors will engage in some level of political activity. Yet, many of these politically active organisations are not established with the aim to defend, represent, or serve some interest, cause, or constituency, but rather for other purposes, such as producing cars, providing health care, or teaching students. Political representation is a by-product of their core business. Although these actors may play an important part in the political process, firms, hospitals, or universities have no intermediary function, and their potential political activities are in most cases entirely self-regarding, as they will rarely speak out for issues not directly related to their own agenda. Including these types of organisations will thus add little to our understanding of how organisations maintain themselves and engage with policymakers, whilst also remaining attuned to the needs of their constituencies.

In this regard, some scholars emphasise that interest organisations must have a strong membership component. For instance, Jordan et al. (2004) prefer not to classify non-constituency organisations (like firms, universities, and hospitals) as interest organisations, but rather as pressure participants (Halpin 2010). In a similar vein, our approach considered interest organisations as collective, membership-, or constituency-based organisations. Organised interests may include organisations with formal members (i.e., individuals or other organisations such as firms or institutions) or organisations with informal constituencies (i.e., donors or supporters) (Jordan & Maloney 2007). These organisations may advocate for

enfranchised (e.g., the self-interest of affiliates) or disenfranchised (e.g., the poor, the environment, animals) members or constituencies (Beyers et al. 2008; Halpin 2010).

However, Jordan et al. (2004) do not go so far as to label all membership organisations as interest organisations. In this regard, the authors stress the political behavioural component, and include only organisations that are *primarily* occupied with the representation of political interests and the seeking of political influence. Such an approach will map organisations based on observed political behaviour, for instance, appearances in the media or representation in advisory bodies or consultations. However, a large number of organisations, often labelled 'service/non-profit organisations', would not be recognised as interest organisations simply because they demonstrate only limited (or no) political activities. For instance, an NGO which primarily focuses on development or a national sport federation that has advocated only once in the past will not be included (Halpin 2010, 2014; Jordan et al. 2004). This type of organisation is what Truman (1951) calls a latent interest organisation.

Although the behavioural approach is well-suited when researching interest organisations' political strategies or influence (e.g., De Bruycker 2016), it was less suitable for our research purposes. In contrast, our approach did not make an *a-priori* distinction based on the political activities of interest organisations, but rather also included constituency-based organisations that exhibit low levels of political activity. This was done for a number of reasons, the primary concern being not truncating essential variation. Making valid claims about balancing organisational maintenance, constituencies' interests, and engaging with policymakers would be rendered impossible if one of the main outcomes (rarely being politically active) was systematically excluded. Second, empirically, some problems would have arisen when determining a specific cut-off point of political activity, which is further complicated when trying to make this assessment based on the website of the

organisation. In this regard, interest organisations may strongly downplay their political engagement or exaggerate their political role.

Table 2: Typology of organised interests

	Behavioural	
	Politically active	Politically not active
Represents a collective interest	Interest organisation (1) e.g., labour unions, trade unions, environmental groups, human rights groups, business associations, identity groups	Latent interest organisation (2) e.g., non-profit organisations like relief groups, self-help groups, leisure associations
Does not represent a collective interest	Pressure participant (3) e.g., universities, hospital, cities, regions, firms	Latent pressure participant (4) e.g., firms without a public affairs unit

In sum, it was our aim to capture the total reservoir of political mobilisation and collective action and not focus solely on those organisations that affiliate in a certain way (e.g., only formal membership) or pass a certain threshold of political engagement. Instead, we considered all those organisations that aggregate and/or represent collective interests. We therefore define interest organisations as all non-profit, non-governmental organisations that have a constituency and which can potentially become politically active (top left and right cells in Table 2). These organisations have an intermediary function. This population includes all labour unions, professional associations, business associations, and identity groups, as well as constituency-based service/non-profit organisations. Yet, it does not include firms, universities, governmental entities, or political parties.

Sampling interest organisations

This section deals with the approach taken to establish a representative sample of interest organisations; we use the Belgian sampling procedure here as one possible example. The sampling of interest communities often relies on an extensive scrutiny of various sources, and ideally involves the triangulation of multiple databases. Roughly speaking, there are two kinds of data collection strategies, which

relate to whether or not researchers opt to emphasise the behavioural approach, namely, the top-down and bottom-up approaches.

First, we could adopt a top-down mapping strategy, whereby the researcher relies on registers of organisations that participated in some policymaking process. Examples are studies that use the US state lobby registration rolls (Lowery and Gray 1995), lists of organisations that attended specific political events (Hanegraaff 2015), or organisations that are included in some advisory bodies (Fraussen et al. 2015). Usually, scholars who emphasise the behavioural dimension tend to start with top-down sources. The threshold for inclusion here is relatively high, as organisations that are involved to a lesser extent (or less visibly) in policymaking or engage with public policy through different (or less visible) venues or channels are filtered out.

The second strategy is called bottom-up mapping. This approach is mostly used by scholars who are interested in varying levels of collective action, the size of interest communities, and the extent to which and how organisational entities are established. Typical data sources here are directories or encyclopaedias of organisations that list all the associations in a particular polity. This approach has been used for mapping transnational advocacy (Beckfield 2003) as well as populations at the national level (for an overview, see Halpin & Jordan 2012). In contrast to the top-down approach, there usually is no threshold in terms of political activities: all constituency-based organisations are included, irrespective of their possible involvement (and interest) in public policy.[10]

Given the conceptualisation of the population of interest organisation, in which we do not envisage a threshold for a minimum level of political activities, we opted for a bottom-up approach. To sample Belgian interest organisations, we had different sources at our disposal. The most comprehensive database is the *Kruispuntbank voor Ondernemingen* (KBO, Crosspoint Bank for Enterprises) which is maintained by the Federal Public Service Economy, SMEs, Self-Employed and Energy (*FPS Economy, Federale Overheidsdienst Economie, K.M.O., Middenstand en Energie*). It registers all legal entities that engage in economic activity in Belgium and

is connected to different other databanks that are maintained by (among others) the National Bank of Belgium and the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs. It contains more than two million corporate entities and, important for our purposes, all citizens who established a legal person, a VZW (non-profit), or a foundation. All European countries have a similar register and even use a related classification (following ISIC or industrial classifications codes) based on a standardisation ushered in by EUROSTAT and the OECD.

The register uses the second revision of the NACE classification (which is called NACEBEL in Belgium and uses ISIC classification codes), requiring organisations to indicate in which industrial or other activities they primarily engage (multiple options can be selected).[3] To account for the interest organisations, a separate category was created known as S94, which refers to organisations that represent the interests and views of specific constituencies.[4] This initial list contained 19,191 organisations.

The objective was to filter out the organisations that are (1) organised at the regional or national level (not the local or European, international levels); (2) not profit-seeking; (3) not part of government; and (4) represent a certain collective interest and/or have members, donors, or a constituency. This was done by employing a number of (semi-)automated and manual steps.

The S94 category is further specified under sub-headers including businesses, employers, professional membership associations, and development

[3] NACE is the abbreviation of the French *Nomenclature statistique des activités économiques dans la Communauté européenne*. This European industry classification system consists of a 6 digit code and is systematically used in most national statistical data-systems (see http://goo.gl/8NLquM).

[4] The full definition of S94 reads as follows: "This division includes activities of organisations representing interests of special groups or promoting ideas to the general public. These organisations usually have a constituency of members, but their activities may involve and *benefit non-members as well. The primary breakdown of this division is determined by the purpose that these organizations serve, namely interests of employers, self-employed individuals and the scientific community (group 94.1), interests of employees (group 94.2) or promotion of religious, political, cultural, educational or recreational ideas and activities (group 94.9).*"

NGOs, as well as religious orders (such as abbeys, dioceses, and other mostly local religious institutions). The latter organisations were deleted from the list (3358 in total). Furthermore, the list also contained a high number of double entries (3797 were deleted).[11] Furthermore, we also deleted organisations based on tag-word searches (e.g., 'EURO' and 'Youth House') (in total, 827 entities were deleted). The remainder of the list included 11 209 entities.

One feature of the KBO is that it features data on the connectedness of organisations. Indeed, many Belgian organisations are part of a conglomerate structure, which is represented in the KBO as dyadic ties between organisations. This feature was used to drastically reduce the number of organisations that needed to be checked manually. We did so by separating the so-called 'main organisations' (5024) from the 'sub-organisations' (6185). Yet, as some sub-organisations are active at the national or regional level, they also needed to be processed, but we managed to do so in a semi-automated way.

To process these organisations, we developed an online data-processing tool.[12] First, the list of 5024 organisations was uploaded into the online tool.[13] For these organisations, the coder first determined whether the organisation was indeed 'in target' (given the criteria outlined above). Many main organisations – about 80 percent – did not fit the criteria. This means that for about 80 percent of the organisations, the matching sub-organisations need not be checked. For the organisations that were in target, the tool compiled a list of matching sub-organisations, drawing not from the limited list of 6185 sub-organisations, but from the full KBO database. Furthermore, as some organisations can have multiple main organisations (this is sometimes done for administrative reasons), the tool also compiled a list of main organisations based on a word similarity match (thereby further reducing the list of organisations we had to manually check). The coder then arranged these entities in a hierarchical manner (based on whether the organisational entity was active on the local, regional, national, or international level). So, although we started from a 'flat' list of entities, the tool enabled us to

represent the hierarchical nature of organisations. All organisations active at the national and regional level were included in the sample.

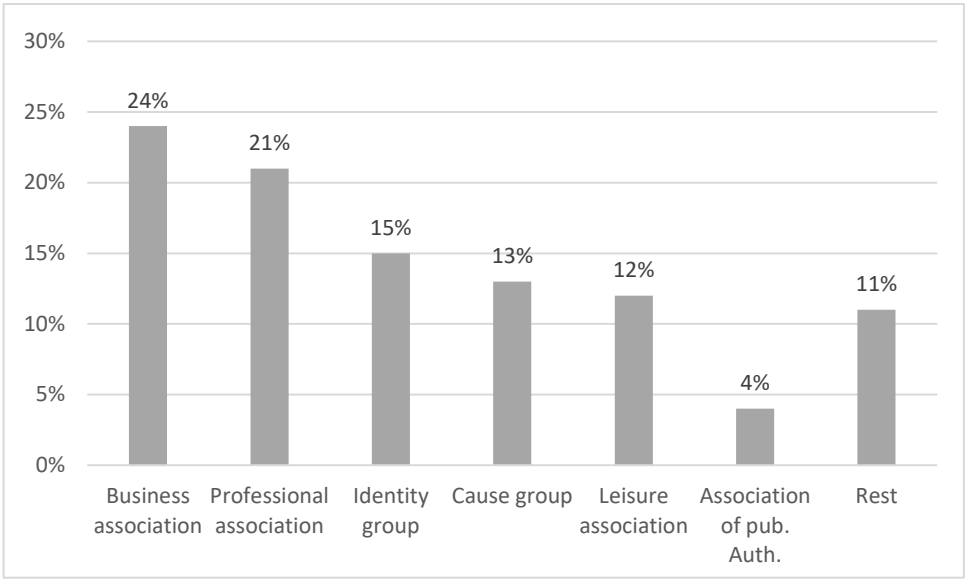
Take, for instance, a certain interest organisation that is a conglomerate of three main organisations (to each of which 10 sub-organisations are tied). This organisation would take up 33 entries in the registry. In essence, if not in target, the coder only has to process one of these main organisations to reduce the list by 33 entries. If in target, the coder can process these entities more efficiently, compared to processing them one by one, at random.

The resulting sample (n=1461) was further triangulated by comparing it to two other bottom-up sources: *SectorLink* and *Filantropie.be*. Filantropie.be is a voluntary register with mostly non-business interests or social profit organizations, and encompasses organisations that are active at the national, regional/subnational, and local level. A similar and complementary initiative is SectorLink. It provides an overview of Belgian professional associations, industry groups, and business federations. These lists of organisations were also uploaded into the tool and matched to the existing list by using a customised automated text-comparison function. The new organisations were processed according to the same procedure, which resulted in 230 new organisations. The end result was a list of 1691 organisations (for more detailed information, see www.cigsurvey.eu). The online platform allowed multiple coders to work on the same list of organisations, whilst each list is instantly and simultaneously kept up to date.

After this sampling procedure, the online tool prompted the coder to collect contact data and some additional data from the organisation's website. To establish the type of organisation, the coder first determined whether the organisation mentioned whether or not it had formal members. If so, the coder coded the type and number of members (from this, it can be derived whether the organisation is a business, professional, leisure, identity, or labour union). The organisations without formal members were given a separate code. Additionally, for all organisations, it was also established whether being politically active was their primary purpose.

Furthermore, for public interest organisations, it was also gauged what kind of interest they represent (cause or identity). Instead of instructing the coders to categorise organisations in a pre-set classification, coding separate variables allowed us to make several typologies. Below, we present one of the possible typologies (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Distribution of organisations (n=1691)



To demonstrate the versatility of this approach, below we present a cross-tabulation of two other typologies (Table 3). The typology in the rows differentiates between public interest organisations (identity and cause groups in the typology above) that are latent and non-latent. The second typology (in the columns) differentiates between public interest organisations with and without a formal membership.

Table 3: Distribution of public interest organisations by two typologies (n=591)

	Membership	Non-membership
Latent	175	101
Non-latent	108	207

Comparing these frequencies provides some information on the conceptual discussion above. Here we see that 67 percent (n=207) of public interest organisations without formal members are non-latent, or in other words, primarily engaged in advocacy. In addition, 63 percent (n=175) of the latent public interest organisations have members. Following the approach proposed by Jordan et al. (2004) would result in a set of 315 public interest organisations (108+207); our approach adds another 276 organisations.

Survey procedure

The survey device was developed by a team of international scholars based on previous research projects (see: Beyers et al. 2016; e.g., Beyers & Kerremans 2007; Fink-Hafner 1998; Jordan & Maloney 2007). It entailed questions about the ties to members, the organisational setup, the political activities and strategies, as well as the organisations' resources and political positioning. In total, 70 questions were asked. The survey device was tested in two pilots: the first entailed in-depth interviews with five respondents, and in the second 100 respondents were invited. Due to the considerable length of the survey (on average, 45 minutes), multiple incentives had to be envisaged and care had to be taken with selecting the most appropriate respondent in each organisation.

In this section, we elaborate how we identified respondents within organisations and how we approached and motivated these respondents to participate. Constructing a well-defined survey procedure is critical for obtaining a satisfactory response rate and reducing total survey bias, which occurs, for one, due to a lack of responses from (specific) respondents (Dillman et al., 2014). This section gives a detailed overview of the Belgian and European survey procedures.[14]

In devising the survey procedure, it is important to note that a respondent will decide whether to participate based on a variety of different aspects. In this regard, not only the survey device itself, but also the survey layout, invitation email, subject lines, greeting, number of reminders, and project website will shape the respondent's decision to participate (Dillman et al., 2014). We therefore followed Dillman (1978), who proposes a tailored/total survey design, which involves (1) using prior knowledge about the survey population and topic, (2) instilling *all* communication with personalised cues, and (3) communicating messages in a varied way via different media, i.e., using mixed incentives.

Use of prior knowledge

To interact with interest representatives, it was important to use prior knowledge about the target population (Dillman et al. 2014). First of all, given the considerable length of the survey, we had to substantially incentivise our respondents to participate. Based on anecdotal evidence, we know that interest representative are, generally speaking, busy and tend to receive many survey requests. This type of respondent closely resembles other experts embedded in an organisational context, such as management executives, lawyers, and doctors. Recent research has shown that overall, the response rates in such targets groups are in decline. For instance, Cycyota and Harrison (2006) report a decline in response rates, and place the current average, based on 231 international studies, at 34 percent (SD=17 per cent).

Secondly, we know from previous research projects on interest organisations that certain sensitivities may exists amongst our target population. For instance, in some cases, representatives of certain types of interest organisations are sensitive about discussing their political activities. Furthermore, interest representatives, generally speaking, repudiate being called 'lobbyists' who work for 'interest groups'. We have therefore taken care not to use these labels when communicating with the respondents. For instance, in English, we opted for the more positive terms 'representatives' and 'civil society organisation'.

Third, when identifying and contacting respondents, it was important to keep in mind that interest organisations have a typical organisational structure, which includes a front office; a number of policy experts (in some cases organised in working groups/committees); a secretary general; and a board of directors headed by a president and often supported by auxiliary staff, interns, and volunteers. As the survey tapped specific information about the organisational management and political activities of interest organisations, a high-ranking official was deemed the most appropriate respondent. The pilot revealed that about one-fifth of the questions (e.g., about the budget or use of specific political strategies) could not be answered by lower-ranking officials. Furthermore, as many questions are about the day-to-day activities, the board, usually responsible for the general steering of the organisation, was also considered less suitable to fill out the survey. Ideally, targeting the secretary general, manager, or a high-ranking policy expert/political officer is most likely to yield high-quality and reliable data.

Yet, in our experience, this depended on the size of the organisation. In larger organisations, the secretary general or CEO may lack the time to complete surveys and is prone to delegate such tasks further down the echelons. In these cases, it was better to directly target lower-ranking staff. We generally employed a five-person cut-off rule; for organisations larger than five full-time equivalent employees, we did not contact the highest-ranking official. In the absence of staff, contacting the president of the board is most likely to yield the best results.

Personal cues

Dillman et al. (2014) also highlight the importance of personalising the communication with the respondents, which has been widely tested in empirical research (Cook et al., 2000; Cycyota & Harrison, 2002). Personalisation is a key way to engender ties between the researcher and the respondent (Dillman et al., 2014). Furthermore, in organisational contexts, personalisation – by targeting specific respondents – may also be a way to solve collective action problems amongst multiple potential respondents (i.e., in the case of shared mailboxes). Yet, nowadays,

respondents are wary of phishing attempts and are sensitive to mass-customisation (Sauermann & Roach 2013). Nevertheless, recent research suggests that instilling communication with personal cues – like using first names – may increase the odds of responding up to 48 percent (Sauermann & Roach 2013).

To ensure a personal approach, we only used general information addresses when no person could be identified. In about 95 percent of the cases, it was possible to identify at least one person, whilst the probability of obtaining a personal email address for this person was about 98 percent. The likelihood of obtaining no contact information (also no information address) lay around 0.5 percent; these organisations were dropped from the sample. To enlarge the chances of success, we attempted to identify two persons per organisation, which succeeded in about 60 percent of the cases. In about 17 per cent of the cases, we called the organisations to obtain additional contact information. In addition to email addresses, we collected the name, gender, and telephone numbers of all the respondents. We addressed each person by name and included the abbreviated name of the organisation in the subject title. Only when names were absent did we address the person with a general salutation (e.g. 'Dear sirs'). Another way to engender a personal approach we used was to send and reply to emails via two personal email addresses (i.e., not using an information address).

One side effect of using personalised cues and supplying respondents with the possibility to respond is that each invitation and reminder generated a high volume of email traffic. Dillman et al. (2014) recommend processing these emails as much as possible. For instance, for the EU survey, counting across all steps, I replied to a total of 479 emails (405 questions/comments/problems and 74 rejections).

Multiple incentives, varied ways, different media

Lastly, Dillman et al. (2014) underline the importance of using multiple incentives and varying messages via multiple media. Some psychological research has tested whether applying additional follow-up reminders (e.g., via mail or telephone) might increase response rates (Roth & Bevier 1998). Repeated contact

signals the legitimacy of the survey and the willingness of the researcher to invest time and resources in reaching out to the respondent (Sauermann & Roach 2013). This is an important way to stimulate trust between respondent and researcher. Furthermore, respondents benefit from complying, as by doing so they avoid future reminders (Cycyota & Harrison 2002). At the same time, the guilt associated with not complying with the invitation can be an important cost for the respondent *(ibid.*). Lastly, contacting respondents at different times might help simply because they may be busy or absent at the first moment of contact (Sauermann & Roach 2013). Kittleson (1997) noted a doubling of the response rate after sending a single follow-up email, yet the gains for sending additional follow-up, he notes, are marginal.

In any case, care should be taken not to come across as too 'pushy' (Deutskens et al., 2004). Dillman et al.(2014) recommend using up to three reminders, but via varied means of communication and with adapted messages. In this regard, experimental research shows that slightly changing the wording and content of each message may lead to a 30 percent increase in the odds of responding (Sauermann & Roach 2013). For instance, adapting the reminder by adding a cut-off date may be conducive, as Fox and Crask's systematic review study found that in 9 out of 12 studies, this increased the response rate (1988:476). As to the timing of the reminders, Kittleson (1997) and Dillman et al. (2014) recommend sending it between 4-7 days after the invitations, although empirical evidence is less clear on this (Sauermann & Roach 2013). In line with these recommendations, we devised the following procedure (see Table 4).

Table 4: The survey procedure.

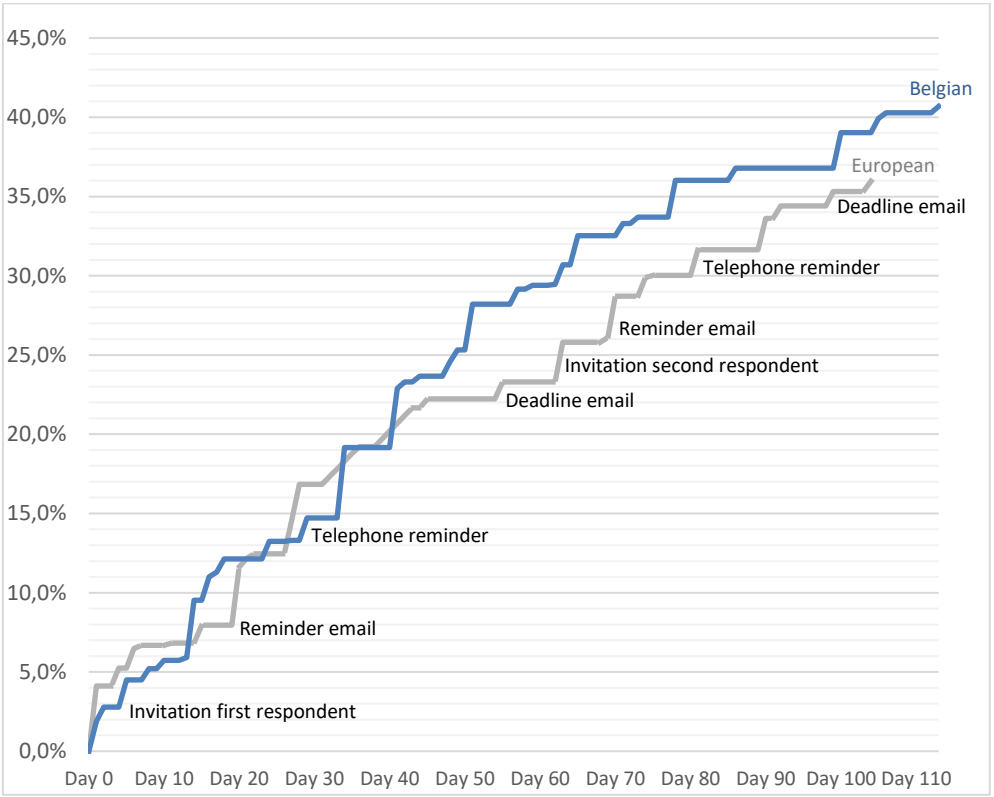
Day	Step	Description
Day -7	Step 1	Sent out invitation letter
Day 0	Step 2	Sent out invitation email
Day 19	Step 3	Sent out email reminder
Day 25	Step 4	Reminder call
Day 62	Step 5	Deadline email first group
Day 69	Step 6	Sent out invitation email second respondent
Day 81	Step 7	Sent out email reminder
Day 88	Step 8	Reminder call second person
Day 99	Step 9	Deadline email second person
Day 112	Step 10	End survey

We envisaged consecutively contacting two respondents, four times each, via email and telephone. The message in the emails and telephone calls were non-obtrusive and contained a slightly different message in each step. As recommended by Dillman et al. (2014), the emails contained only short and conscience messages. Below we represent the response rates of the Belgian and European surveys (Figure 2). We highlight some important remarks here. First of all, given that Fox and Crask (1988) report that a pre-notification letter may increase response rates between 9 and 45 percent, we did so for the European survey (this letter did not include the possibility to fill out the survey). However, this was not done in the Belgian survey, which led to a difference in the response rate of only one percent after the initial invitation.

Secondly, sending a reminder email following the invitation led to a doubling of the response rate (from three to six percent). However, calling the respondents proved to be the most effective incentive. In each survey, we observed about a 10 percent increase. One reason for this is that calling respondents yields new contact data, as respondents may transfer the caller to candidates who are more appropriate. Comparing the two trend lines, we see that during this step, the Belgian response rate positively deviates from the European line. One reason for this could be the more effective revision of contact lists we foresaw during the Belgian survey

procedure. Lastly, in both trend lines, we also clearly see a diminishing return; after three reminders, the fourth yielded only a marginal increase in response rate.

Figure 2: Response rates



In sum, given the length of the survey and the high number of survey requests our respondents receive, the response rates of the Belgian (42 percent) and the European (36 percent) surveys are satisfactory. This is in line with similar surveys, as Marchetti (2015) reports a 41 percent average response rate (n=14). Subsequent surveys in this project utilised similar survey procedures and also obtained similarly high response rates.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the methodology employed in this dissertation. Given the presence of substantial hypotheses in the current scholarly work on the subject, but a lack of empirical tests, we opted for a large-N quantitative design. This would allow us to weigh in on some long-standing debates by empirically and systematically testing expectations on a broad set of organised interests drawn from a diverse set of polities. Furthermore, given the conceptualisation of institutionalisation as having various aspects, a cross-sectional design was deemed most appropriate. Survey research was chosen, as it is a reliable and cost-effective way to collect details on a large number of organisational indicators. The data was also supplemented with observational data from the organisations' websites and in-depth interviews.

This chapter discussed how we defined the population of interest organisations and how we subsequently drew a representative sample from this population. As there are no ready-made registers containing all interest organisations, substantial time and resources had to be invested in creating a representative list. Furthermore, how we identified, approached, and motivated respondents to participate was explained. Given the considerable length of the survey, we envisaged contacting two respondents, four times each, with varied messages via different media (Cf., Dillman et al. 2014). In the end, we obtained an average response rate of about 38%. This means that of the 15,000 organisations we invited, about 5,000 filled out at least 50% of the survey.

When Professionals Take Over

Explaining Patterns of Membership Influence in Interest Organisations

Abstract. This paper analyses the influence that members exercise on the policy positions of interest organisations. Although the decline of membership influence is often postulated as an important consequence of the formalisation and professionalisation of interest organisations, few empirical analyses have tested this proposition. This paper analyses membership influence by using survey data of a representative sample of approximately 2300 interest organisations from six European countries and the European level. As members generally have a strong say about the policy positions that interest organisations adopt, this paper claims that the pessimistic tone in current scholarly work is largely unwarranted. Furthermore, the analysis shows that hiring professionals does not invariably decrease membership influence and may, in some conditions, even facilitate it. This finding contradicts or nuances the presumption that formalisation and professionalisation reduce membership influence.

Introduction

There is considerable variation in the level of influence that members exert on the advocacy activities of interest organisations. In some organisations, members are a vital part of the organisational apparatus, as no advocacy position can be agreed upon without their approval. In other organisations, advocacy work is largely decided upon and carried out by professional staff (Binderkrantz 2009: 668). One prominent concern in contemporary work is that when organisations reach a certain size, professionals take over, and the position of members is marginalised to that of 'check book participants', 'paper membership', 'credit card members' or 'cash cow supporters' (Jordan & Maloney 1997; Maloney et al. 2008; McCarthy & Zald 1973; Michels 1915; Rothenberg 1992; Skocpol 2004). It seems that associating 'organisation' with 'oligarchy' has reached a law-like status. Much research claims that membership influence is declining in social movement organisations, interest groups and third-sector organisations, which I subsume under the overarching concept of 'interest organisations'. However, little is known about the conditions that constrain or limit membership influence.

Although members can influence many aspects of an interest organisation, this paper focuses specifically on their influence on political positioning. Here, influence is defined as the degree to which members can effectively shape the interest organisation's position on specific public policies. Analysing membership influence on political positions is relevant for our understanding of both the representativeness of systems of interest representation and the overall functioning of organised interests.

First, much of our current thinking on the organisational development of political organisations goes back to Michels, who argues that limited membership influence is associated with the 'elitization' of organisational leaders, who act mostly based upon their own interests (1915: 76). Six decades later, in reflecting on social movement organisations, McCarthy and Zald state that as interest organisations 'become routinized and oligarchic, leaders become more and more distant from the

group whose interest they presumably represent' (1973: 13). Additionally, more recent scholarship sees limited membership influence as an important source of bias in systems of interest representation (Berkhout et al. 2017; Binderkrantz 2009; Jordan & Maloney 2007) – or, according to Michels: 'For democracy, however, the first appearance of professional leadership marks the beginning of the end' (1915: 73).

Second, membership influence is inexorably tied to the governability of organisations. This is perhaps most notably captured in Schmitter and Streeck's (1999: 19) characterisation of the logic of influence and the logic of membership (see also: R. J. Bennett 2000). Organisational leadership must strike an appropriate balance between acting upon the interests of their members and doing what is necessary for the organisation to survive and flourish (Greenwood 2002; Kohler-Koch & Buth 2013; Schmitter & Streeck 1999). Taken to the extreme, both logics may inhibit organisational functioning. On the one hand, organisations that are too closely controlled by their members, perhaps because of a lack of financial independence, might lack the flexibility, leeway and strategic direction needed to act as meaningful long-term governance partners (Greenwood 2002: 65; Schmitter & Streeck 1999: 50). On the other hand, as argued by Knoke (1981: 154–155), when members experience the inability to exercise influence within the organisation, the likelihood of 'organisational detachment' increases. This could threaten the very existence of the organisation.

So how can we explain the varying degrees of membership influence in interest organisations? To answer this question, this paper draws on a rich research tradition that dates back to the influential thesis of Michels (1915) and spans sub-fields focussing on different types of interest organisations. Authors in these different sub-fields uncover several mechanisms that might lead to lower membership influence; however, these mechanisms and their relative levels of importance are rarely systematically tested (e.g., Eikenberry & Kluver 2004; Jordan & Maloney 2007; McCarthy & Zald 1973). Much of what we know about membership

influence is based on ad hoc case studies or scant empirical evidence on a specific type of interest organisation (e.g., large NGOs) (for an exception, see Binderkrantz 2009). Consequently, at this point, we simply do not know whether investing in an organisation's structure, staff, or political connections is invariably associated with less influential members. Nonetheless, many scholars are rather pessimistic about the capacity of members to influence their organisation's policy positions.

This paper analyses recently collected survey evidence from more than 2300 interest organisations across seven European polities (Belgium, The Netherlands, Slovenia, Lithuania, Italy, Sweden and the European Union). Instead of focussing on a narrow set of organisations, this paper analyses a broader diversity of organisations (e.g. both citizen groups and business associations). Most surprisingly, the analysis shows that under certain conditions, hiring professionals might actually be associated with more membership influence. Additionally, the analysis shows that political insiders display not lower but higher levels of membership influence. This paper therefore nuances – and even to a certain extent qualifies – what has allegedly been identified as one of the only iron laws in the social sciences (Diefenbach 2018).

Beyond the truisms?

This section elaborates upon the three most vital determinants in explaining membership influence on the policy positions of interest organisations. First, according to Michels, in large and complex organisations, membership influence simply cannot exist. Due to 'practical and technical necessity,' the very notion of an organisation implies a concentration of power at the top, which comes at the cost of 'rank and file' members (1915: 72). As a consequence, 'Every party or professional union becomes divided into a minority of directors and a majority of directed' (*ibid.*). The first part of this section elaborates upon this idea by discussing more recent work on the formalisation and professionalisation of social movement organisations (e.g., McCarthy & Zald 1973; Piven & Cloward 1977), interest groups (e.g., Jordan & Maloney 1997, 2007) and non-profit organisations (e.g. Eikenberry & Kluver 2004).

Second, developing close and conventional ties with policymakers – or the

degree of political insiderness – is often associated with lower membership influence. According to Michels, 'the interests of a body of employees are always conservative' and will, 'by a universally applicable social law', 'conflict with the interests of the collectivity' (1915: 353). Schmitter and Streeck further specify that one way in which organisations secure their interest – in order to 'survive and prosper' – is by seeking to 'gain access to and exercise adequate influence over public authorities' (1999: 19). This, according to the authors, is in tension with an overly influential membership that imposes their 'immediate demands' and 'short-term' interest perceptions upon the organisation (Beyers 2008; Greenwood 2002). The second part of this section focuses on how political insiderness is associated with lower membership influence.

Third, and finally, a considerable body of work underlines that resource diversification is an important way for organisational leadership to curb membership influence (Froelich 1999; Greenwood 2002; Jordan & Maloney 2007; McCarthy & Zald 1973; Staggenborg 1988). Michels argues that the 'financial strength of the party which renders liberal payment of the officials possible, contributes greatly to the dictatorial appetites' (1915: 147). In a similar vein, McCarthy and Zald state that 'outside financial support' 'means that a membership in the classical sense is almost dispensable' (1973: 18). In the last part of this section, this mechanism is discussed as a specific instance of resource dependency theory (Pfeffer & Salancik 1978).

The effect of formalisation and professionalisation

First, various contemporary scholars argue that the formalisation and professionalisation of an organisation lead to a decrease in membership influence (Jordan & Maloney 1997, 2007; Kohler-Koch & Buth 2013; McCarthy & Zald 1973; Michels 1915; Saurugger 2012). To begin with, formalisation often presumes lower membership influence. Formalisation here is defined as 'the elaboration of controls in the form of standard rules, procedures and systems and by the use of documentation and records' (Child 1973: 169). Formalisation may make the organisation's functioning more predictable and may improve its ability to deal with

complex problems. Formalisation is an inevitable consequence as organisations grow in size and complexity. However, according to Michels, as organisations become more formalised, members lack the necessary motivation, time and skill to control all the organisation's activities (1915). Schmitter and Streeck, arguing in the opposite causal direction, claim that organisations can grow in 'size and comprehensiveness' only 'if they can acquire a capacity to reject short-term members' demands and make their decisions binding upon their members even against resistance' (Schmitter & Streeck 1999: 50).

H1: The higher the degree of formalisation is, the lower the degree of membership influence.

Furthermore, professionalisation, which is here defined as the hiring of professionals, also presumably decreases membership influence. Given the complex legal and institutional environment, advocacy work is increasingly performed by professionals, who may see their work not necessarily as a calling but as part of their career (Jordan & Maloney 2007; McCarthy & Zald 1973; Staggenborg 1988). In this regard, the criteria for hiring staff are expertise, experience and connections and may not always include commitment to the cause (Maloney 2015). These tendencies possibly lead to the hiring of professionals who show less alignment with the grievances or needs of the members on whose behalf they speak (Jordan & Maloney 2007; Kohler-Koch & Buth 2013). More specifically, professionals, whose livelihoods are increasingly intertwined with the survival of the organisation, might be more pre-disposed to focus on organisational maintenance instead of informing or involving their members; this potentially leads to 'mission drift' or 'goal displacement' (Eikenberry & Kluver 2004; Froelich 1999). In addition, professionals often favour a business-like style of management, in which they refer to their members as customers or clients and use direct mailing and other sophisticated marketing techniques; which may alienate membership (Hustinx 2014; Jordan & Maloney 2007; Saxton 2004).

However, at the same time, research has shown that larger organisations (in terms of staff) exhibit a higher propensity to involve their members (Jordan & Maloney 2007; Kriesi 2005; Maloney & Roßteutscher 2006). One reason for this might be that professionals can also consciously enable involvement – and thus membership influence – when deciding upon the organisation's policy position to achieve a stronger position towards policymakers. Indeed, experimental psychological research has shown that negotiators of representative organisations dare to make stronger and more forceful claims than less representative negotiators (Druckman et al. 1972; Jones & Worchel 1992). However, despite this evidence, the bulk of the current research suggests that professionalisation is negatively related to membership influence.

H2: The more staff an organisation employs, the lower the degree of membership influence.

One important intervening factor in the relation between hiring professional staff and membership influence might be the extent to which members are actually involved in organisational activities and functioning. Although Michels (1915) and, more recently, Jordan and Maloney (2007) assume that members are unable or unwilling to control the organisation, the extent of their involvement might vary. In this regard, the effect of employing staff might vary depending on the different degrees of membership involvement. On the one hand, when members are not involved in organisational functioning, employing more staff leads to less membership influence. When staff are granted more leeway, they can become more influential at the expense of members, who in turn have no problem with delegating complicated tasks such as formulating policy positions. On the other hand, when members are more involved, they might curb this leeway and outsource only well-delineated, supportive tasks. In this regard, employing more staff may even enable membership influence, as answering members' emails, organising workgroups, congregating general assemblies and aggregating members' concerns could constitute a full-time occupation.

H3: At low levels of membership involvement, the effect of employing more staff on membership influence is negative, whilst at high levels of membership involvement, this effect is positive.

The effect of being an insider

The second part of this section focuses on how political insiderness is associated with less membership influence. Political insiderness is here defined as the degree to which interest organisations are granted regular access to policymakers or political institutions (Fraussen et al. 2015). Michels' thesis (1915) emphasises that the marginal role of members in the internal decision making of the organisation leads to the de-radicalisation of political advocacy. In a similar vein, Piven and Cloward (1977) argue that becoming more enmeshed with the political environment could ensure organisational legitimacy and maintenance but may foster the dis-empowerment of the membership. For Schmitter & Streeck, organisational leaders must find a balance between acting upon the will of their members (logic of membership) and broader organisational goals, such as becoming a long-term governance partner and the possibility of shaping public policy (logic of influence) (1999: 19). Indeed, to allow for political manoeuvring, the organisational leadership needs a certain degree of autonomy vis-à-vis the membership (Beyers 2008: 1203). In sum, most scholars cited here agree that a higher degree of political insiderness corresponds with a lower degree of membership influence.

H4: The higher the degree of political insiderness is, the lower the degree of membership influence.

The effect of resource dependencies

Finally, in the work of Michels (1915), McCarthy and Zald (1973), and Maloney (2015), organisations' decreased reliance on their membership for resources is an important factor predicting lower levels of membership influence. McCarthy and Zald argue that at high degrees of resource diversification, 'the base lacks any control over the leadership of the movement organisation' (1973: 18). This mechanism is best understood in the framework of resource dependency theory (RDT). In brief, RDT states that to survive and reach their goals, organisations need

external resources, which makes organisations sensitive to the will and interests of their donors (Bloodgood & Tremblay-Boire 2016; Neumayr et al. 2015; Pfeffer & Salancik 1978). When resources mainly come from the membership, members have an important tether with which they can control the organisation. However, to gain organisational autonomy, the leadership may seek to diversify their resource dependencies, for instance, by seeking government funding, corporate sponsorship or commercial revenues (Eikenberry & Kluver 2004). When funding is increasingly drawn from outside the membership base, organisations become less dependent on their members and thus reduce the extent to which members can control the organisation's political positioning. In the words of McCarthy and Zald, 'the donor to such a movement has little control over the movement leadership short of withholding funds' (1973: 18).

H5: The less dependent the organisation is on financial resources drawn from the membership, the lower the degree of membership influence.

Research design

The data analysed in this paper are part of a larger research project that included the surveying of interest organisations in various European political systems (AUTHOR; see WEBSITE). The survey focuses on topics such as political strategies, organisational development and management. Previous empirical studies on the subject have focused mainly on single countries, whilst few comparative and large-N studies have been conducted on this subject. Furthermore, previous evidence is mainly situated in the Anglo-Saxon context, whilst other political contexts have received much less consideration. This paper therefore uses survey evidence from Western (Belgium and The Netherlands), Southern (Italy), Eastern (Slovenia and Lithuania), and Scandinavian (Sweden) countries and the European Union (EU). These systems vary in the extent to which and how state-society relations are institutionalised. One way to characterise systems of interest representation is by placing them on a pluralist-corporatist continuum. For instance, Belgium and Sweden are often characterised as neo-corporatist, whilst Lithuania might be

described as rather pluralistic (see Table 5 below) (Jahn 2016; Siaroff 1999).[15] How state-society relations are characterised is likely to matter because according to Streeck, the logic of influence corresponds with more neo-corporatist arrangements in which organised interests are granted 'organisational security, e.g., by guaranteeing them privileged access and recognising them as the sole representative' (1983: 266). In contrast, in more pluralistic settings, organised interests are less able to turn to the state to offer them 'additional resources on a more reliable basis'; thus, here, the logic of membership is more likely to prevail (Schmitter & Streeck 1999).

Table 5: Ranks and average score of corporatism (reproduced from Jahn, 2016)

Rank	Country	Mean
2	Sweden	1.26
3	Belgium	1.21
4	The Netherlands	1.08
8	Slovenia	0.96
19	Italy	-0.11
33	Lithuania	-0.90

The paper focuses on membership organisations, which are organised entities that aggregate and represent the political interests of their members or constituencies before government or the broader public.[16] These organisations may represent not only the interests of individuals or firms but also the interests of particular causes (e.g., environmental concerns or animal rights). We opt for a broad conceptualisation to encompass a wide array of entities that represent the organisational fabric between citizens and the government (e.g., public/citizen interest groups, social movement organisations, non-profit organisations, trade unions, leisure groups, and business associations). The analysis focuses on organisations that seek to represent nationwide constituencies and excludes associations that are primarily focused on representation at the local level (such as

provinces or cities). Ultimately, the sampling procedures resulted in 11 136 organisations of which, on average, 38 percent completed the survey.[17] This response rate is above average compared to other interest organisation surveys (Marchetti 2015). For the purpose of this paper, we include only those organisations that explicitly reported having members or supporters whilst also formulating policy positions. The final dataset includes 2302 advocacy organisations with members (for more detail, see Online Appendix Table A1).

Measurement of variables

To measure membership influence, which is the dependent variable in this paper, we asked respondents the following question: *Thinking about your organisation's position on public policies, how would you rate the influence of your membership?* The answer options were (1) "not at all influential", (2) "not very influential", (3) "somewhat influential" and (4) "very influential". The regression model collapses the two middle categories, which results in a variable consisting of three categories.

More details on the independent variables, which are briefly described here, can be found in the Online Appendix Table A2. To capture formalisation (Hypothesis 1), a cumulative scale was constructed based on an organisation having the following properties: (1) "a president", (2) a "secretary general/managing director", (3) an "executive committee", (4) "written rules/constitution", (5) "committees responsible for specific tasks", (6) a "general assembly" and (7) "judicial experts". To gauge professionalisation (Hypothesis 2), the analysis includes the logarithmically transformed number of staff (FTE) the organisations employ. To gauge membership involvement (Hypothesis 3), a cumulative scale was constructed based on the importance of members in the following activities (on a five-point scale): "helping to influence public policy", "providing ideas about your organisation's campaigning strategies", "identifying problems or providing ideas about your organisation's activities", and "providing evidence of support from affected members or concerned

citizens".[5] To measure the extent to which organised interests are political insiders (Hypothesis 4), a scale was introduced based on the extensiveness with which organisations, on a five-point scale, "responded to open consultations", "served on advisory commissions/boards" and "presented research results or technical information to policymakers".[6] To measure the organisation's resource dependency on the membership (Hypothesis 5), the percentage of the budget originating from membership fees was included.

In addition to country of origin, four control variables are added to the analysis (for more details, see Online Appendix Table A3). First, organisations often have formal rules with regard to how decisions are made, and these rules are likely to impact membership influence (Diefenbach 2018). For instance, when staff are formally entitled to make decisions on policy positioning, it might negatively impact membership influence. Second, previous authors have linked the size of the membership to membership influence. For large-membership organisations, it may be difficult for the leadership to include and hear all members during decision-making processes, whilst members themselves may be hindered by collective action problems (Schmitter & Streeck 1999: 25). The analysis therefore includes two measures of membership size, one for individual membership and one for organisational membership. This distinction is important, as one cannot compare the individual membership of trade unions with the company membership of business associations. Third, the analysis controls for the type of organisation. Previous authors have argued how membership influence may vary across different types of organisations based on the types of benefits (e.g., material, solidarity) provided (e.g.,

[5] *In the final empirical chapter, this index also includes "running local groups or branches", and "generating income for the organisation"*. Including these items in this index does not change the results, yet it does reduce the number of valid observations (see appendix Table A16)

[6] In the final empirical chapter, this index also includes how often policy-makers initiated contact with their organisations (likert-scale). Including these items in this index does not change the results, yet it does reduce the number of valid observations (see appendix Table A16)

Binderkrantz 2009, see below) and Online Appendix Table A4. Finally, age is also added as a co-variate, as older organisations are more likely to be formalised and thus less likely to have influential members (Rucht 1999). See Online Appendix table A5 for the distributions of the independent and control variables.

Descriptive analysis

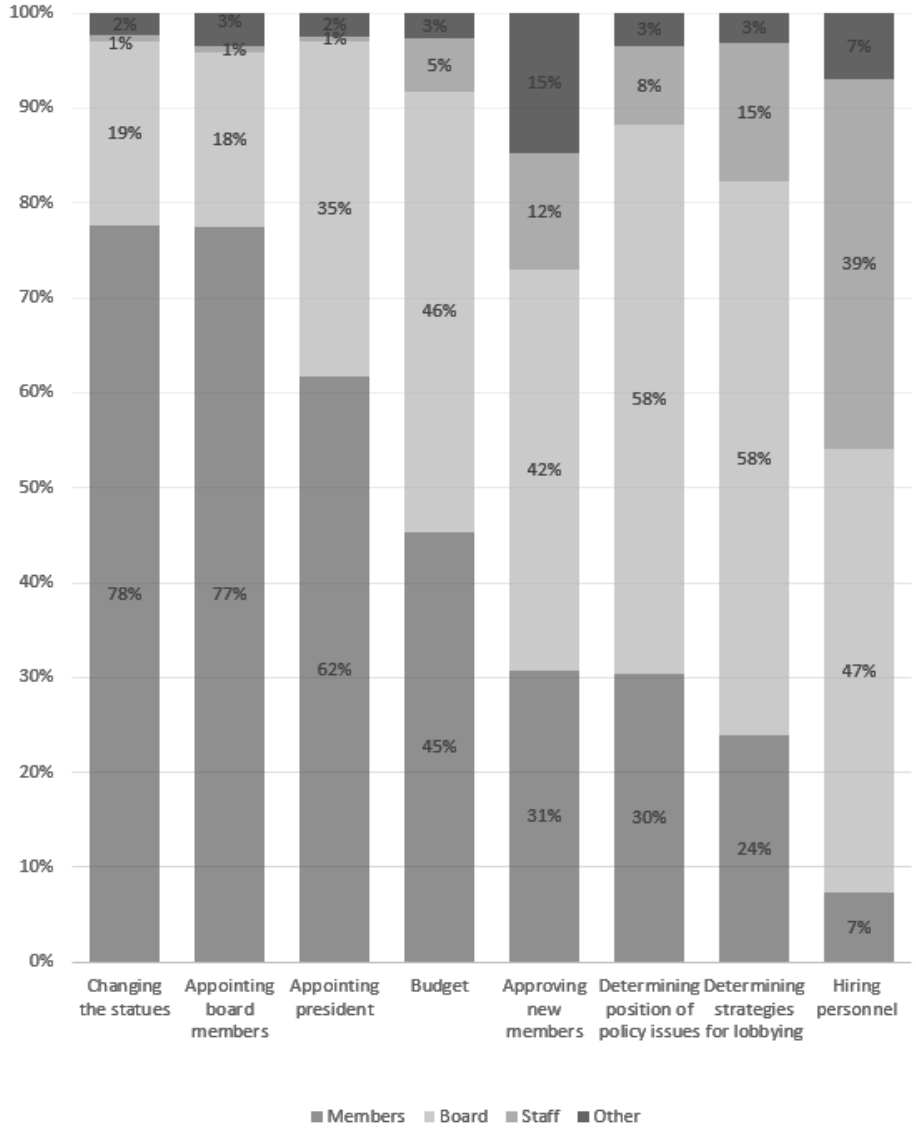
Most interest organisations in the dataset have a comparable organisational configuration. The majority of organisations (93 percent) have a president, who usually presides over the board of directors. Furthermore, most organisations in the sample employ staff (81 percent). Figure 1 presents a more detailed view of the internal functioning of the interest organisations and of the role of the members, the board and professional staff. Appointing board members (including the president) and changing the organisation's statutes are usually decided upon by the members (for instance, in a general assembly, either by voting or consensus). For all other competences (such as the general strategic steering of the organisation), we observe that the board of directors is, formally speaking, the most important body. Day-to-day managerial tasks (such as human resource management) are usually conducted by the staff.

In approximately 14 percent of the cases, members have no formal say about any of the decisions depicted in Figure 3 (see Online Appendix for this calculation). We could say that these members are purely symbolic, or what McCarthy and Zald (1973: 20) call 'paper membership,' which is presumably typical of a 'professional movement organisation'. Similar distributions are reported in other earlier studies. For instance, Binderkrantz (2009: 668) reports that among Danish organisations, only a minority (13 percent, n=781) correspond to the ideal-typical 'protest business' or to the model of an organisation with 'checkbook members' who have few or no democratic rights. Jordan and Maloney (2007: 127), studying British organisations, put this number at 5 percent (n=536).

In 49 percent of the organisations in our sample, members play a representative role, meaning that they are primarily responsible for appointing the

president, the board and for changing the statutes. For the remainder of our sample (37 percent), in addition to their representative role, members also have a formal say in other decisions, such as the budget and determining the organisation's policy positions. These are organisations where members play an active role and where the membership is effectively mobilised.

Figure 3: Division of decision-making powers for certain competences (n=2302)



The dependent variable

However, how do these different roles relate to membership influence? Table 6 shows the distribution of membership influence on steering the organisation's policy position (the dependent variable in the regression analysis below), classified by different modes of organisational decision making. First, we see that interest organisations vary considerably in terms of membership influence. In total, in about four out of ten cases, members have ample influence over the policy positioning of the organisation, whilst only three percent are not at all influential. Note that this distribution closely follows the percentages of members with a symbolic and active role (the bivariate relation can be found in the Online Appendix Table A6). These data again corroborate earlier work by Binderkrantz (2009), who reports that in approximately five out of ten organisations, members are to a large degree influential, whilst in 15 percent of organisations, they have no influence at all. Admittedly, democratic norms surrounding the social desirability of membership may have pushed these percentages upwards. However, we doubt whether this mechanism has resulted in systematically biased data. As we offered full confidentiality to our respondents, there is no reason why respondents would intentionally bias their responses. Furthermore, and more importantly, our data show considerable variation, and a substantial number of respondents admitted that their members have limited or no influence. Finally, the descriptive evidence resonates well with the distributions reported in previous research.

Table 6 provides a more nuanced insight into the relation between organisational decision making and membership influence. We see that when members are formally entitled to decide upon the policy position of the organisation (either by consensus or by voting), they have substantially more influence (60 and 58 percent are very influential, respectively). For instance, compared to when members make decisions by consensus, members have less influence on the organisation's policy positions when the board decides (60 percent vs. 38 percent under consensus and 40 percent when voting). However, when staff make these

decisions, membership influence is the lowest (23 percent very influential). Yet, staff are entitled to do so in only 8 percent of the cases (see Figure 1).

Table 6: Influence, by mode of decision making (n=2302)

	Not influential	Moderately influential	Very influential
Consensus members	2.6%	37.6%	59.8%
Voting members	3.8%	38.6%	57.6%
Consensus board	2.9%	59.6%	37.5%
Voting board	2.7%	57.2%	40.1%
Senior staff	5.2%	71.4%	23.4%
Other	10.1%	57.0%	32.9%
Total	3%	54%	43%

In line with recent work, the data also show that most organisations are governed by rules and procedures that may introduce checks and balances for not only the members but also the staff and organisational leadership (Diefenbach 2018: 10). For instance, members can control the board and staff by instituting by-laws that guarantee a final say in the organisation's policy position. At the same time, the organisational leadership may isolate itself from the membership by delegating tasks to the senior staff. Previous work on this matter has under-emphasised that the organisational setup may guide the behaviour of professionals and may mitigate staff influence (for an exception see Staggenborg 1988: 604).

Explanatory analysis

Table 7 presents the ordinal logistic regression (proportional odds model), which analyses the likelihood that members are influential in establishing the organisation's policy position. Model I tests for the variables related to the hypotheses and includes the control variables. Regarding the latter, some results are worth mentioning. With respect to organisation type, the evidence shows that all else being equal, compared to business associations, members of identity groups are more likely to be influential. The bivariate relation between membership influence and type suggests that the members of trade unions are most influential, but this

result does not hold in light of the other co-variates (for the bivariate relations, see Online Appendix Table A7). This finding supplements our current knowledge about the relation between membership influence and organisation type in an important way. For instance, it supports the finding of Binderkrantz (2009), who shows that cause (or public) interest organisations are not significantly different from business associations. However, it also contradicts Binderkrantz. When considering the other co-variates, trade unions, in terms of membership influence, are not significantly different from other organisational types. This finding raises doubt about the expectation that the selective material benefits provided by trade unions (or business associations) are associated with more membership influence (Olson 1965; Salisbury 1969, 1984). Quite to the contrary, we see that the members of identity groups – organisations that largely provide their members with solidarity benefits – are actually more influential.

With regards to membership size, the findings are consistent with previous research indicating that having more members coincides with a decline in membership influence (Schmitter & Streeck 1999). However, this variable is significant only for individual members and not for organisational members. With regard to age, the results show that members of older organisations are not more likely to have substantial influence over the policy position of the organisation. Finally, regarding country differences, members are more likely to be influential in pluralist contexts (like Lithuania and Italy) than in Sweden, which has the most pronounced neo-corporatist features. The correlation between the countries' score on the neo-corporatist scale and their ranking of degree of membership influence is -.73 (sig. 0.10), meaning that there is a substantial – but not a significant – association.[18]

Table 7:Ordinal logistic regression membership influence, all observations pooled together

	Model I	Model II
Intercept	-	-
1/2	-1.84 (0.41)***	-2.42 (0.41)***
2/3	2.23 (0.41)***	1.67 (0.40)***
Country: Sweden (ref)	-	-
Country: Belgium	0.17 (0.14)	-0.14 (0.16)
Country: EU	0.04 (0.16)	1.55 (0.22)***
Country: Italy	1.71 (0.22)***	0.94 (0.19)***
Country: Lithuania	1.13 (0.19)***	0.59 (0.18)**
Country: The Netherlands	0.78 (0.19)***	-0.55 (0.22)*
Country: Slovenia	-0.37 (0.23)	-0.17 (0.14)
Type=Business (ref)	-	-
Type 2=Professional	0.16 (0.15)	0.14 (0.15)
Type 3=Labour	0.32 (0.27)	0.28 (0.27)
Type 4=Identity	0.41 (0.18)*	0.39 (0.18)*
Type 5=Cause	<0.01 (0.16)	<0.01 (0.16)
Type 6=leisure	0.01 (0.19)	-0.03 (0.19)
Type 7=Institutions	-0.03 (0.24)	-0.04 (0.24)
Type 8=Rest	0.29 (0.29)	0.32 (0.29)
Number of individual members	-	-
Number of individual members	-0.42 (0.14)**	-0.42 (0.14)**
Number of individual members	-0.51 (0.12)***	-0.5 (0.12)***
Number of business members	-	-
Number of business members	-0.14 (0.13)	-0.16 (0.13)
Number of business members	0.06 (0.12)	0.05 (0.12)
Age (log)	0.06 (0.05)	0.06 (0.05)
Number of staff (log)	0 (0.03)	-0.41 (0.11)***
Formalisation (index)	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)
Decision made by (ref=members)	-	-
Decision made by (members)	-0.06 (0.17)	-0.08 (0.17)
Decision made by (board)	-0.84 (0.14)***	-0.85 (0.14)***
Decision made by (board)	-0.72 (0.16)***	-0.73 (0.16)***
Decision made by (staff)	-1.40 (0.2)***	-1.41 (0.20)***
Decision made by (other)	-1.23 (0.28)***	-1.30 (0.28)***
Membership involvement	0.13 (0.02)***	0.11 (0.02)***
Membership dependency	0.26 (0.11)*	0.25 (0.11)*
Political Insiderness index	0.08 (0.02)***	0.07 (0.02)***
Staff: involvement	-	0.03 (0.01)***
Log Likelihood	-1658.32	-1651.65
Df	30	31
AIC	3376.64	3365.31
N	2302	2302

Index: parameter estimates (standard errors between brackets); ***=<.001; **=<.01; *=<.05

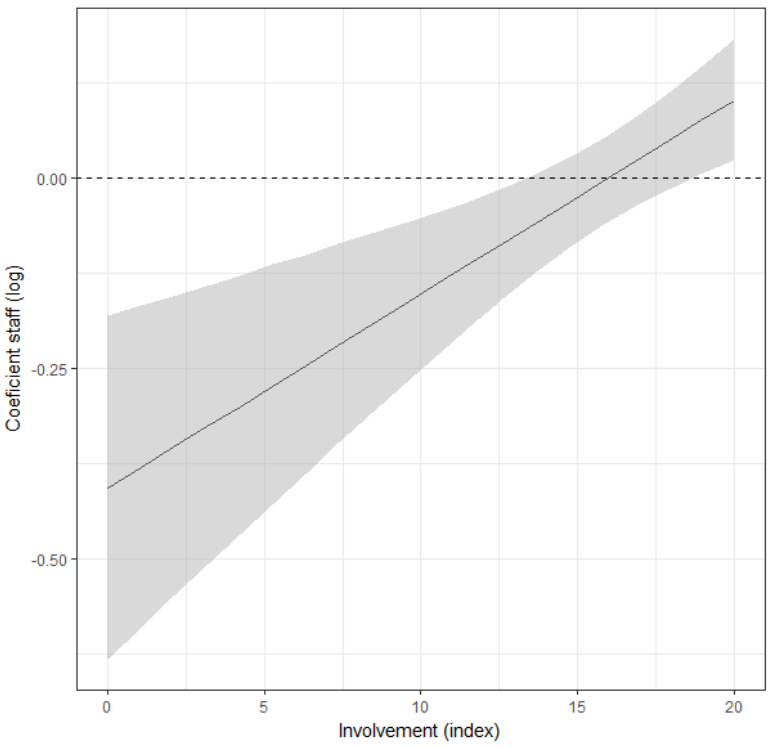
Testing the hypotheses

In contrast to our findings regarding the first and second hypotheses, our analysis does not show that adopting a more formalised organisational structure and hiring more professionals leads to less membership influence. This means that one of the basic premises of Michels' iron law – namely, that membership influence is virtually impossible in larger (in terms of staff) and more complex organisations – does not seem to hold. However, this is only a partial explanation, as the interaction hypothesis (H3) does seem to hold true (see Model II). As expected, the effect of employing staff on membership influence, varies according to the different levels of membership involvement. First, all else being equal, higher levels of membership involvement are associated with higher levels of membership influence. Second, the interaction model shows that when membership involvement is low, increasing staff by one unit leads to 50 percent lower odds of influential members. Note that this also tentatively confirms the main thrust of Hypothesis 1. By contrast, when membership involvement is high, employing more staff leads to approximately 11 percent higher odds that members will be influential. The cut-off point is 16 on the 20-point involvement index. For reference, approximately 53 percent of the organisations have a score above this cut-off point. See Figure 4 for a visual representation of this relation. In sum, hiring more staff is not invariably associated with less membership influence. To the contrary, combining strong membership involvement and sufficient (wo)man power may actually foster a context in which members can be influential.

Regarding Hypothesis 4, political insiderness, or the extent to which organisations engage in inside lobbying and take part in advisory committees, does not decrease but rather increases membership influence. One explanation for this result is that members are an important resource for political advocacy, as they may supply substantial relevant expertise. Indeed, being an insider might require more influential members. First, political advocates who enjoy strong backing from their membership are more representative and will be better political players, as

policymakers may see them as more legitimate (Bouwen 2002: 370). Second, political insiders are more frequently involved in the implementation of public policy. This implementation will go more smoothly when the leadership of interest organisations has considered the individual concerns of their membership, as doing so 'tends to increase the acceptance of regulation by those affected by it' (Streeck & Schmitter 1985: 132). Furthermore, research in experimental psychology has argued that having a say about the group's position is positively related to the acceptance of that position (Jones & Worchel 1992: 326). Third, members can possess not only technical but also political information, which is a valuable currency in the policy process.

Figure 4: Marginal probability plot: Interaction effect between employing staff, membership involvement and membership influence (n=2302)



Regarding Hypothesis 5, the percentage of the budget drawn from members is positively related to membership influence. The more an organisation depends upon their members for financial contributions, the more influence members will wield on the political positioning of the organisations. This finding is in line with previous work, for instance, that by McCarthy and Zald (1973). However, although the mechanism works in the conceived way, the data shows that many organisations have not cut their financial ties with their members; as membership fees, on average, still make up 52 percent of interest organisations' budgets.

The findings in this study nuance or even qualify previous theoretical expectations dating back to Michel's century-old thesis. The model unequivocally shows that the negative relation between members and professionals is by no means an iron law. Furthermore, it shows precisely under which conditions membership influence and hiring professionals are compatible. To be sure, these findings should not lead to the conclusion that the oligarchic tendencies Michels and many others warned about do not exist (e.g., McCarthy and Zald, 1973; Jordan and Maloney, 1997)(e.g., Jordan & Maloney 1997; McCarthy & Zald 1973). Indeed, the model shows that the combination of low degrees of membership involvement, the absence of internal checks and balances and low dependency on membership fees leads to lower levels of membership influence. However, this seems to occur in only a small portion of organisations in this study.

Conclusion

This paper started from the observation that interest organisations strongly differ in the extent to which their members can influence their policy positions (Binderkrantz 2009). Organisations face problems at either end of the membership influence spectrum. On the one hand, if members have no influence at all, organised interests might risk losing support and may lack credibility in the eyes of policymakers. On the other hand, high membership influence may curtail the discretion and autonomy of the organisational leadership. In this case, the organisation runs the risk of becoming prone to deadlock and might show less

flexibility and effectiveness in the political game (Beyers 2008; Greenwood 2002; Schmitter & Streeck 1999).

This article sought to explain the varying levels of membership influence. The scholarship on this subject dates back to the influential work of Michels (1915) and spans various sub-disciplines. Despite the prominence of membership influence, few have analysed this in a systematic fashion, across different political systems and for a wide range of organisations (but see Binderkrantz 2009). Nevertheless, it is often taken for granted that professionalisation and political insiderness invariably leads to less membership influence. This presumption is inconsistent with some previous work that is beginning to sketch a different empirical image (Binderkrantz 2009; Diefenbach 2018).

This paper focused on the three determinants that are most vital in explaining membership influence on the policy positions of interest organisations. These are (1) the degree of formalisation and professionalisation, (2) the degree of political insiderness and (3) resource dependencies.

One general conclusion is that, at least in case of the surveyed organisations, membership influence is not in complete disarray, as some scholars and commentators have long claimed. Instead, the analysis shows considerable variation in terms of membership influence. The analysis also demonstrates that although 81 percent of all organisations have staff, in only 8 percent of the cases staff are formally entitled to decide upon policy positions. Where staff makes the decisions, members are more likely to play a purely symbolic role. These organisations correspond to the ideal type of 'protest businesses' in which members have few or no democratic rights, perhaps because they have little motivation to be actively involved (Jordan & Maloney 1997, 2007).

One typical example of an organisation with a purely symbolic membership is the Belgian consumer organisation Test-Aankoop/Test-Achats, which is a founding member of BEUC and employs more than 400 staff (Depuydt 2016). The role of their members is largely reduced to that of customers. Ironically, in 2013, Test-Aankoop

was judged by the Belgian Jury of Ethical Practices in Advertisement to have misled its members. On its forum for complaints, some members asked Test-Aankoop to help them end harassment by Test-Aankoop (Online 2013). However, organisations such as Test-Aankoop seem to be the exception rather than the rule. As in the majority of organisations, members play a representative or active role. A counter-example, is the Red Cross-Flanders, which employs more than 1300 staff but where volunteering members hold voting rights at the highest organisational levels (e.g., direction committee of humanitarian services, which is supported by some 300 employees). Although both organisations employ many staff members, the degree of membership influence is highly different.

This discrepancy can be explained by one of the main conclusions that can be drawn from this paper. The analysis shows that hiring staff does not always decrease membership influence, as previously claimed (e.g., Jordan & Maloney 1997; Michels 1915). In fact, combining high membership involvement with professional staff actually contributes positively to membership influence. These findings have some important practical implications for the management of political membership organisations. Indeed, to enable more active members, organisations must invest in a robust organisational infrastructure and recruit staff members. At the same time, the analysis shows that oligarchic tendencies can be shaped by formal decision-making rules. By instituting checks and balances, members may safely delegate day-to-day managerial tasks to staff. Or in the words of Staggenborg, focussing specifically on social movement organisations, 'Based on my data, I dispute the conclusion that formalized SMOs necessarily become oligarchical. In fact, many seem more democratic than informal SMOs because they follow routinized procedures that make it more difficult for individual leaders to attain disproportionate power.' (1988: 604).

Furthermore, the analysis clarifies the relation between political insiderness and membership influence. Previous authors have suggested that the more an organised interest is connected to the political system, the less influential its

members will be (Beyers 2008; Greenwood 2002; Piven & Cloward 1977; Schmitter & Streeck 1999). However, the evidence shows something different, namely, if organised interests supply information to policymakers, reply to consultations and sit on advisory councils – or, in short, become insiders to the political system – their membership influence will not decrease. One important reason could be that policymakers might actually favour more inclusive and representative organisations.

In conclusion, the relationship between members, professionals and membership influence, although perhaps less problematic than previously presumed, is highly relevant. This paper qualifies some long-standing claims about membership influence. More generally, it shows that we must be careful with general claims stating that professionalisation always leads to oligarchy. Instead, the overall set of organised interests analysed in seven political systems displays substantial variation in membership influence. To be sure, the analysis does not deny the existence of oligarchic tendencies; rather, it specifies the conditions under which such tendencies might run rampant or be curtailed. Rather surprisingly, in an organisation with an involved membership, hiring professional staff might actually do more good than harm.

Writing Blank Checks?

How government funding affects interest organisations' advocacy behaviour in a multi-layered context

Heylen, F. & Willems, E. (2018) Writing Blank Checks? How government funding affects interest organisations' advocacy behaviour in a multi-layered context, Journal of European Public Policy: doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2018.1495250

Abstract. This article analyses how government funding affects the interactions interest organisations initiate with governments in a multi-level context. Governments rarely write blank checks, but rather specify eligibility and spending requirements when funding interest organisations. Our primary argument is that these requirements do not only impact organisations' interactions with their benefactors, but that they may also impact interactions with governments at *other* levels. We analyse this expectation drawing data from a recent survey of a representative sample of Belgian interest organisations. Our results demonstrate that organisations dependent on funding from the subnational and European level are less prone to interact with the national government. Whereas, organisations dependent on national government funding are not less likely to contact the subnational level of government. This variation is explained by the various ways these respective governments implement discretion.

Introduction

Governments have an interest in establishing stable ties with interest organisations because they provide expertise, signal public support, or facilitate policy implementation (Bouwen 2002; Coen 2007; Haverland & Liefferink 2012). In exchange, governments often support organised interests with funds (Fraussen 2014; Mahoney & Beckstrand 2011; Mosley 2012). However, governments may specify rules and requirements for the acquisition and use of financial support. Such conditions may impact organised interests' advocacy behaviour by making the organisation sensitive to their main funders' preferences. For instance, the European Commission (EC) demands that the activities of its beneficiaries reflect a European dimension. Furthermore, interest organisations advocating the transfer of competences back to the Member States will not be funded (Sanchez-Salgado 2007). The EC is not the only political institution that specifies a *degree of discretion* regarding the spending of its funds. For instance, Celis, Mackay, and Meier (2012: 18) illustrate that the Flemish government – one of the subnational governments of Belgium – attempts to ensure a return on investment by requiring organisations not to spend too much time on national policies. However, there is little systematic research on how funding rules impact the advocacy behaviour of organised interests when organisations depend on funders at multiple levels of government.

Analysing how government funding fosters or stifles advocacy behaviour is relevant for our understanding of the overall legitimacy and coherence of multi-level political systems. Through funding, governments may stimulate the construction of political communities at their level. Supporting a steady mobilisation of an established community of organised interests may strengthen the political legitimacy of the European Union (EU) and the subnational level of government (Follesdal & Hix 2005; Héritier 2004: 26; Keating 2014). Additionally, the overall coherence of a multi-level political system is affected by government funding. For instance, establishing close financial ties with interest organisations at one level may stifle organised interests' proclivity to approach governments at other levels

(Bartolini 2005: 270). This may be problematic as many societal concerns (e.g. gender issues) are transversal and therefore must be addressed across all levels of government (Celis et al. 2012: 2).

So how does government funding affect interest organisations' advocacy activities in a multi-layered context? We argue that the rules and requirements implemented on one governmental level may motivate or hinder interest organisations from interacting with governments at other levels. Our theoretical foundation is 'resource dependency theory' (RDT), which states that organisations experience external control from actors who supply them with resources (Pfeffer & Salancik 1978). Empirical tests of RDT often focus on dyadic interactions between funders and recipients. However, nowadays, political environments are, particularly in Europe, increasingly multi-layered. Nevertheless, empirical tests of how organisations manage multiple incompatible benefactors' demands are scarce (Hillman et al. 2009; Wry et al. 2013). Following Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) our primary expectation is that the criticality of government funding and the degree of discretion recipients enjoy are the most important conditions when organisations interact with multiple funders. Criticality is defined as an organisation's capacity to function when losing vital resources. The degree of discretion is defined as the extent to which benefactors are able and willing to regulate the eligibility and use of funding. Certain rules may stimulate or stifle advocacy toward the benefactor or other governments. Hence, strong critical dependency and low discretion increase the likelihood that government funding will affect advocacy behaviour.

In this article, we analyse recent survey evidence from 727 Belgian interest organisations. We supplement this with a qualitative analysis of key legislation and nine in-depth expert interviews regarding the funding of organised interests. Belgium provides an interesting case because previous research indicates that funding from the EU and Belgian subnational governments may steer advocacy activities (Celis et al. 2012; Sánchez-Salgado 2007). Furthermore, the institutional arrangement of Belgium allows us to compare the effect of funding from different

governments on the same set of interest organisations. Our analysis reveals that a strong dependence on subnational and European funding systematically leads to fewer interactions with the national government. However, relying on national government funding does not diminish contact with subnational governments. We argue that this differential effect of government funding can be explained by how funders implement discretion at different levels of government. This conclusion applies even when controlling for the division of policy competences, resources, age, and organisation type.

Theoretical framework

Interactions between interest organisations and governments are rarely a one-way street since policymakers are incentivised to involve interest organisations in policymaking (Bouwen 2002; Coen 2007; Eising 2007). First, interest organisations can supply governments with technical expertise and information on the policy preferences of key societal actors (Bouwen 2002; Eising 2017; Haverland & Liefferink 2012). Second, interest organisations perform an intermediary function which is instrumental for policy implementation (Bouwen 2002; Haverland & Liefferink 2012; Milward & Provan 2000; Streeck & Schmitter 1985). Third, the mobilisation of national (or subnational or European) interest organisations is crucial in developing a political community, which is vital for building political orders (Bartolini 2005; Keating & Wilson 2014; Plotke 1996).

Governments can shape their interactions with civil society through funding interest organisations (Bloodgood & Tremblay-Boire 2016; Fraussen 2014; Greenwood 2007; Kohler-Koch & Finke 2007). In this regard, RDT is often employed to discuss the impact of government funding on the behaviour and structure of interest organisations. One frequently cited concern is that government funding may restrain interest organisations from political interactions because they 'do not wish to bite the hand that feeds them' (Bloodgood & Tremblay-Boire 2016; Chaves et al. 2004; Mosley 2012; B. Verschuere & De Corte 2012). However, most research demonstrates that funded organisations are more inclined to approach their

beneficiary government (Buffardi et al. 2015; Chaves et al. 2004; Mosley 2012; Moulton & Eckerd 2012; Neumayr et al. 2015). These observations align with RDT. For instance, Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) claim that to survive and achieve their goals, organisations interact more with entities in their environment that control vital resources.

One important remark is that these interactions may or may not result in organised interests' loss of autonomy. Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) describe several conditions which make external control (by governments) more likely. We analyse two of these conditions: (1) the criticality of the resource and (2) discretion. Some authors emphasise the criticality of resource dependency (Beyers & Kerremans 2007; Bouwen 2002; Khieng & Dahles 2014). Criticality here means, *'the ability of the organisation to continue functioning in the absence of the resource'* (Pfeffer & Salancik 1978: 46). Criticality might explain the varying degree to which interest organisations interact with funding governments.

Additionally, in a multi-layered context, funding received from one government may impact the advocacy activities between recipients and other governments. Although empirical tests of RDT typically focus on dyadic interactions between funders and recipients, interest organisations are often confronted with competing demands and opportunities at various levels of government (Hillman et al. 2009; Wry et al. 2013). Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) assert that a funder's implemented discretion is crucial for understanding the effect of competing resource-interdependencies. However, this condition has received limited systematic research attention. We define discretion as the extent to which benefactors are able and willing to establish rules and requirements for the acquisition and use of funding (Pfeffer & Salancik 1978: 48). These rules and requirements are crucial because they may affect the advocacy activities of interest organisations. For instance, governments may demand exclusivity of territorial focus, prioritise engaging in certain policy topics, or (dis/en)courage organisations to contact governments at other levels.

Table 8: Effect of discretion and critical funding on advocacy activities directed towards other levels of government

	High Discretion	*Low Discretion*
Critical Funding	No effect	Strong effect
Not critical	No effect	No/Weak effect

Four outcomes may result from these two conditions (Table 8). Regardless of how critical funding is, it will not affect the multi-level strategies of the recipient (left top and bottom cells) if the funder is unable or unwilling to determine with whom the organisation may interact (the equivalent of writing a blank check). However, when funders provide little or no discretion, this may affect the recipients' multi-level strategies. If funding is critical, this will have a strong effect (top right cell). But if funding is not critical, it is unlikely that this will have a strong impact (bottom right cell). In short, critical dependencies combined with low discretion is likely to affect interest organisations' advocacy behaviour.

We assert that governments' degree of discretion is a function of their legal-administrative capacity and their political goals. With regards to their capacity, in multi-layered political systems, governments vary in their competency over policy domains. When governments are exclusively competent, it is more likely that they will have sufficient financial autonomy and legal capacity to (extensively) regulate funding streams (Deschouwer 2012; Loughlin 2000). This may be less likely in domains where competences are limited or shared, because the diverse nature of funding relations may mitigate dependency on one government (Pfeffer & Salancik 1978: 50). Additionally, the content of government funding policies can also vary in terms of their political goals. One goal that is particularly prevalent in evolving (multi-level) contexts is political order building (Plotke 1996). According to Plotke, 'political orders are built by political blocs that include' 'movements and interest groups' (1996: 39). Specifically, governments may attempt to consolidate and develop systems of interest representation by facilitating advocacy activities and

cooperation with and between organised interests (Plotke 1996: 60). Governments thereby ensure continuous policy expertise from recognised organised interests; this may contribute to the overall legitimacy of a political order (*ibid.*; Bouwen 2002).

Subnational governments may seek to foster stable ties with interest organisations within, but not beyond, their own jurisdictional boundaries (Keating & Wilson 2014: 852). In addition, previous research demonstrates that European institutions are poised to develop an EU-wide interest community which 'may create legitimacy for public action' or at least strengthen the bargaining position of EU institutions and raise support for particular policy solutions (Héritier 2004: 26; Greenwood 2007: 344). However, establishing and supporting subnational and European interest communities may hollow out national governments by 'undermining national mechanisms of political representation and legitimation' (Bartolini 2005: 408; Follesdal & Hix 2005; Keating & Wilson 2014; Schmidt 2013; Skelcher 2000). We can therefore predict that subnational and European levels of government are more eager to establish rules and requirements that ensure organised interests will focus on their polity; shifting the focus from contacting national governments. National governments may counter these dynamics by stimulating cooperation among organised interests from different regions (Billiet et al. 2006; Celis et al. 2012).

Research design

Belgium provides an interesting case for examining government funding's effect on advocacy behaviour in a multi-level context; as interest organisations can gain funding from multiple governments. Belgium is characterized by both centrifugal federalism (fleeing from the centre) and the uploading of policy competences to the EU. Currently, substantial competences are delegated to Belgium's principal subnational governments; Dutch-speaking Flanders and predominantly French-speaking Wallonia.

[19] Nowadays, domains such as sport, culture, education, environment, mobility, and infrastructure are subnational competences. The opportunity to implement funding programmes for interest organisations arose alongside the delegation of competences to the subnational level (Keating & Wilson 2014). Policy domains such as gender, health and social affairs are shared. The Belgian national government currently remains primary legislator in domains such as development cooperation, fiscal policy, economic policy, social security, foreign affairs, and justice (Deschouwer 2012). These domains are, to a varying degree, also subject to European legislation. Furthermore, the EU has several channels to fund domestic interest organisations (Mahoney & Beckstrand 2011; Salgado 2010). In summary, Belgian interest organisations substantially rely on funding from national, subnational and European institutions. At the same time, since many key policy domains are fragmented, Belgian interest organisations must engage with governments at multiple levels.

In this article, we opt for a broad conceptualisation of organised interests, encompassing a wide range of actors that stand between citizens and the government; these include citizen groups, non-profits organisations, labour unions, professional associations, leisure associations, and business associations. Our sample focuses on organisations that aim to represent (sub)national constituencies and excludes organisations that primarily mobilise at the local level (provinces and cities). The data collected among organised interests is part of a larger research project consisting of comparative surveys in various European countries (www.cigsurvey.eu; Beyers et al. 2016). The sampling procedure yielded a list of 1691 interest organisations. These organisations were surveyed on topics such as political strategies, organisational development, and management. We ultimately achieved a response rate of 43 percent (n=727).[20] These organisations constitute a representative sample of Belgian interest organisations (Online Appendix Figure 1A). In addition, we conducted a content analysis of key legislation regarding the funding policies of subnational and national governments. We also conducted nine

interviews with expert interest representatives and government officials. The experts were selected to represent different types of interest organisations active in domains with substantial funding streams across levels of government (see Online Appendix).

To map the advocacy activities of interest organisations aimed at the different levels of government in Belgium, we construct four measures (one for each level of government). These are the dependent variables in our analysis. To construct these variables, we asked respondents how frequently their organisation had contacted governmental actors in the past 12 months. In separate batteries, we assessed contacts with governmental actors at (1) the European, (2) national, (3) Flemish, and (4) Francophone levels of government. The items in each battery contained the most important governmental actors at this level, ranging from the legislative to the executive and administrative branch. The response options ranged from 'no access' to 'at least once a week'. We created four indices by adding the response options of each governmental level (see Online Appendix).

To gauge critical dependence upon government funding, the respondents indicated the percentage of the budget (2015) coming from subnational, national and European levels of government. To meaningfully compare the coefficients of funding, we standardised these three percentages.[21] By including these three variables into the analysis (i.e., relative proportions of the budget), we estimate the criticality of government funding. The higher the share of funding coming from one government, the more critically dependent the organisation will be upon this government. Although we do not directly measure the degree of discretion in the statistical analysis below, we discuss the varying degrees of discretion governments offer to beneficiaries based on the content analysis and expert interviews. This helps to contextualise and illustrate the robustness of our statistical results.

We add six control variables. First, the division of competences is a crucial factor we control for. Organisations who are interested in certain domains must turn to the government competent for that matter (Greenwood 1997). To do so, we

created three dichotomous variables: indicating, respectively, whether organisations are active in subnational, national or shared (Online Appendix Table A9, Beyers & Bursens 2013). Second, we control for whether the organisational membership is principally located at the subnational or national level of government. This is crucial because organisations with a (sub)national membership are more likely to focus on the (sub)national level of government (Pralle 2003). Third, we control for organisations' finite capacity to conduct advocacy work. More precisely, those who interact already with one (or more) level(s) of government may interact less with other levels of government. We control for this by adding the measures of advocacy at other levels of government as control variables. Fourth, we control for resource endowment, particularly whether well-resourced organisations have greater capacity to interact with governments (e.g., Kohler-Koch et al. 2017). For this purpose, we construct a categorical variable which indicates whether the organisational budget is at (between €100000 and €500000), below the median (<€100000), or above the median (>€500000) budget in the sample. Fifth, we control for organisation type since some types of organisations may be more politically active. Based on information from their websites, we created a variable distinguishing between different types of organisations (Binderkrantz 2008; Online Appendix Table A10). Finally, we control for organisational age since the advocacy behaviour of older organisations may reflect the political situation before the federalisation of Belgium (Buffardi et al. 2015) (distributions in Online Appendix Table A11).

Analysis: criticality and discretion of government funding in Belgium

The key independent variable in our analysis is government funding. We argue that government funding may affect advocacy behaviour, depending on two conditions. The first condition is criticality. Among the interest organisations in our sample, on average 37 percent of their budget originates from government funding. This underlines the importance of government funding for Belgian interest organisations. In addition, 64 percent of all organisations receive funding from at

least one government. However, there are stark differences with respect to the (critical) dependence on funding from different levels of government. Of organisations who receive at least one quarter of their budget from government, 36 percent depend on subnational funding and 13 percent on national government funding. In contrast, only 2 percent depend for one quarter of their budget on EU funding. The data show that a substantial number of Belgian interest organisations critically depend upon national and subnational government funding.

The second condition is discretion, which is the extent to which governments are able and willing to implement rules and procedures regarding funding. The implementation of (extensive) funding programmes is a function of the legislative competences and thus also the financial autonomy governments have in specific policy domains (Deschouwer 2012; Loughlin 2000). As corroborated by all our expert interviewees, in policy domains for which governments hold exclusive competences, larger funding streams are often more extensively regulated. For instance, we see that the national government provides large-scale structural funding within the policy domain of international development cooperation (€1.165 billion for 85 officially recognised organisations). No less than five national laws regulate official recognition for structural funding and delineate many criteria development NGOs have to fulfil (Online Appendix Table A12; 2016015111; 2016015088; 2015015122; 2014015123; 2014015030).[22] The extent of regulation in this domain is much more limited at the subnational level, where governments only occasionally provide smaller funds for development NGOs. For example, in subnational legislation, the criteria detailed in the decrees and project calls are often narrowly aimed at development education (Art. 17 2007036209; Chapter 3 2013200236). The opposite applies in the exclusively subnational socio-cultural policy domain; for instance Flanders provides large-scale structural funding of €57656559 divided among 146 organisations (2017020648; 2017031708). Similarly, at the Francophone level of government, structural funding for environmental organisations, also a subnational competence, is extensively regulated (at least 66

criteria have to be fulfilled; 2014200854; 2014204154). In contrast, the national government grants only limited funding in this domain (through a simple application procedure on the website of the National Lottery; see also 2017031161).[23] In short, larger sources of funding of any government are invariably regulated more extensively compared to smaller funds (like projects).

With regards to the European level, the European Social Funds (ESFs) present a major European funding source directly aimed at domestic organisations. In Belgium, ESFs are primarily implemented, managed and supplemented by government agencies at the subnational level. For instance, in Francophone Belgium the current ESF Operational Programme totals at €1214434685 (40 percent EU).[24] Although the EU designs the programmes to which this money is allocated, eligibility requirements, spending rules, and evaluation procedures are largely determined by the responsible governments who are co-financers (2015036252; 2015036442; 2002036509; 1999029514; 2002029465). Therefore, how discretion shapes advocacy activities through European funding is substantially affected by the rules and requirements of the implementing government.

To examine government funding's effects on interest organisations' advocacy behaviour, we must investigate the exact content and political goals of these funding rules. Aside from eligibility and spending criteria regarding the (technical) management of the organisation (e.g. degree of professionalization, financial solvability), some criteria regulate advocacy behaviour. Comparing development cooperation with socio-cultural (or environmental) policy illustrates that while the national government encourages collaboration among organisations and advocacy activities in the two principal Belgian regions, the subnational governments stifle interest organisations in their multi-level advocacy activities. As the following examples demonstrate, each government wants to foster stable ties with interest organisations within, but not beyond, their own jurisdiction (Keating & Wilson 2014: 852). The target, extent of regulation, and examples of the funding criteria are summarized in Table A8 of the Online Appendix.

Regarding the national government's development cooperation policy, eligibility and spending criteria include 'a stimulus to work in consortia across the language border in common strategic frameworks', and 'having activities that cover the whole of Belgium' (Art.10 § 2 °5; Art.11 § 1 2016015088). Moreover, the national government expects a regular policy dialogue with its funded organisations (Art.11 § 1 2016015088).

In contrast, the planned activities of organisations described in the application for obtaining funds in the socio-cultural policy domain must reflect, in Flanders, the 'relevance and appearance of the Dutch-speaking community (Art. 4, Art.10 °6 2017020648) and many criteria pertain to the active use of the Dutch language by the organisations' staff and members (Art.8, Art. 33, Art. 48- 49 2017020648); while on the Francophone side, socio-cultural associations must present 'two broader awareness campaigns in the French-language community per year on concrete themes specified by decree' (Art.3 °4 2003029435). Furthermore, the rules and requirements established by the subnational governments for funds granted to environmental associations include 'being a member of an advisory council' (Art. 11 °2 2014200854; Art. 2 § 1 2016035174); stipulate 'a stimulus to work in consortia within the own region – consolidating the local and provincial level' or 'having activities in at least three out of five provinces – with the provinces in the other regions counting as one' (2014200854; 2016035174). Moreover, the Flemish and Francophone levels of government direct environmental organisations to focus advocacy activities on policy priorities determined by the government (Art. 12 °3 2014200854; Art. 8, Art. 11 2016035174). Similar legislation can be found in subnational policy domains such as youth, arts, or sports (see Online Appendix Table A12).

In addition, experts confirmed that non-compliance with the (structural) funding programme's rules and requirements will cause the application to be deemed inadmissible. Moreover, organisations granted funding are also annually controlled and mandated to report their performance regarding these criteria and

in addressing policy priorities in their activities. They may lose funding or be forced to reimburse it if they do not fulfil these demands. However, governments presumably respect the political autonomy of interest organisations. More specifically, our content-analysis found no formal eligibility or evaluation criteria pertaining to the censoring of specific advocacy behaviour. To the contrary, the subnational governments for instance stipulates that socio-cultural associations have to 'make explicit their vision on their critical role and how they will fulfil this role' in society (Art. 23 °3 2017031708; Art. 1 2003029435).

In conclusion, many Belgian interest organisations are critically dependent upon government funding in policy domains in which either the national or subnational governments are able and willing to shape discretion. Whilst the national government incentivises advocacy activities across language barriers, the eligibility and spending requirements put in place by the subnational governments are not conducive to do so. In the following section, we analyse how criticality and discretion affect organised interests' advocacy behaviour in a multi-level context.

Analysis: explaining patterns of advocacy behaviour

In the distribution of the four dependent variables measuring advocacy activities (one for each level of government), there is significant variation in the extent to which Belgian interest organisations contact governments. There is generally a skewed distribution, meaning that few organisations develop strong ties with particular governments. Furthermore, the distribution includes a high proportion of zeros, meaning that many organisations never or seldom contact certain governmental actors (see Online Appendix Figure 2A). However, this does not mean that they do not contact other levels of government. Examining these four measures together rather than separately may provide insight into the behavioural patterns of Belgian interest organisations and particularly the extent to which they engage in multi-level advocacy activities. Around 72 percent of all interest organisations target two or more levels of government. Of these organisations, 34 percent target two levels, 30 percent target three levels, and 8 percent target all

four levels of government. In short, few organised interests display a high level of political activity; but among those who are politically active, many advocate across multiple levels of government.

The subsequent analyses compare the effects of government funding on the propensity of interest organisations to approach different levels of government. Since there are four separate dependent variables, we present four separate models. The dependent variables are count measures characterized by over-dispersion (the variance is larger than the mean) as well as many zeros; therefore, a zero-inflated negative binomial regression (ZINB) is the most appropriate modelling strategy for this type of data. ZINB models, regress the excess of zeros in a separate model. Table 9 presents the four models.

The excess of zeros is presumably best-captured by the origin of an organisations' constituency. Most zeros in the dataset are due to the fact that exclusively Francophone or Flemish organisations' lack of contact with the other subnational level or the national government. We therefore include this covariate in the zero-inflated part of the model. Since we are not interested in the conditional effects and our expectations impinge upon the extensiveness of advocacy behaviour, we do not include other covariates in this part of the model. Vuong tests confirm that our ZINB models, which control for the territorial based membership, fit significantly better than regular negative binomial models.[25]

Regarding our primary expectation, introducing the variables on government funding produces a significantly better model fit.[26] At all levels of government, there is a positive relationship between receiving funding from particular governments and advocacy contacts with those same governments.

Table 9: Zero-inflated negative binominal regressions

	Flemish	Francophone level	National	European
Zero-inflated Model				
Intercept	-0.25 (0.15)*	-0.08 (0.14)	-1.88 (0.24)***	-0.98 (0.31)**
Member (National, ref.)	-	-	-	-
Member (Flemish)	-2.89 (0.42)***	3.18 (0.35)***	1.17 (0.28)***	0.48 (0.31)
Member (Francophone)	4.08 (0.60)***	-2.57 (0.37)***	1.19 (0.30)***	0.57 (0.34)*
Count Model				
Intercept	1.55 (0.15)***	2.03 (0.19)***	0.84 (0.16)***	-0.02 (0.3)
Subnational Funding	0.19 (0.08)**	0.40 (0.09)***	-0.24 (0.07)***	-0.15 (0.13)
National Funding	-0.07 (0.07)	0.03 (0.08)	0.20 (0.07)***	-0.25 (0.13)*
European Funding	<0.01 (0.06)	0.06 (0.07)	-0.13 (0.06)**	0.27 (0.09)***
Subnational competences	0.16 (0.07)**	0.07 (0.08)	-0.16 (0.07)**	0.41 (0.13)***
National competences	-0.07 (0.07)	0.03 (0.08)	0.27 (0.06)***	0.15 (0.13)
Shared competences	0.03 (0.06)	0.07 (0.08)	0.09 (0.07)	0.08 (0.12)
Resources (<med., ref.)	-	-	-	-
Resources (med.)	0.16 (0.08)**	0.30 (0.09)***	0.08 (0.07)	-0.06 (0.15)
Resources (>med.)	0.16 (0.08)**	0.31 (0.10)***	0.09 (0.08)	0.21 (0.15)
Flemish contacts	-	-0.01 (0.01)	0.05 (0.01)***	<0.01 (0.01)
Francophone contacts	-0.01 (<0.01)	-	0.02 (<0.01)***	0.01 (0.01)
National contacts	0.06 (0.01)***	0.04 (0.01)***	-	0.07 (0.01)***
European contacts	0.01 (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)	0.06 (0.01)***	-
Type: (Non-profit, ref.)[7]	-	-	-	-
Type: Professional	0.07 (0.12)	0.24 (0.13)*	0.28 (0.11)**	-0.24 (0.21)
Type: Citizen groups	0.03 (0.11)	0.21 (0.11)*	0.26 (0.10)**	-0.18 (0.19)
Type: Business	0.14 (0.11)	0.18 (0.12)	0.20 (0.11)*	-0.21 (0.19)
Type: Leisure	-0.06 (0.13)	0.23 (0.14)	0.04 (0.15)	-0.82 (0.25)***
Type: Rest	0.42 (0.14)***	0.57 (0.14)***	-0.20 (0.14)	-0.49 (0.28)*
Age (log)	-0.08 (0.03)**	-0.06 (0.04)	0.02 (0.03)	0.07 (0.07)
Log(theta)	2.22 (0.21)***	1.59 (0.13)***	2.02 (0.19)***	0.78 (0.28)***
Log-likelihood	-1059.47	-1035.04	-1333.08	-936.73
Observations	577	577	577	577

Index: *= p < 0.1, **= p < 0.05, ***=p < 0.01

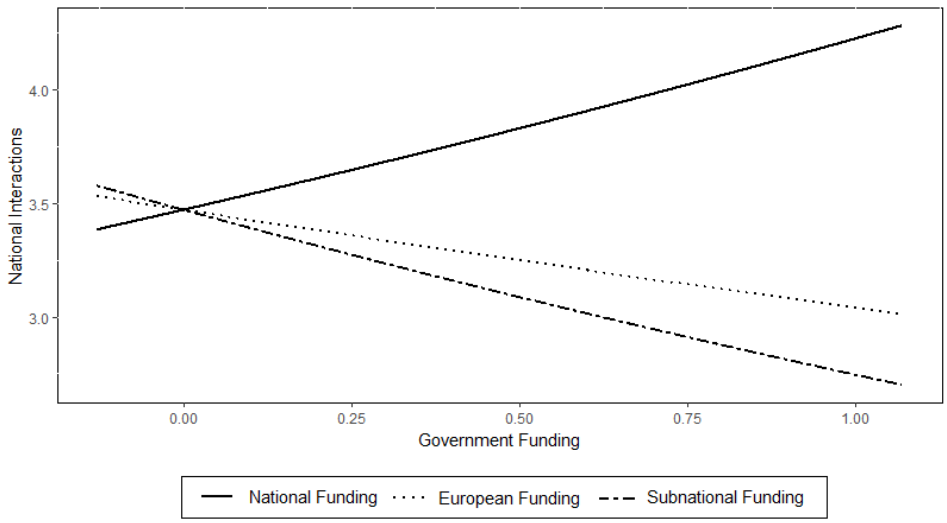
[7] Non-profit organisations are public interest organisations which are not primarily politically active. As opposed to citizen groups which are public interest organisations that are primarily politically active.

Specifically, the more critical funding becomes (in terms of a higher proportion of their budget originating from a particular government), the more organised interests will contact that government. In the various models, the effect of funding is most substantive for subnational funding when contacting the Francophone level of government (β= 0.40) and for EU funding when contacting the EU institutions (β= 0.27). When the criticality of funding moves up one unit, contacts increase by 49 percent and 30 percent respectively.[3] This is substantially greater than the effects at the Flemish (β= 0.19) and national levels of government (β= 0.20); contacts increase by 20 and 22 percent respectively when the criticality of government funding increases by one unit. These results therefore confirm previous research demonstrating that government funding corresponds with a higher propensity to approach the funding government (Buffardi et al. 2015; Chaves et al. 2004).

These results are also confirmed by our expert interviewees in the domain of development cooperation; for instance, the national level of government expects a regular 'dialogue' (e.g. within work groups on specific themes or within advisory councils) with the interest organisations they fund . Respondents indicate that the content of these dialogues is not restricted to modalities connected to the funding, but that it also concerns specific government policies. The experts reported similar patterns with respect to subnational governments. As described by Fraussen (2014), the Flemish environmental regulatory framework triggered the formalisation of interactions between environmental associations and the Flemish government. Since then, the Flemish government actively shapes interest mobilisation by reducing the number of organisations they recognize for funding and policy deliberations. Furthermore, the interviewed government officials indicate that project funding, directly connected to certain policy priorities, is an effective means to draw the focus of interest organisations. In sum, as one interest representative states: interest organisations tend to 'huddle together with the one that gives the money'.

Our analysis indicates that ties between particular governments and interest organisations have implications beyond this dyadic relation. More precisely, funding from a particular governmental level can substantially impact the contacts between the recipient and other governmental levels (Figure 5). The evidence shows that, generally, increasing levels of critical dependency upon one level of government results in fewer advocacy activities aimed at other government levels. For instance, substantial subnational funding is negatively associated with contacting the national government (β= -0.24). One unit increase in subnational funding diminishes contacts with the national government by 21 percent. Furthermore, EU funding is negatively associated with the propensity of organisations to seek contact with the national government (β= -0.13). However, this is not a uniform effect, as national government funding does not significantly affect the propensity with which groups address subnational governments.

Figure 5: Predicted values of government funding from different levels on interacting with the national level of government



These varying effects may be attributed to how discretion is shaped by the subnational levels of governments relative to how the national government establishes funding requirements (Celis et al. 2012; Verschuere & De Corte 2012).

However, based on statistical models alone we cannot draw firm conclusions regarding the exact causal relationship between funding and advocacy behaviour. Government funding can attract advocacy, but advocacy towards a particular government may also trigger this government to fund advocacy organisations. Yet, the qualitative evidence suggests that the funding policies governments adopt, actively seek to steer advocacy behaviour. More precisely, the content analysis illustrates that the rules established by subnational governments are not conducive to multi-level advocacy behaviour. Previous case-study research found that eligibility criteria substantially influence the functioning and political behaviour of organised interests. For instance, since the federalisation of sports policy in 1977, all Belgian sports federations had to divide into a Flemish and a Francophone chapter to fulfil eligibility requirements (De Knop & De Bosscher 2016). As one interviewed Flemish government official expressed: 'You had to choose'. These subnational chapters have subsequently established extensive ties with the subnational governments and reduced their connections with the national government. At the same time, funded interest organisations are subject to stringent rules and criteria regulating other aspects of their political behaviour.

According to our expert interviewees active in the completely devolved policy domains of social-cultural policy and environmental policy, the subnational governments currently take no action to enforce the exclusivity of political contacts; perhaps because organisations have long since adapted to the federalised political context. Policy domains in which the competences are shared and in which governments must compete for the focus of organised interests may therefore provide a more compelling test for our hypothesis. Indeed some expert interviewees indicated that if one critically depends on subnational funding, one should tread carefully when contacting the national government. One interviewee admitted to self-censoring their annual reports to not mention their cooperation with organisations from the other linguistic community. This corroborates Celis et al. (2012), who demonstrate that Flemish women's organisations should not spend a

disproportionate amount of time addressing national government's matters. Yet, this is not formally explicated in regulations or legislation, but this appears to be an informal rule that interest organisations adhere to when balancing ties with national and subnational governments.

The national government attempts to counter these centrifugal dynamics (Billiet et al. 2006; Celis et al. 2012). For instance, a national government official indicated that funding is employed to incentivise the inclusion of both Flemish and Francophone organisations in Common Strategic Frameworks for development cooperation. This may explain national funding's insignificant effect on the likelihood of contacting the subnational levels of government.

The control variables demonstrate some other interesting results. First, organisations active on national competences more frequently approach the national government. Similarly, organisations primarily focused on subnational competences more often approach the Flemish government. Second, we control to what extent being politically active on one level of government influences contacts with other levels of government. Generally, contacting the national government more, increases contacts with all other levels of government; this illustrates that the national government is still a central venue.[27] Regarding resources, results are mixed. Greater access to resources increases contacts with the subnational governments, but not at the national or European level. There is no evidence suggesting that contacting 'more distant' levels, such as the EU, requires more resourceful organisations; this corroborates earlier research by Beyers and Kerremans (2007). The fourth control variable, group type, produced some differences. Relative to non-profit organisations, there are no differences for the other organisational types in the propensity to contact the Flemish government. In contrast, professional groups and citizen groups more frequently contact the Francophone and national levels of government. Compared to non-profit organisations, business associations only interact more with the national

government. The final control variable, age, negatively impacts advocacy before the Flemish government, but not on other government levels.

Conclusion

In this article, we analysed the conditions under which funding affects Belgian interest organisations' propensity to contact governments in a multi-layered context. Although it was already well-established that government funding stimulates more contacts between interest organisations and policymakers, few authors have examined how this might unfold in a context with multiple funders (e.g. Buffardi et al. 2015; Chaves et al. 2004). Our research demonstrates that government funding not only affects the propensity to interact with the funding government, but may also substantially impact interest organisations' interactions with other governments. For example, when controlling for a wide range of variables, interest organisations approach the Belgian national government less frequently if they depend more critically on funding from the subnational or European level.

To interpret these results, we applied a resource dependency perspective. Following Hillman et al. (2009) and Wry et al. (2013), we argue that RDT may be fruitfully applied to understand the multi-level context in which many interest organisations find themselves nowadays. Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) emphasise two conditions; the criticality of government funding and discretion. Although highly relevant to our understanding of the effect of funding on the behaviour and functioning of organised interests, few works have taken discretion, i.e. the rules and criteria regulating funding, into account.

It is evident that governments use funding to shape the mobilisation of interest organisations. For instance, governments may wish to fund organisations that deploy activities within their territory as this could foster a vibrant interest community within their own jurisdiction. This is a crucial element of political order building (Keating & Wilson 2014; Plotke 1996). Therefore, subnational governments may wish to develop strong, nearly exclusive ties with subnational interest

organisations and might thereby stifle advocacy activities towards the national level of government. Whilst the national government may seek to fund organisations active across subnational boundaries.

The contribution of this article is two-fold. First, we show that acquiring and spending government funding is often subject to detailed regulation. These rules are not restricted to technical indicators, but also include criteria of a more political nature. For instance, our qualitative evidence shows that governments may regulate the extent to which it expects a political dialogue with the funded organisations. In this regard, governments may steer the focus of organised interests by granting funding tied to specific policy priorities. In the statistical models, we show that higher levels of criticality consistently lead to more interactions between recipients and their benefactors.

Second, we show that in multi-level systems, funding conditions at one level may affect the advocacy behaviour at other levels of government. The statistical models demonstrate that subnational and European funding draws away organised interests' from the national level of government. Whilst national funding does not affect ties between subnational governments and interest organisations. In this regard, our qualitative evidence demonstrates substantial differences in how national, subnational and European institutions regulate funding. Whilst national funding is used to incentivise cooperation across regions, subnational rules on funding are not conducive for multi-level advocacy behaviour. For instance, subnational legislation details a number of stringent language and territoriality requirements that have in the past led to the splitting up of national interest organisations. These results are not only consistent with previous research, they are also aligned with the notion of political order building, in which governments seek to establish stable, almost exclusive, relations with organised interests that provide them with continuous policy expertise (Celis et al. 2012; Plotke 1996; Bouwen 2002).

In sum, this article shows that examining the relative amount of funding as well as the rules tied to funding is an important avenue for further research.

Admittedly, the Belgian funding structure and its multi-level arrangements have some unique features. However, in many countries, organised interest acquire funding from the national government and in several cases also from sub- and supranational institutions. As we show, this could affect the advocacy activities of interest organisations and might even interfere with their autonomous functioning. Governments may vary in terms of the political objectives they pursue when funding organised interests, but it would be unreasonable to expect that in supporting organised interests with public resources, governments write blank checks.

Live to Fight Another Day?

Organizational Maintenance and Mortality Anxiety of Civil Society Organizations[8][9]

Heylen, F., Fraussen, B. & Beyers, J. (2018) Live to Fight Another Day? Organizational Maintenance and Mortality Anxiety of Civil Society Organisations, Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly: doi.org/10.1177/0899764018788664

Abstract. Communities of civil society organizations are characterized by substantial volatility, as new organizations are continuously established and old ones are regularly disbanded. This paper aims to improve our understanding of the dynamic nature of civil society by focusing on a particular aspect of organizational maintenance, namely mortality anxiety. Building upon previous work that assesses actual and perceived survival chances of civil society organizations, we examine how inter-organizational competition, ties with public authorities and the internal institutionalization of civil society organizations shape how these groups assess their survival chances. Our results demonstrate that high levels of inter-organizational competition and a strong reliance on government funding significantly increase mortality anxiety. Furthermore, they highlight the importance of a professionalized and internally differentiated structure. We rely on survey data and focus on the case of Belgium, in this way providing a first assessment of mortality anxiety in a neo-corporatist political system. Courant current

[8] NVSQ is a US journal, so US spelling is used.
[9] Civil society organisations is used here instead of interest organisation, which is more commonly used in this journal.

Introduction

A vibrant civil society is often considered a hallmark of a healthy democracy (Putnam 2001; for a recent discussion see Schlozman et al. 2015; Skocpol 2004). A dense and diverse network of civil society organizations provides an important complement to the representation of citizens through political parties and elections. These associations can function as "schools of democracy" and have the potential to establish crucial linkages between citizens and public authorities. However, such representative expectations are difficult to meet in times when civil society groups face serious challenges, including changing patterns of political engagement, inter-organizational competition and technological changes. The relations of civil society with public authorities have also become more complex. For instance, governments sometimes aim to steer the activities of civil society organizations through government funding, or adopt a critical attitude vis-à-vis their advocacy work (Arvidson et al. 2017; T. Brandsen et al. 2017).

As a result, civil society groups may find it hard to play their representative role, and become more preoccupied with organizational stability and survival (e.g. Mosley 2012). Previous work has demonstrated the volatile nature of organizational populations, caused by the "death" of existing organizations and the "birth" of new ones (Halpin & Jordan 2009; Lowery & Gray 2015). This article focusses on a related, yet distinct aspect of mortality, namely the fear of disbandment or mortality anxiety. Gray and Lowery define mortality anxiety as "an assessment of the likelihood that an organization will soon face a crisis threatening its existence" (1997: 26). Why do some organizations fear for their continued existence? To what extent is this determined by competition amongst groups, the relations with public authorities, or organizational features such as internal differentiation and the relations with their membership?

This paper builds upon previous research, in particular the work by Gray and Lowery on population ecology (1996), as well as studies on mortality anxiety in the United States and the United Kingdom (Gray & Lowery 1997; Halpin & Thomas

2012b). We aim to contribute to this literature in two ways. First, we analyze mortality anxiety in a neo-corporatist context. Sometimes it is presumed that competition amongst civil society organizations is less pronounced in these systems compared to more pluralist ones (Grote et al. 2008; F. Wilson 1983). However, not many scholars have systematically assessed this (an exception is Fisker 2013). Second, in explaining mortality anxiety, scholars have focused less on the extent to which organizations are embedded within their broader environment (Halpin & Jordan 2009; Halpin & Nownes 2012). In this paper, we therefore complement the population ecology approach with an assessment of how resource dependencies with public authorities (e.g. access to policy-makers and reliance on government funding) and the internal institutionalization of organizations (e.g. professionalization and member involvement) impacts mortality anxiety.

The next section relates the question of mortality anxiety to earlier work on the organizational maintenance of civil society organizations, and briefly reviews previous studies on this topic. In this section, we also develop our main hypotheses, building upon insights from population ecology, resource dependence theory and earlier work on the internal institutionalization of civil society groups. Next, we clarify our research design and data, which results from a survey among Belgian civil society groups. Subsequently, we present our results, relate our findings to previous research, and conclude by discussing some broader implications.

Organizational maintenance of civil society organizations

We propose to get a more fine-grained understanding of mortality anxiety by approaching it from three different perspectives. These perspectives cover the most important elements of an organization's struggle for survival, which have also been addressed in previous work on mortality anxiety and organizational survival more generally.

First of all, the research on mortality anxiety draws heavily on population ecology. In these studies, competition between organizations is often considered a key factor for explaining how groups perceive their survival chances. Population

ecologists also acknowledge that the relations between an organization and its broader environment will shape how the leadership perceives the chances of organizational survival. Nevertheless, due to a strong reliance on census data, most population studies have not systematically assessed the impact of variation in contextual embeddedness, such as the relations with public authorities (Hager et al. 2004; Halpin & Nownes 2012; Halpin & Jordan 2009).

In a second instance, we therefore build upon studies that have highlighted the importance of organizational ties to political institutions and other institutional actors to gain vital resources as well as legitimacy (Andrews & Edwards 2004; Baum & Oliver 1991; Hager et al. 2004; Vermeulen et al. 2016; Walker & McCarthy 2010). However, in line with Walker & McCarthy (2010), and drawing on resource dependence theory (Pfeffer & Salancik 1978), we point to the ambiguity of maintaining close ties to government, as these ties can have positive and negative consequences for the functioning of an organization.

Third, following recent work on mortality anxiety and the actual disbanding of organizations, we also consider the role of internal institutionalization. While we control for organizational features such as age and size, we emphasize specific factors related to the internal structure and functioning of organizations. We zoom in on elements highlighted in previous work on the internal institutionalization of civil society organizations, such as whether there is a clear internal division of labor and the level of membership involvement (Minkoff 1999; Staggenborg 1988). Our assumption here is that small and young organizations with limited resources might also be confident about their survival chances, if they have a professionalized structure in place as well as adequate processes for membership involvement. In the following paragraphs, we formulate our hypotheses, building on these three perspectives.

The population ecology literature strongly emphasizes competition as an important explanatory factor for understanding organizational maintenance (Lowery & Gray 1995). This competition usually takes place on two fronts:

competition for resources and competition for policy influence. As regards to organizational maintenance, the fight for resources is particularly relevant. Previous work has assessed the impact of competition in different ways. Population ecologists usually assess competition in an indirect way by assessing the number of organizations, or population density, active within a certain domain. As argued by Gray and Lowery, if the number of groups in a domain increases, more groups have to compete for the same pool of resources, which increases the chances of mortality anxiety and ultimately organizational deaths (1996: 27). Yet, despite its straightforward nature, density might be a rather crude proxy for competition. That is, high density could also suggest the opposite: precisely because competition is low, many groups are able to survive and flourish. We can also measure competition in a more direct way, by assessing an organization's, experience of stress. In this view, it is the perception of a competitive environment that shapes organizational behavior. One way to measure this subjective experience is by surveying group officials and asking them directly to what extent they perceive competition (which we consider a proxy of what Lowery and Gray term 'direct competition'). The expectation is that the higher the level of direct competition, the more likely the leadership experience mortality anxiety.

H1. Groups who are engaged in policy domains characterized by high levels of indirect competition are more likely to experience mortality anxiety.

H2. Groups who experience higher levels of direct competition are more likely to experience mortality anxiety.

Our second set of expectations focuses on the ties of civil society organizations with political institutions. Indeed, one of the central assumptions of resource dependence theory is that organizations can enhance their survival chances by developing ties to other organizations and institutions that provide critical resources (Pfeffer & Salancik 1978; see also Baum & Oliver 1991). Ties with policy-makers are especially important for civil society organizations, as they are often vital to secure critical resources. For instance, being a political insider – i.e.

enjoying regular access – improves the legitimacy an organization enjoys (Baum & Oliver 1991; Halpin & Thomas 2012a; Vermeulen et al. 2016). Additionally, the signal that political elites consider particular civil society organizations as relevant participants in the policy process might positively affect their ability to attract members and additional financial resources (Hager et al. 2004; Baum & Oliver 1991; Walker & McCarthy 2010; Mosley 2012). We therefore expect that organizations with ties to policy-makers, or a high level of "insiderness", will experience less mortality anxiety.

Another aspect of ties with public authorities involves the reliance of civil society organizations on government funding (Walker 1983; Mahoney & Beckstrand 2011; Neumayr et al. 2015; Verschuere & De Corte 2014). Government funding is often considered a double-edged sword, sometimes essential to organizational maintenance and development, but also possibly threatening to an organization's autonomy. On the one hand, such support from public authorities may assist the establishment of groups, benefit their organizational development and enhance their legitimacy (Hager et al. 2004). On the other hand, according to resource dependence theory, maintaining close ties to government can also increase mortality anxiety. For instance, recent work shows that a strong reliance on government funding cause mission drift, which implies that civil society groups are less attentive to the concerns of their members (Kim & Van Ryzin 2014; Mosley 2012; Nikolova 2015; B. Verschuere & De Corte 2012; Walker & McCarthy 2010). In the long run, these pressures increase organizational uncertainty and could lead to mortality anxiety and/or disbandment (Anheier et al. 1997; Bloodgood & Tremblay-Boire 2016; Chaves et al. 2004). Furthermore, organizations who rely on government funding need to comply with specific requirements, which implies heavy administrative burdens, putting them on a competitive disadvantage compared to those organization who do not have to follow these rules (Walker & McCarthy 2010; Hager et al. 2004). Therefore, we expect that civil society

organization for whom government funding represents a large share of their budget will experience higher levels of mortality anxiety.

H3. Groups that are insiders to the political system are less likely to experience mortality anxiety.

H4. Groups that rely strongly on government funding are more likely to experience mortality anxiety.

Third, previous research has shown how organizational features itself are vital to explain not only mortality anxiety, but also mortality itself. We therefore complement the two perspectives outlined above with a third set of expectations related to the internal processes of civil society organizations, building upon earlier studies of internal institutionalization (Jordan & Maloney 2007; Klüver & Saurugger 2013; Maier et al. 2016; McCarthy & Zald 1973; Minkoff 1999; Staggenborg 1988). We build upon classic work on political organizations that has emphasized the tension between developing the organization by establishing professional structures, and ensuring a continued membership involvement (Michels 1915; see also Schmitter & Streeck 1999; Piven & Cloward 1977; Rucht 1999).

Substantial empirical work has emphasized that organizations can establish organizational robustness by investing in professional staff and by developing adequate internal management (Hung & Ong 2012; Jordan & Maloney 1997; Maloney 2015; Marquez 2015; McCarthy & Zald 1973; Staggenborg 1988). One way of coping with this complexity involves hiring professionals with expertise in management, finance, communication or law. Another strategy is to develop a sophisticated internal division of labor and to establish specialized sub-units enabling the organization to cope with specific problems. Such professionalization could give organizations a competitive edge, making them better prepared to tackle external challenges, and might consequently reduce mortality anxiety (Halpin & Thomas 2012).

Some scholars argue that because of trends towards professionalization, membership-driven organizations are in disarray (e.g. Skocpol 2004), while other

researchers have contested or nuanced this claim (e.g. Minkoff et al. 2013; Walker & McCarthy 2010). It seems plausible that investment in a more elaborate organizational structure could result in fewer opportunities for membership participation. Indeed, although organizations investing in their maintenance may experience less mortality anxiety, scholars note this could be at the cost of their membership. In this regard, previous work on mortality anxiety (but also on mortality in general) has focused on membership size (Edwards & McCarthy 2004; Gray & Lowery 1997; Halpin & Nownes 2011; Vermeulen et al. 2016). The expectation is that organizations with more members, which may provide a reliable source of income, will experience less mortality anxiety. Although we test for membership size, we also analyze the role members play within civil society groups. Specifically, we look at actual membership involvement, more in particular the extent to which members are participating in the day-to-day operations of the organization. Our assumption is that involving members may build loyalty, substantial societal support, foster an allegiance and ensure a reliable stream of income. In addition, an active membership may enable experimentation, innovation and the circulation of ideas that keep the leadership fit and well informed about the concerns of their constituency. Therefore, our expectation is that groups fostering and building strong ties with their members will experience less mortality anxiety.

H5: Groups that professionalize are less likely to experience mortality anxiety.

H6: Groups with many members are less likely to experience mortality anxiety.

H7. Groups that maintain strong ties with their members are less likely to experience mortality anxiety.

Research design

This paper focuses on the Belgian case, a country that is typically described as "moderately neo-corporatist". In that sense it is quite similar to countries like Germany and Denmark (Bloodgood & Tremblay-Boire 2016; Lijphart & Crepaz 1991;

Siaroff 1999). In this section, we present the research design, which involves two steps: a) a systematic mapping of the population of Belgian civil society groups and b) implementing a survey among these groups.

Our mapping of Belgian civil society started from the Crossroads Bank for Enterprises (*Kruispuntbank voor Ondernemingen*) which is maintained by the Belgian federal government. This database registers all legal entities that engage in some socio-economic activity and contains more than two million organizational entities, including all established legal persons, non-profits and foundations (for details see Online Appendix). The register requires organizations to indicate which socio-economic activities they primarily engage in. To account for civil society organizations, a separate category (S94) was created, which refers to organizations that represent the interests of specific constituencies. This set includes a diversity of organizations that are active in a wide range of policy domains, such as groups that gather citizens and focus on public causes (e.g. the environment) and/or the provision of particular services (e.g. health), as well as associations that represent professionals within a particular sector, or companies active in a certain industry.

As the overall project primarily focuses on representation at the national and regional level, we decided to restrict our mapping to those organizations that are active at these levels of government and excluded civil society groups that are primarily focused on representation at the local level (such as provinces and cities). Combined, this yielded a list of 1691 regional and nation-wide (or federal) organizations; of these 42 percent are nation-wide groups and 58 percent are regional (Flemish of Francophone) organizations. Having established this overview, we searched (via the website and in some instances short telephone calls) contact data for two (high-level) representatives of each organization (for instance: the director, president or secretary-general).

Table 10: Distributions independent and control variables

Variables	Obs.	Mean	SD	Freq.	Min	Max
Independent variables						
Indirect competition (log)	752	5.53	1.01	-	2.89	7.65
Direct competition (1=No, ref.)	858	-	-	202	- (ref)	-
2=little	-	-	-	233	-	-
3=moderate	-	-	-	240	-	-
4=strong	-	-	-	138	-	-
5=very strong	-	-	-	45	-	-
Insiderness (index)	629	5.2	3.4	-	0	16
Government subsidies (%)	779	36.1	37.9	-	0	100
Internal differentiation (index)	836	5.25	1.46	-	0	7
Number of staff (log)	770	8.2	8.2	-	-18.4	8.7
Membership involvement (index)	744	20.9	5.5	-	0	30
# individual members (1=<Median, ref.)	799	-	-	385	- (ref)	-
2=Median	-	-	-	190	-	-
3=>Median	-	-	-	224	-	-
# organizational members (1=<Median, ref.)	799	-	-	298	-	-
2=Median	-	-	-	254	-	-
3=>Median	-	-	-	247	-	-
Controls						
Age (log)	944	3.76	0.89	-	0	5.5
Members origin (1=nation-wide, ref.)	788	-	-	332	-	-
2=Flemish	-	-	-	279	-	-
3=Francophone	-	-	-	177	-	-
Type (1=Service group, ref.)	1021	-	-	195	-	-
2=Professionals	-	-	-	199	-	-
3=Citizen group	-	-	-	179	-	-
4=Business	-	-	-	235	-	-
5=Leisure	-	-	-	145	-	-
6=Rest	-	-	-	68	-	-

Although much evidence can be retrieved from public and online sources, detailed information on various important features of an organization (such as the size and composition of its budget, or advocacy strategies) is usually not publicly available. A survey is a useful and adequate tool to collect such information. Our survey focuses on topics such as advocacy strategies, organizational development and management, relations with members and other stakeholders, and the challenges organizations face. The web-survey was conducted between January and

May of 2016. In the end we achieved a response rate of 43 percent (n=727 respondents who responded to more than half of the survey questions), which is relatively high compared to similar surveys (Marchetti 2015). Descriptive details on the independent and control variables are presented in Table 10.

The dependent variable for this paper is mortality anxiety, which is the perception by the leadership that the very existence of their organization is challenged. More precisely, we put forward the following question, replicating the question that was first applied by Gray and Lowery (1997) and also used in a later study by Halpin and Thomas (2012):

> *"Sometimes the continued existence of an organization is challenged, for instance by societal changes and challenges. Considering the next five years, what is your estimation of the likelihood that the continued existence of your organization will face a serious challenge?"*

The responses were coded on a five-point Likert-scale ranging from "very unlikely" to "very likely". For the regression model (see below) we collapsed the two highest and the two lowest categories, resulting in a variable consisting of three categories (very unlikely/unlikely – neither likely or unlikely – likely/very likely).

Group density, our proxy for indirect competition, was measured based on the following question: "*Which (policy) areas is your organization involved in?*" In total, we identified 26 policy domains and for each domain we established the number of organizations that indicated to be active in these domains; this measure of group density is frequently used as an indicator of competition (Berkhout et al. 2015; Lowery & Gray 2015). As the distribution of this measure is right-skewed (Pearson's Coefficient of Skewness γ_1=1.00) we logarithmically transformed this measure. To measure the degree of direct competition we asked: "*In general, how much competition from like-minded organizations does your organization experience when attracting members, donations and subsidies?"* The answer possibilities included five categories on a Likert scale, ranging from "no competition" through "very strong competition". A large number of groups claimed to face "no

competition" (24 percent) or "low competition" (27 percent), while 28 percent reported "average competition", 16 percent "strong competition" and five percent "very strong competition".

The degree to which civil society organizations are political insiders was gauged with the following two questions. First, we asked, "*During the last 12 months, how often has your organization been involved in any of the following activities?*" The answer options included, *(1) "responded to open consultations", (2) "served on advisory commissions or boards" and (3) "presented research results or technical information to policy-makers".* The second question asked how often policy-makers initiated contact with their organization. For these four variables, respondents could choose between five categories.[28] As the polychoric ordinal α indicates a high reliability score of .85 (Gadermann et al. 2012), we summed to four variables to create a scale which ranges from 0 to 16. We have considerable variation in insiderness. For instance, 19 percent of our respondents were "never" contacted by policy-makers, 43 percent "once per year", while 23 percent "once every three months" and 16 percent were "regularly" contacted (once per month or more).

To measure the dependency on funding from regional, national and European governments, we included a variable indicating which percentage of the budget originates from public funding. Also with respect to this variable, we observe substantial differences; 39 percent does not receive any public subsidies, 25 percent depends for less than half of their budget on government funding, and for 36 percent of the surveyed organizations public subsidies represent the majority of their financial resources.

As clarified above, we have three hypotheses referring to the internal institutionalization of civil society organizations. The first of these hypotheses (H5) assesses the effect of professionalization, which we examine by taking into account the level of internal differentiation and the amount of staff an organization employs. A first feature involves the internal organizational differentiation and the extent to which organizations install specialized units. For this purpose, we constructed a

scale based on the following question: "*Does your organizations have any of the following: (1) a president, (2) secretary general/managing director, (3) executive committee, (4) written rules/constitution, (5) committees competent for specific tasks, (6) general assembly, (7) judicial experts?*". The different items are dichotomous (polychoric ordinal α=.85). In addition, to measure the number of staff the organization employs, we asked: "*How many paid staff (full time equivalent), does your organization employ?*" As the quantile-quantile plot reveals that the distribution of this measure is rightly skewed (γ_1=0.27), the variable was logarithmically transformed.

Second, as for membership size, respondents were asked to indicate the size of the organizational membership (in one of eight categories).[29] However, one cannot simply compare the individual membership of labor unions with the company membership of business associations. Therefore, a categorical indicator was created that classifies membership size for two different membership types, namely individuals, on the one hand, and, organizations (such as companies, institutions, and other civil society organizations), on the other hand. Specifically, there are two categorical variables with three sets of equally sized categories, distinguishing groups with a low, medium and high amount of members, taking into account the distribution between these two membership types.

Third, to measure membership involvement, we constructed a scale based on the following question: "*How important are your members for the following activities?*" These activities included: *(1) "helping to influence public policy", (2) "providing ideas about your organization's campaigning strategies", (3) "identifying problems or providing ideas about your organization's activities", and (4) "providing evidence of support from affected members or concerned citizens", (5) "running local groups or branches", and (6) "generating income for the organization"*. The responses were coded on a five-point Likert-scale, which were added to form a scale (polychoric ordinal α=.71).[30]

We add three control variables, organizational age, region and organization type.[31] As regards age, studies have demonstrated a "liability of newness", as younger organizations tend to die at a higher rate than older ones (Hung & Ong 2012; Vermeulen et al. 2016). Younger groups may enjoy less extensive networks with other organizations and public authorities, which makes them more vulnerable to environmental shocks, such as the loss of government funding or a decline in membership subscriptions. The distribution of this variable is left skewed (γ_1=-0.73), we therefore logarithmically transformed this variable.

Next, we control for regional differences within Belgium. Belgian civil society consists of groups that are organized at both the federal and the regional level (more precisely in two linguistic communities; Flanders and Francophone Belgium). Therefore, it is plausible to presume that a specific socio-economic context in a region might affect the mortality anxiety of groups based in that region. To assess regional differences we used a survey question, which gauges the origin of the organizational members. Based on this we make a distinction between Flemish, Francophone and nation-wide organizations.

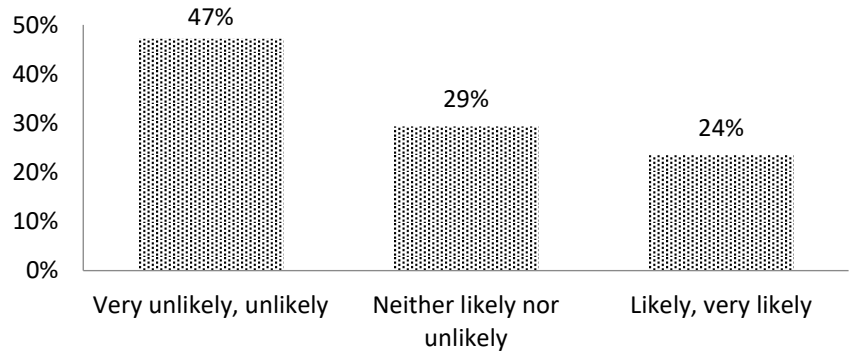
Finally, we control for organization type, distinguishing groups that represent businesses or professions from those that claim to represent citizen and/or public interests. Generally, business groups experience less severe collective action problems as the size of the potential membership is lower and their potential members exhibit rather specific interests, making it easier to supply selective benefits (Dür & Mateo 2016; Olson 1965). Therefore, we expect that business groups face lower level of mortality anxiety compared to non-business groups (Halpin & Thomas 2012). In addition, we expect that different types of citizen groups will vary in their level of mortality anxiety. On the one hand, some citizen groups adopt a more outspoken advocacy role (for instance, defending the environment or raising public awareness for rare diseases). On the other hand other organizations, which we label as service-oriented groups, fulfil social tasks such as conducting development projects, supporting volunteering work, or organizing health care. We

expect the latter segment to experience more mortality anxiety, as they are often involved in short-term projects and their sources of income are more volatile, especially in times of austerity. To distinguish between organization types, coders were asked to classify groups, based on the organization's website, in a category typology (see Online Appendix).

Results

Figure 6 gives an overview of the dependent variable. Whereas almost half (47 percent) of the surveyed groups considers the discontinued existence of their organization unlikely, 24 percent indicated that they experience considerable levels of mortality anxiety, whereas another 29 percent of the groups took a position in the middle. Given the established nature of many sampled organizations (national organizations with some legal statute), it is puzzling to observe that almost 1 out of 4 groups experiences considerable organizational stress. Many organizations in the sample have existed for quite some time (mean age is 41), have considerable resources (the modal budget ranges between 100,000 and 500,000 Euros) and enjoy institutionalized access on a regular basis (52 percent are consulted once every three months or more by policy-makers). Furthermore, many of these associations receive some government funding (25 percent get up to half of their budget from the government and 36 percent more than half), and/or boast a substantial individual membership (the modal membership is situated between 100 and 1000 members). Nonetheless, several of them experience high levels of mortality anxiety.

Figure 6: Mortality anxiety (n=840, percentages)



How do these results compare to earlier research on mortality anxiety? Previous studies have focused on polities that are traditionally seen as more pluralist, such as the United States (Gray & Lowery 1997) and the United Kingdom (Halpin & Thomas 2012). Often, group competition is assumed to be rather strong in these pluralist systems, while associational life is seen as more stable and predictable in neo-corporatist political systems (Grote et al. 2008; Schmitter 1973). Yet, if we consider the results of Halpin and Thomas' (2012) study, we see that in the case of Scotland 17 percent of the groups experienced a serious challenge to their survival (compared to 24 percent in Belgium), while 54 percent perceived such a challenge as not very likely (compared to 46 percent of the Belgian groups). For Lowery and Gray (1997), who assessed mortality anxiety among groups in the United States, we observe that respectively 14 and 17 percent considered such an existential crisis "very likely" or "likely", while 69 percent did not report any mortality anxiety. Compared to these results, mortality anxiety is rather high in Belgium, contradicting the expectation the neo-corporatist systems would be characterized by a more stable civil society.

Table 11 presents the results of an ordinal logistic regression (proportional odds model) in which we analyze the likelihood that civil society organizations consider the extinction of their organization as "very likely" or "likely" (compared to "unlikely") within the next five years.[32] Before looking at our specific hypotheses, we briefly present the effects of the control variables. It is noteworthy to mention that age does not affect mortality anxiety; nor do we find an effect for regional differences. While the liability of newness is often linked to organizational death and Gray and Lowery also confirmed this expectation for mortality anxiety, our results are similar to those of Halpin and Thomas (2012) who demonstrate that age is not an important factor. As regards group type, we find that, compared to service-oriented organizations, citizen groups who focus more on policy advocacy are significantly less likely to experience higher levels of mortality anxiety.

Table 11: Predicting mortality anxiety (ordinal logistic regression)

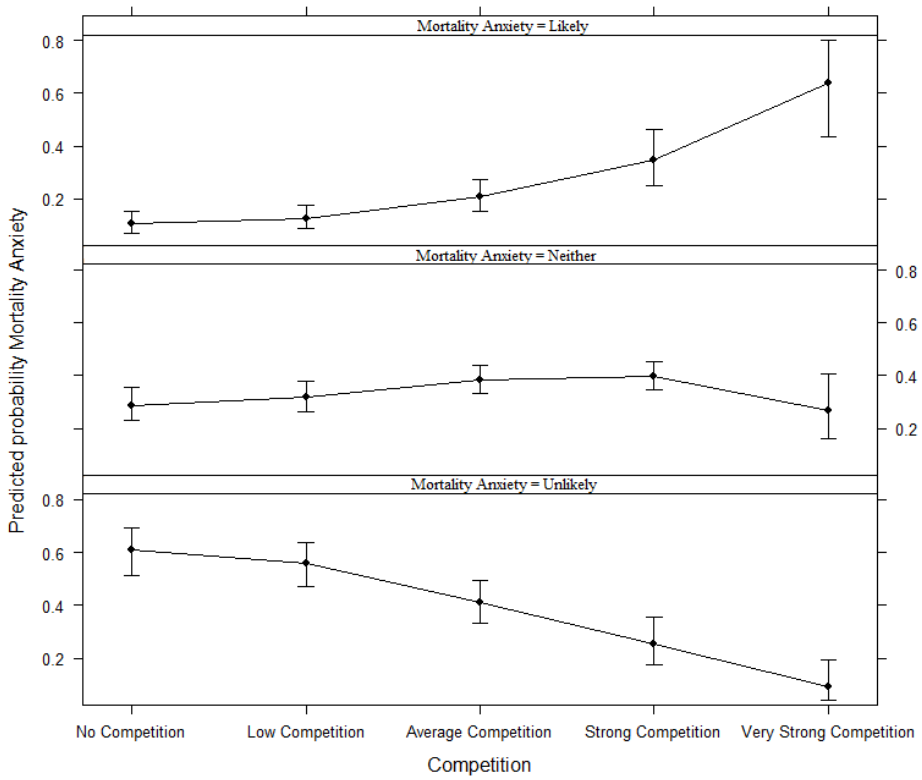
Independent variables	Full model	Interaction Model
Intercept 1/2	-1.64 (0.89) †	2.27 (2.14)
Intercept 2/3	0.07 (0.89)	3.98 (2.14) †
Age (log)	-0.04 (0.11)	-0.03 (0.11)
Membership. 1=nation-wide. ref.	-	-
2=Flemish membership	-0.34 (0.22)	-0.35 (0.22)
3=Francophone membership	-0.23 (0.27)	-0.22 (0.27)
Type. 1=Service groups. ref.[10]	-	-
2=Professionals	0.07 (0.33)	0.10 (0.33)
3=Citizen groups	-0.65 (0.31)*	-0.62 (0.32) †
4=Business	-0.24 (0.35)	-0.19 (0.35)
5=Leisure	-0.43 (0.34)	-0.38 (0.34)
6=Rest	-0.19 (0.45)	-0.21 (0.46)
Diffuse competition (log)	-0.1 (0.11)	-0.10 (0.11)
Specific competition. 1=no. ref. category	-	-
2=little	0.21 (0.26)	0.19 (0.26)
3=moderate	0.8 (0.26)**	0.80 (0.26)**
4=strong	1.52 (0.32)***	1.49 (0.32)***
5=very strong	2.72 (0.48)***	2.73 (0.48)***
Insiderness (index)	-0.06 (0.03) †	-0.06 (0.03) †
Government funding (%)	0.02 (<0.01)***	0.02 (0.01)***
Internal differentiation (index)[11]	-0.22 (0.09)**	0.50 (0.37)
Number of staff (log)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Individual members. 0=<median. ref.	-	-
1=median	-0.71 (0.26)**	-0.73 (0.26)**
2=>median	-0.94 (0.28)***	-0.97 (0.29)***
Organizational members. 0=<median.	-	-
1=median	-0.31 (0.23)	-0.33 (0.23)
2=>median	-0.45 (0.25) †	-0.47 (0.25) †
Member involvement (index)	0.03 (0.02)	0.22 (0.10)*
Interaction:	-	-0.03 (0.02)*
AIC	961.3	959.2
Residual Variance	913.3	909.2
Log likelihood	-456.7	-454.6
Df	24	25

Index: parameter estimates (standard errors between brackets); ***=<.001; **=<.01; *=<.05; †=<.1

[10] Service groups are referred to in the second empirical chapter as non-profit organisations. Using this denomination is less common in this journal, and could have created confusion.
[11] This is referred to as formalisation in the first empirical chapter.

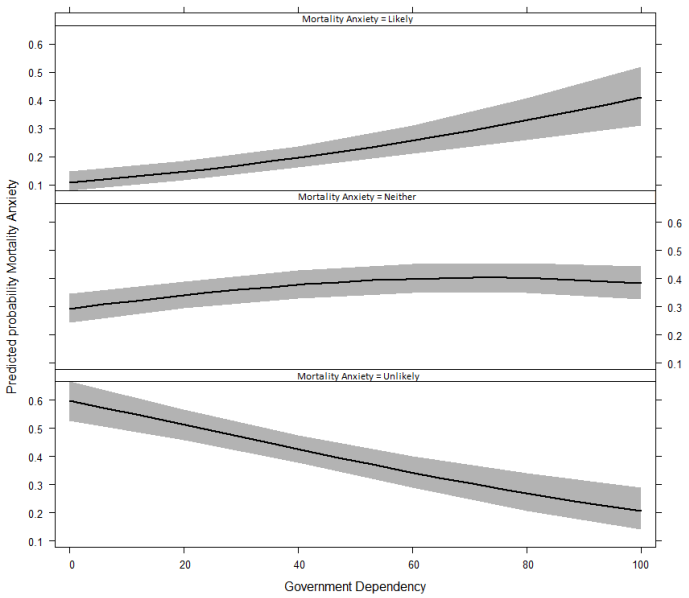
With respect to competition (Hypotheses 1 and 2), the model demonstrates that civil society organizations that are confronted with high levels of mobilization by other groups in their area of interest are not more likely to show mortality anxiety. Note that the correlation between this measure of indirect competition based on density and our indicator of direct competition, is significant yet rather low (r=0.09, p=<.0171). This means that what population ecologists refer to as indirect competition, does not affect mortality anxiety. Yet, the measure of direct competition strongly predicts mortality anxiety, meaning that high levels of perceived competition correspond with more fear of organizational disbandment. When going from 1 (no competition) to 5 (very strong competition), the odds of reporting mortality anxiety are 15 times greater, given that all other variables held constant (see Figure 7).[33]

Figure 7: Predicted probability of mortality anxiety for different levels of competition (n=492)



These results on direct competition demonstrate that mortality anxiety is strongly shaped by how the leadership experiences the broader environment. One key environmental factor for civil society groups are public authorities. To assess the potential effects of ties with public authorities, we focus on the organization's insiderness and its reliance on government funding (Hypothesis 3 and 4). Civil society groups who develop close relations with policy-makers, and thus are insiders to the political system, do not show substantially lower levels of mortality anxiety, meaning that we have to reject Hypothesis 3. In contrast, a group's financial dependence on government support has clear implications for mortality anxiety (Hypothesis 4). As Figure 8 shows, at very high levels of government funding (>70 percent of the budget), the expected probability of facing mortality anxiety is higher than .30. Groups who do not rely on government funding, or for whom this source of income represents only a small portion of their budget, are significantly less likely to experience mortality anxiety. This clearly indicates that the leadership perceives survival as more precarious when the dependence on government funding is high.

Figure 8: Predicted probability of mortality anxiety for different levels of government funding (n=492)

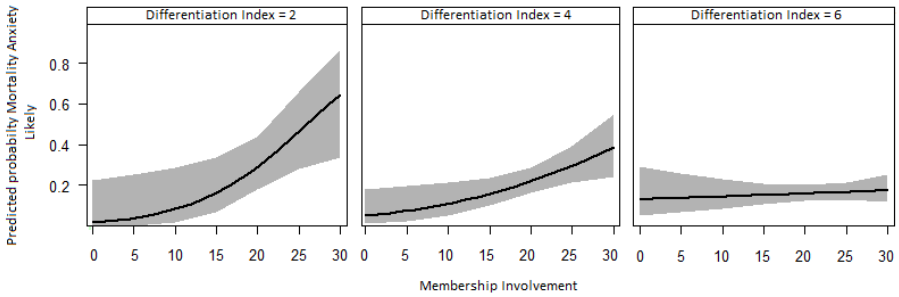


Finally, we address the effects of professionalization, membership size, and member involvement (Hypothesis 5, 6 and 7). To begin, organizations that have adopted a differentiated structure – our first indicator to test Hypothesis 5 – show lower levels of anxiety. Yet, employing more staff – our second indicator to test Hypothesis 5 – does not significantly decrease anxiety. Hence, what seems to matter more for managing mortality anxiety is not so much the absolute number of staff but rather the internal allocation of the available human resources. Next, we observe relevant effects of membership size. In particular, civil society groups with more individual members are less likely to demonstrate mortality anxiety compared to groups that have fewer or no members. While the coefficients indicate a similar effect for civil society groups with organizational members, the differences are not statistically significant. Finally, the membership involvement index does not generate a significant impact, which in itself is a very relevant finding. Although a larger membership seems to decrease mortality anxiety, actively mobilizing, involving, supporting or informing a constituency, appears to have no direct impact on mortality anxiety.

We also examined whether the effect of membership involvement on mortality anxiety varies across different levels of organizational differentiation (Interaction Model in Table 11). Do groups that involve their members strongly need a more differentiated structure in order to adequately manage the organization? If so, groups with a strong membership involvement which lack a robust organization will demonstrate higher levels of mortality anxiety. Indeed, our analysis indicates that the effect of membership involvement depends on the extent to which a group has adopted a differentiated organizational structure. In other words, organizations that involve their members more, experience, higher levels of mortality anxiety when they do not adopt a differentiated structure. This impact of membership involvement decreases, meaning it generates lower levels of mortality anxiety, if organizations adopt a more differentiated structure. The effect of membership

involvement flattens out when organizational differentiation is maximized. This is an interesting observation as it demonstrates that organizations may, to some extent, manage their vulnerability by crafting effective organizational structures. While high levels of membership involvement should not be considered detrimental to organizational survival, it may require an adjustment of internal structures and processes (see figure 9).

Figure 9: Predicted probability mortality anxiety of the interaction effect between three levels of organizational differentiation and membership involvement (n=492)



Conclusion

This paper started from the observation that there is considerable volatility in populations of civil society groups, and addressed the question why some groups experience high levels of mortality anxiety, or fear for their continued existence. Understanding mortality anxiety is essential for understanding the dynamics of interest representation. Some work has demonstrated that stress related to organizational maintenance is crucial for explaining the dynamics of organizational populations and the advocacy strategies organizations adopt (Dür & Mateo 2012). That is, if civil society groups face higher levels of mortality anxiety, indicating their probable disbandment, this may have implications for the balanced or biased nature of interest representation. Furthermore, groups that face high levels of mortality anxiety – and thus fear their continued existence – may adopt less risky advocacy strategies and might spend more energy on organizational matters (such as searching financial resources or prioritizing efforts to maintain their membership), instead of representing the interests of their members in the political arena.

We approached this problem from three perspectives, inspired by population ecology, resource dependence theory and previous work on the internal institutionalization of civil society organizations.

Three results stand out in particular. First, somewhat surprisingly, we found that mortality anxiety among civil society organizations is rather high in Belgium, compared to earlier observations made in more pluralist countries (Gray & Lowery 1997; Halpin & Thomas 2012). This finding is at odds with the often held – but rarely tested – presumption that inter-organizational competition between civil society groups is lower in neo-corporatist political systems, as government interventions in those countries would lead to a more stable system of interest representation. Our results do not fit well with these expectations, and should urge scholars to reconsider the impact of system-level differences on the organizational maintenance of civil society organizations. In that regard, a more direct comparison of mortality anxiety across countries and policy domains would be a promising avenue to take this research agenda forward.

Second, our analysis confirmed that relations with public authorities, more specifically government funding, play an important, albeit ambiguous, role in the well-being of organizations. Although some research has argued that government funding might enhance the survival chances of civil society organizations (Brown & Troutt 2004; Hager et al. 2004), other work has underlined the perils of financial dependence on public authorities (Froelich 1999; e.g., Rosenbaum 1981). The latter findings are in line with our results, as we find that groups that depend strongly on government funding demonstrate higher levels of mortality anxiety. This insecurity is probably even higher in times of austerity, when government funding is more volatile and might be decreased substantially. Another risk connected to government funding is that it may displace private funding from the membership (e.g. the crowding-out hypothesis, see Kim & van Ryzin 2014; Nikolova 2015; Rosenbaum 1981).

Finally, as regards the internal institutionalization, we find that actively involving members does not decrease mortality anxiety. So echoing the seminal work of Michels (1915) and many others, there could be a tension between internal institutionalization and maintaining a representative nature. However, our findings suggest that a differentiated, more professionalized structure may facilitate membership involvement and may have positive implications for the perceived organizational survival. Specifically, more internally differentiated organizations can combine a high involvement of their members with good prospects for survival. This is ultimately good news for the representation of members via civil society organizations.

Our analysis drew theoretical and empirical inspiration from related research on the survival and disbanding of civil society organizations. Although one has to bear in mind possible differences between mortality anxiety and actual organizational disbandment (Hager et al. 2004; Hung & Ong 2012; Lecy & Searing 2015; Vermeulen et al. 2016), we believe that analyzing mortality anxiety enables a more fine-grained understanding of organizational stress that would not show up on a post-mortem examination. For instance, while research shows that larger and older organizations are expected to be less subject to disbandment, our analysis suggests that these factors matter less when organizational leaders themselves assess their survival chances (even though we find significant effects for membership size). In our view, the relation between actual disbanding and mortality anxiety could go in two directions. On the one hand, anxiety could lead to an increased propensity of organizational failure implying a positive relation between anxiety and actual disbandment. However, on the other hand, anxiety could elicit a 'fight' response or a more cautious approach which could actually prevent disbandment and prolong organizational life. To increase our knowledge of the link between mortality anxiety and organizational maintenance, future work would benefit from examining these organizational responses more closely.

Conclusion

Interest organisations play a potentially essential role in democratic societies. However, striking a balance between organised interests' main goals of maintaining ties to members, engaging with policymakers, and organisational survival might be difficult to achieve (J. Q. Wilson 1995). One of the concerns amongst scholars is that organisational institutionalisation may make organised interests more robust and thus less likely to disband, but at the same time, institutionalisation may also undercut membership ties. Paradoxically, diminishing levels of membership support could, in turn, also contribute to organisational demise (Jenkins 1983; Knoke 1981; Vermeulen et al. 2016). This puzzle was translated into the following research question: can organisations do well (survive and engage with policymakers) whilst also doing good (remaining attuned to the will of their constituency)? Answering this question involved systematically evaluating whether and how institutionalisation affects interest organisations' main goals inconsistently.

Although the consequences of professionalisation, formalisation, political insiderness, membership involvement, and organisational autonomy have received substantial academic attention, large-scale empirical tests remain rare. As a consequence, we simply do not know whether the various aspects of institutionalisation have an inconsistent effect on an organisation's relations with its members, its propensity to engage with policymakers, or organisational survival. Nevertheless, considering the behaviour and functioning of interest organisations as a tension between various dichotomous elements – such as the logic of membership or logic of influence, members or maintenance, or members and professionals – remains pervasive in many works (Jordan & Maloney 1997;

McCarthy & Zald 1973; Michels 1915; Olson 1965; Schmitter & Streeck 1999; Skocpol 2004).

It is argued here that there is no one universal or law-like process that guides the functioning and the behaviour of all interest organisations (Halpin, 2010: 270; Halpin 2014). Instead, understanding these organisational tensions requires a more fine-grained notion of the specific rules and procedures that govern organised interests. In this regard, rules and procedures may steer the universal 'free-riding' behaviour of members (Cf. Olson 1965) or the law-like 'oligarchic' nature of professionals (Cf. Michels 1915). I demonstrate that with adequate rules and procedures in place and when organisations command a professional workforce, it is possible for organisations to do well whilst also doing good. In the following section, the main expectations outlined in Table 1 are discussed. The second section discusses some shortcomings of this research and avenues for further research. The last section concludes this work.

Findings

Considering the different findings across the empirical chapters, it is possible to formulate an answer to the research question. Below, Table 1 is replicated, displaying the results of the empirical tests (Table 12).[12] Based on these results, it is possible to weigh in on some long-standing debates. Generally speaking, many of the expected effects of institutionalisation on interest organisations' membership

[12] Some adjustments had to be made. First of all, in the second empirical paper, due to place restrictions, membership involvement, insiderness, formalisation and professionalisation were not included. The full regression table can be found in the Appendix Table A15. Secondly, in the first empirical paper, dependency on membership resources was used instead of dependency upon government funding. The same analysis with government funding can be found in the Appendix Table A16. Thirdly, in the third empirical paper, professionalisation was conceptualised as having two elements; internal differentiation and the hiring of staff. In the overall dissertation, internal differentiation has been changed to formalisation – without changing the measurement – and this is seen as separate from professionalisation.

relations, political activities, and survival could not be confirmed. It is therefore possible to nuance, and to a certain extent also complement, a considerable body of scholarly work. Yet, the rejection of certain presumed effects of institutionalisation could also help to solve the paradox that prompted this research.

Table 12: Results of the empirical analyses

	Goals of interest organisations		
Aspects of institutionalisation	Membership influence	Political activities	Survival
Professionalisation	-/+	+*	N
Formalisation	N	N	+
Membership involvement	+	N**	-
Insiderness	+	+	N
Autonomy (from gvt.)	N	-	+

Index: N = No statistically significant effect
* Positive significant effect in two the four regressions
** Positive significant effect in only one of the four regressions

Professionalisation, formalisation, and membership involvement

One important finding is that professionalisation and membership influence are not necessarily inversely related as previously suggested (Michels 1915). In fact, the data demonstrate that professionalisation can have a significant negative as well as a significant positive effect on membership influence, depending on the level of membership involvement. When organisations employ professional staff whilst also succeeding in maintaining high levels of membership involvement, this will positively affect membership influence.

Furthermore, it was shown that the situation regarding members' influence on the political functioning of interest organisations is not as dire as previously suggested (e.g., Grant 2003; Jordan & Maloney 1997). Members, at least in the organisations under study, have ample influence over their interest organisation's political position. For instance, in only 14 percent of the organisations do members play a purely symbolic role, whilst members play a representative or active role in organisational decision-making in 49 percent and 37percent of the cases,

respectively. These findings are in line with recent empirical research (e.g., Binderkrantz 2009). In addition, even though 81 percent of the organisations employ professional staff members, professionals decide on policy positions in only 8 percent of the organisations surveyed.

However, this work would not go so far as to conclude that the alleged tension between members and professionals is completely unfounded. The data also show that when members are completely uninvolved, in combination with high levels of professionalisation, members are more likely to play a purely symbolic role. This type of organisation coincides with what Jordan and Maloney (2007) have termed, 'protest businesses'. Yet, in line with previous research, the findings indicate that this type of organisation only represents a small portion of the total sample. For instance, Binderkrantz (2009: 668) reports that among Danish organisations, only a minority (13 percent, n=781) correspond to the model of an organisation with 'checkbook members' who have few or no democratic rights. Meanwhile, Jordan and Maloney (2007: 127), studying British organisations, put this number at 5 percent (n=536).

The most important point is that professionalisation is not always or even necessarily associated with a diminished position for members. To give some indication, 65 percent of the organisations under study combine high levels of professionalisation and high levels of membership involvement, leading to significantly higher levels of membership influence. One reason for this could be that in contemporary organisations, involving members, i.e., replying to members' emails; aggregating members' concerns; and organising workshops, seminars, and general assemblies may constitute a full-time job. Without the proper (wo-)man power, membership involvement will not be translated into membership influence. Another reason might be that members only invest their time in organisations that can adequately support their efforts. Jordan and Maloney (2007: 153), quoting the work of Maloney and Roßteutscher, argue:

> Large groups – who are likely to employ larger numbers of staff – appear more efficient at engendering volunteering than medium- or small-size organizations. Thus, it appears that professionalism does not necessarily 'drive out volunteerism' and that smaller organizations – where the likelihood of greater face-to-face interaction is valorized under the Tocquevillian/Putnam model – are not necessarily the vanguard of volunteering.

Moving on to the next goal of interest organisations, the data show that professionalisation has a positive impact on the proclivity of interest organisations to engage with policymakers. This may be because advocacy work is a time-intensive activity for which specific expertise is needed. Yet, the empirical tests show that professionalisation, in the case of Belgium, only significantly affects contacting the subnational tiers of government, and not the national or European levels of government. These findings are in line with the work of Beyers and Kerremans (2007: 427), who demonstrate that a larger workforce is not always associated with the ability to contact 'more distant levels'.

Additionally, organisations with a larger workforce are not less (or more) likely to experience mortality anxiety. This is a counterintuitive finding. However, formalisation, in turn, does have a positive impact on organisational survival. It seems to matter not how many staff members are employed, but the organisational context in which they are employed. This gives credence to the idea that, small organisations – in terms of staff – may show a considerable degree of robustness if they have sufficiently invested in an internally formalised structure (Cf., Randall & Svåsand 2002).

Formalisation, in turn, does not impact membership influence, and is thus not associated with oligarchic tendencies as Michels (1915) and others have suggested. This finding is based on evidence from some 2302 organisations in seven political systems. Moreover, formalised organisations are not more or less likely to engage with policymakers. Ultimately, formalisation or the extent to which

organisations differentiate their functioning, have written constitutions, and have specialised committees or work-groups does not disrupt the balance between members, political activities, and survival, but instead may even facilitate it. As Staggenborg argues,

> Based on my data, I dispute the conclusion that formalized SMOs necessarily become oligarchical. In fact, many seem more democratic than informal SMOs because they follow routinized procedures that make it more difficult for individual leaders to attain disproportionate power. (1988: 604)

Although membership involvement leads to higher levels of membership influence, we found an unexpected negative effect of membership involvement on mortality anxiety. Organisations that involve their members more experience higher levels of mortality anxiety. One reason may be that involving members can be cumbersome and could lead to organisational dysfunction. In this regard, the organisational leadership may opt to steer away from the traditional model of membership (Halpin 2010). Yet, according to the empirical analyses, another option for organisational leaders is to invest in a more formalised organisational structure. In this regard, the data show that the negative effect of membership involvement may be offset if the organisation has a more formalised structure. Again, this points to the idea that maintaining close ties with members whilst maintaining the organisation requires a well-functioning organisational framework that can support their efforts.

The data show that to understand the effect of professionalisation or formalisation on membership influence and organisational survival, it is important to take into account the extent to which members are involved. Yet, it cannot be deduced from the analyses what drives the members to become involved. One explanation is that members lack the necessary skill or time to play an active role in interest organisations. This can be regarded as a demand-side argument (Halpin

2010). As Lipset (1999) argues in an introductory chapter to a recent edition of Michels' work (1915):

> The pulls of work, family, personal leisure activities, and the like severely limit the amount of actual time and psychic energy which the average person may invest in membership groups or politics. The lower interest and participation are also due to the fact that the membership of any mass organization necessarily has less education and general sophistication than the leadership. (1999: 17)

If it was ever the case that members lack the time, education, and psychic energy to get involved, today this may no longer be the case. Individuals' average levels of education, income, and discretionary time have radically improved over the last century (McCarthy & Zald 1973). So, another explanation, as proposed by Jordan and Maloney (2007), is that certain organisations may shape the possibilities for involvement, as certain organisations may prefer a limited role for their members (Halpin 2010). This can be seen as a supply-side argument.

Although, it is possible that both demand-side and supply-side variables can explain the members' varying tendency to become involved, this study shows that there is no 'iron law' that dictates that professionalisation or formalisation will inevitably lead to a lack of membership influence. Yet, at the same time, the data does not completely refute previous influential insights. By highlighting the variation in organisational configurations, it is possible to predict when the negative consequences of institutionalisation are more, less, or not at all pronounced.

Political insiderness

The data confirm that insiders to the political system are more likely to directly engage with policymakers. Furthermore, and perhaps more surprisingly, it is also shown that insiderness is positively related to membership influence. This is puzzling because this seems to qualify the tension between the logic of influence and the logic of membership, which is pervasive in many works on interest organisations (Schmitter & Streeck 1999).

The tension between satisfying the needs of the membership and engaging with policymakers can be traced back to the work of Olson (1965). According to Olson, it is irrational to expect that members will join and support organisations that solely aim to achieve political influence. This is because organising for political action is susceptible to so-called 'free-riding behaviour' by members. So, instead of satisfying the members with collective incentives (e.g., political action), Olson recommends applying selective material incentives (e.g., membership discounts, insurance or newsletters). As a consequence, to pacify the tension between political action and continued membership support, and thus to survive, organisational entrepreneurs may opt to de-politicise their organisation and transform into service-providing bureaus (see also, Moe 1981) .

In a similar vein, in the work of Schmitter and Streeck (1999), organisational behaviour and functioning is a compromise between the logic of membership and the logic of influence. These authors also note that politically active organisations are driven to become more service-orientated. However, organisations that choose to remain in the political realm 'can only grow in size and comprehensiveness and develop long-term perspective only if they acquire a capacity to reject short-term members' demands' (Schmitter & Streeck 1999: 50). Furthermore, to do so, 'associations need the support of their other environments [like governments] compensating them for the inevitable decline in the spontaneous support from their membership' (*ibid.*). In sum, the authors argue that politically influential interest organisations are less likely to have influential members or, in contrast, that politically active organisations will have less influential members.

Against this backdrop, the data show that political insiderness is positively associated with membership influence. One explanation for this is that the organisational leadership may require regular input by members when deciding upon the organisation's policy position. Members are in many cases a valuable source of information. Another explanation is that policymakers may seek out representative organisations that are in touch with their members. This makes high

levels of membership influence a pre-condition to become long-term governance partners. Yet another argument would be that, in negotiations, representatives perform better when they are backed by their constituency. For instance, psychological research illustrates that representatives dare to make more forceful claims when they feel that they can act for truly representative organisations (Druckman et al. 1972; Jones & Worchel 1992). These arguments amount to the fact that politically influential interest organisations have an interest in, and thus may actively seek out, influential members.

Even though it is possible that political insiderness and membership influence can be combined, this is not a guarantee that the organisations will survive. Indeed, regarding the effect of political insiderness on survival, no conclusive statistically significant effect can be reported. This is in line with our discussion about the ambivalence of political ties in the third empirical chapter. Below, this discussion is further elaborated under the header of 'organisational autonomy'.

Autonomy

The analyses show that a lack of organisational autonomy originating from high degrees of dependency on government funding can, but need not always impact interest organisations' political activities. Two conditions are important: the degree of criticality (can the organisation function in absence of the resource?), and the degree of discretion (to what extent is the funding tied to rules, requirements, and procedures?). As expected, the data show that at high degrees of criticality, interest organisations are sensitive to the interests of the funding government. As one of the interviewed policymakers put it: 'smaller actors, who depend on us for *95* percent, they can, as a matter of speaking, only nod when we ask them something'. Yet, the effect of government funding on the interest organisations' political activities depends on what exactly policymakers expect from the interest organisations they fund. In this regard, it is argued that more attention should be given to the rules and requirements that are tied to government funding, which are

indicative of what governments seek to achieve.

In this regard, the analyses show that, at least in the case of Belgium, governments actively incentivise interest organisations to enter into a political dialogue with them about certain policy issues. This is against the expectation of scholars that expect that government funding will have a de-politicising effect, as interest organisations 'do not want to bite the hand that feeds them' (Bloodgood and Tremblay-Boire 2016; Chaves et al. 2004; Mosley 2010; Verschuere and De Corte 2013). Of course, this need not always be the case, as governments in different countries may also eschew political dialogue.

In Belgium, where government seeks out this political dialogue, funding has a subtler effect on the political activities of organised interest, as it steers with whom interest organisations seek to interact. On the one hand, in the case of Belgian subnational governments, the current legislation is not conducive for interest organisations to engage with the national level of government. Yet, certain transversal policy domains, such as gender, environment, and health care, require Belgian interest organisations to contact governments across multiple levels. On the other hand, the rules concerning national funding are different and incentivise interest organisations to also interact across the language border.

The intention of these rules and procedures can be better understood in the light of political order building (Plotke 1996). Governments want to support and interact with interest organisations active within their jurisdiction, but not beyond. Thus, they will try to shape the mobilisation of interest organisations accordingly. This pattern was confirmed by our statistical analyses, content analysis, and in-depth interviews.

Although all our interviewees confirmed that the current legislation in Belgium does not inhibit interest organisations' critical messages, high degrees of dependencies can still be problematic for the political role of interest organisations. For instance, the policymakers we interviewed indicated that government funding tied to specific policy priorities is a powerful tool to focus the attention of interest

organisations. Secondly, government funding may put a certain administrative burden on organisations; in the words of one of the policymakers we interviewed: 'They [interest organisations] have a certain autonomy, but they have to report, they have to submit a report each year, following a certain format, and they are obliged to enter into dialogue with us.' In this regard, several interest representatives emphasised that the high administrative burden is sometimes difficult to negotiate.

In light of this, the data reveal that depending on government funding has a negative impact on organisational survival. This is important, as about 64 percent of all Belgian interest organisations gain funding from at least one government, and this represents, on average, about 34 percent of their total budget. In comparison, for interest organisations in the Netherlands, government funding makes up only about 19 percent of their total budget. This is a substantial explanation of the relatively high degrees of mortality anxiety amongst Belgian interest organisations. With regard to membership ties, no conclusive evidence was found that government funding affects membership influence.

Limitations and avenues for further research

Although the findings of this dissertation contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how institutionalisation affects the functioning and behaviour of interest organisations, some questions remain to be settled and some new ones have emerged. This section examines some of the limitations of this research and highlights some possible avenues for future research.

First of all, although it was possible to draw on rich survey evidence covering a variety of organisational aspects, follow-up research may consider probing further into the various internal by-laws and procedures that govern interest organisations. One specific blind spot is the lack of data on how rules and procedures arise, change, and are discontinued (Cf., Halpin 2010). In this regard, it must be noted that a certain circular reasoning underpins the current argumentation. Rules and procedures affect the behaviour of professionals and members, but at the same time,

organisational actors can also affect which rules and procedures are constituted. Yet, it can be argued that in many cases, the most important by-laws regarding the division of power and competencies are already agreed upon at the creation of the organisation. Furthermore, there might be a divergence in how rules are formally described and how they are exercised in practise. For instance, although members may be able to vote for the president of the organisation, the extent to which these elections are actually contested may vary.

Secondly, our knowledge of the organisational composition of interest organisations is still fairly limited. Beyond the fact that interest organisations have members, and in some cases also professional staff, little is known about the varying ways in which the organisational leadership is organised. According to our data, 93 percent of the organisations have a president that presides over the board of directors. Although the board of directors decide upon the general and political steering in about 60 percent of the cases, little is known about its composition, functioning, or relations with the other organisational entities (but for work on non-profit boards, see Cornforth 2001). This is in contrast to economists who have devoted considerable attention to board structures in firms and have linked board composition and functioning to transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness (Hermalin & Weisbach 1991; Johnson & Daily 1996; Wan-hussin 2009). In interest organisations, boards can have a vital intermediary function between the members of the organisation and the professionals.

Furthermore, there is variation in countries' legislation regarding the role and format of organisational boards (Gerner-Beuerle et al. 2013). The legal system in countries like Belgium and Spain mandates that boards have a one-tiered structure, meaning that there is only one board which will manage and supervise the functioning of the organisation. However, the legal system in countries such as Slovenia, Lithuania, Italy, and the Netherlands allows organisations to opt for a two-tiered board structure, meaning that there is a general management board and a supervisory board controlling its actions (Gerner-Beuerle et al. 2013: 6). Supervisory

boards may safeguard the coherence between the different organisational entities, but may also lead to slower decision-making (Gerner-Beuerle et al. 2013). In this regard, the difference between one- and two-tiered boards in interest organisations is likely to matter, as it may explain the extent to which members' interest are taken into account.

Third, with regard to the sampling of interest organisations, it was argued that truncating valuable variation is an important concern. In this regard, a broad conceptualisation of interest organisation was proposed, which also entailed organisations that are not primarily engaged in advocacy work. The typology utilised allowed us to differentiate between these so-called latent or service/non-profit organisations in the various empirical analysis. For instance, it was shown that these organisations are, compared to the other types, no less likely to be involved in political activities (see Chapter Five). This may put in doubt what we know about the differences between these types of organisations. Furthermore, it was also demonstrated that these organisations are more likely to experience mortality anxiety compared to citizen groups. Yet, these initial steps should be followed up with more empirical tests and a further refinement of the typology.

Fourth, interest organisations in this work, in line with previous works, are defined as single-entity actors. However, empirical evidence shows that interest organisations are often conglomerates of distinct organisational entities. For instance, in Belgium, we estimate that about 16 percent of all interest organisations are conglomerates of other organisational entities. Yet, when disaggregating all organisations into their constituent legal entities, we see that about 76 percent of the entities we identified belong to such a conglomerate structure. This means that a small majority of organisations commands three out of four organisational entities. For instance, the ABVV (the socialist largest trade union in Belgium) can be regarded as one interest organisation, but it is actually a conglomerate of 176 separate legal entities, which are independent from the ABVV's main office to a varying extent.

The extent to which organisations are conglomerates may be an important indication of organisational complexity, but also of capacity and strength. Furthermore, these conglomerates, as discussed in Schmitter and Streeck (1999: 52) or Katz and Mair (1995: 20-21), may be better at combining high levels of membership involvement (located at the lower levels) with a formalised and professional structure (located at the centralised level) (i.e., Stratarchy: Katz & Mair 1995). Yet, we have little data on the varying ways in which chapters of interest organisations are related to their (national) secretariats (but see Kohler-Koch & Buth 2013). Again, important differences may occur across countries. In multi-level systems like Belgium, the propensity to form conglomerates might differ compared to unitary systems.

Fifth, one important conclusion of the literature review conducted here is that the study of the different types of interest organisations (SMOs, IGs, TSOs) overlap empirically as well as theoretically. However, other types of intermediary organisations may also show some degrees of similarity, such as political parties (Burstein 1998; Fraussen & Halpin 2016b). For instance, it is worth noting that some parallels can be drawn between the study of interest organisations and political parties. For instance, Katz and Mair (1995) describe the rise of the cartel party, a professional organisation which relies mostly on government subsidies, has a loose connection with its membership base, and is poised at effectively and efficiently governing the polity based on technocratic principals and by avoiding inter-party competition. A broader view that studies the effect of institutionalisation on *all* intermediary organisations might therefore be an interesting venue for future research.

Finally, with regards to institutionalisation, this dissertation has not focussed extensively on value infusion; yet, according to Selznick this 'is perhaps its most significant meaning' (1957: 16–17). Value infusion is related to how rules, procedures, and also organisations can acquire a certain 'taken-for-grantedness'. For instance, on a systemic level, it deals with how environmental concerns have

become rooted in our everyday life. On an organisational level, it entails how organisational actors' customs and values converge to form a combined identity. As summarised by Scott:

> As organizations become infused with value, they are no longer regarded as expendable tools; they develop a concern for self-maintenance. By taking on a distinctive set of values, the organization acquires a character structure, an identity. Maintaining the organization is no longer simply an instrumental matter of survival but becomes a struggle to preserve a set of unique values. (1995: 18-19)

Although the extent to which professionals and members attach 'value' to the continued existence of the organisation was discussed, it is possible to elaborate further upon this. Furthermore, as discussed in the second chapter, value infusion through different types of isomorphism can account for how business principles have been propagated in non-profit organisations (Cf., Dimaggio & Powell 1983). Studying value infusion in interest organisations may thus lead to a better understanding of how values, ideas, practices, and organisations acquire legitimacy and become reified within the public imagination.

Conclusion

To what extent can organisations do well (survive and engage with policymakers) whilst also doing good (remaining attuned to the will of their constituency)? The results show that professionalised and formalised organisations are indeed more likely to engage with policymakers and are less likely to fear disbandment. However, professionalisation and formalisation do not necessarily curb membership influence. In fact, organisations with involved members require a substantial workforce to convert involvement into membership influence. This demonstrates that supporting members is a full-time occupation. Furthermore, although membership involvement may negatively affect organisational survival, high levels of formalisation can actually offset this negative effect. In this regard,

institutionalisation, following the work of political party scholars, entails that both professionals *and* members can create an attachment to the organisation which goes further than the immediate tasks or issues at hand.

With regard to political insiderness, the expected relationship between membership influence and organisational disbandment is actually reversed. Against the expectations of some scholars, the data demonstrate that political insiderness is positively related to membership influence. In this regard, representatives will actively seek out influential members who can bring valuable policy goods to the bargaining table (Bouwen 2002). Yet, political insiderness does not unequivocally lead to less fear of disbandment. Institutionalised ties to policymakers may, depending on the regulatory contexts that govern these relations, also hurt the survival chances of interest organisations. In this regard, the consequences of lacking organisational autonomy was emphasised, which may also affect interest organisations' political functioning.

To be sure, it must be emphasised that the findings of this study do not wholly refute the existence of often-cited organisational dilemmas (i.e., the logic of influence vs. the logic of membership, members vs. professionals, members vs. maintenance). Yet, it highlights that under certain conditions, these dilemmas are not as pervasive, universal or law-like as previously posited. It has been demonstrated that the alleged tensions between maintaining interest organisations, involving members, and engaging with policymakers are by no means unavoidable. In fact, the organisational configuration may mitigate or exacerbate these tensions. This approach injects a notion of agency into the debate; organisations with disrupted membership ties cannot be excused on the account of some inevitable organisational tendency, but can and should invest in an adequate structure and workforce to support their members. Only then is it possible for organisations to do well whilst also doing good.

Appendices

Appendix: When Professionals Take Over

Table A1: Population, response rate and filtering on membership and policy position

	Sample	Response	No members	No political position	Rest	Valid
EU	2039	(673) 33%	452	436	651	489
BE	1691	(727) 43%	241	306	641	507
IT	1277	(409) 32%	249	63	207	160
LT	905	(371) 41%	25	34	308	239
NL	2479	(942) 38%	249	98	576	274
SL	1203	(469) 39%	197	119	185	144
SW	1542	(586) 38%	985	936	523	489
Total	11136	4177 (38%)	2398	1992	2823	2302

In total, 11136 organisations were invited to participate in the survey. Of these, 4177 filled out at least 50 percent of the survey. After deleting all organisations without members (n=2398) and organisations that do not engage in deciding upon policy positions (n=1992), we keep 2823 organisations. Due to item non-response on several variables, the valid number of observations is 2302.

Table A2: Operationalisation independent variables

Variable	Question in survey	Answer option	Comments
Formalisation	Does your organisation have any of the following?	Yes/No	The polychoric ordinal is high (α=.82), indicating that the scale is internally reliable.
Professionalisation	How many paid staff (full-time equivalent) work for your organisation?	Numeric	The distribution of this measure is right skewed, indicating that only a few organisations have a very high number of staff members (γ1=.20). The variable is therefore logarithmically transformed.
Membership involvement	How important are members to your organisation with regard to the following activities?	The answer values are (0) "unimportant", (1) "not so important", (2) "neither important nor unimportant", (3) "important", (4) "very important", and (5) "not applicable"	N/A is considered equivalent to "unimportant", and its value is truncated to 0. The polychoric ordinal is good (α=.70), indicating that the scale is internally reliable.
Political insiderness	During the last 12 months, how often has your organisation been involved in any of the following activities?	(0) "never", (1) "at least once", (2) "at least once every three months", (3) "at least once a month" and (4) "at least once a week".	The polychoric ordinal is high (α=.85), indicating that the scale is internally reliable.

Resource dependency	Many organisations get financial support from different sources. Please indicate the percentage of your organisation's budget (last year) that came from membership fees.	Percentage	Because it was asked as a percentage, the variable takes the budget coming from members relative to other sources of income. To enable a more meaningful interpretation of this measure, this variable is standardised. Following Gelman & Hill (2007: 57), we standardise it by subtracting the mean and dividing this by two times the standard deviation. This allows for an interpretation analogous to a dichotomous variable. Moving one unit of analysis corresponds to moving one standard deviation below the mean to one standard deviation above the mean.

Table A3: Operationalisation control variables

Variable	Question in survey	Answer option	Comments
Formal decision-making rules	Organisations like yours can make decisions in different ways, such as consensus among individual members or board members or by voting procedures. Can you please indicate below how your organisation primarily makes decisions in determining the position of your organisation on public policy issues?	(1) "consensus among members", (2) "voting among members", (3) "consensus in the board", (4) "voting in the board", (5) "senior staff make these decisions" and (6) "other".	Introduced as such.
Membership size	Listed below are different types of members. Please indicate for each type of member how many people/organisations support your organisation.	(1) "none", (2) "up to 10", (3) "11-100", (4) "101-1000", (5) "1001-50,000", (6) "50,001-100,000", (7) "100,001-1 million", or (8) "more than a million".	For the analysis in the paper, we create two variables (one for individual membership and one for organisational membership) with three categories: (1) below the average number for this type of member, (2) the average number for this type of member, and (3) above the average number for this type of member.
Type	NA		See below, Table A2

Age	In what year was your organisation founded?	Numeric	The distribution of this variable is left skewed and is therefore logarithmically transformed.

The research team hired a team of student coders to code all interest organisations (based on the organisational website) into eight categories, using the INTERARENA coding scheme.

Table A4: Group type

Organisation type	Description
As. businesses	Associations of businesses
As. of professionals	As. of professionals or a certain trade (e.g, lawyers, and bakers)
Trade unions	Associations of workers/employees (e.g., blue collar, white collar)
Cause group	Associations that rally for a common cause (e.g., environment, animals)
Identity group	Associations of individuals with a common identity (e.g., ethnicity,
Leisure	Associations with an emphasis on supporting members' leisure
Institutional as.	Associations of institutions and public authorities (e.g., hospitals,
Rest	Organisations not fitting in the above categories

Table A5: Overview of independent variables, control variables, and descriptive results (n=2302)

Variables	Mean	SD	Freq.	Min	Max
Number of staff (log)	0.84	2.0	-	-	9.68
Formalisation (index)	5.11	1.36	-	0	7
Decision made by (ref=members)	-	-	383	-	-
Decision made by (members)	-	-	316	-	-
Decision made by (board)	-	-	893	-	-
Decision made by (board)	-	-	439	-	-
Decision made by (staff)	-	-	192	-	-
Decision made by (other)	-	-	79	-	-
Membership dependency (%)	0	0.50	-	-	0.60
# individual members (1=<Median, ref.)	-	-	1094	-	-
(2=Median)	-	-	378	-	-
(3=>Median)	-	-	830	-	-
# organisational members (1=<Median, ref.)	-	-	960	-	-
(2=Median)	-	-	470	-	-
(3=>Median)	-	-	872	-	-
Insiderness (index)	3.24	2.45	-	0	12
Membership involvement (index)	16.09	3.27	-	0	20
Type=Business (ref)	-	-	633	-	-
Type 2=Professional	-	-	427	-	-
Type 3=Labour	-	-	88	-	-
Type 4=Identity	-	-	284	-	-
Type 5=Cause	-	-	486	-	-
Type 6=Leisure	-	-	220	-	-
Type 7=Institutions	-	-	99	-	-
Type 8=rest	-	-	65	-	-
Age (log)	3.26	0.93	-	0.1	7.61

Measurement of roles

Members who are not formally entitled to decide upon (either by voting or consensus) regarding changing the statutes, appointing board members, appointing the president, establishing the budget, approving new members, establishing the position of policy issues, determining the strategies for lobbying, or hiring personnel are categorised as having a symbolic role. Members who are formally entitled to decide upon (either by voting or consensus) changing the statutes, appointing board

members, appointing the president, establishing the budget, or approving new members are categorised as having a representative role. Members who are formally entitled to decide upon (either by voting or consensus) the position of policy issues, the strategies for lobbying, or hiring personnel and play a representative role are categorised as having an active role. In a small number of instances (1.5 percent), members play no representative role but do decide upon policy issues/strategies or personnel. These organisations are also seen as having an active role.

Table A6: Distribution of membership role and membership influence (n=2302)

	Not influential	Moderately influential	Very influential
Active role	4%	38%	**58%**
Representative role	3%	**63%**	35%
Symbolic role	5%	**62%**	32%

Table A7: Influence (very influential, by type)

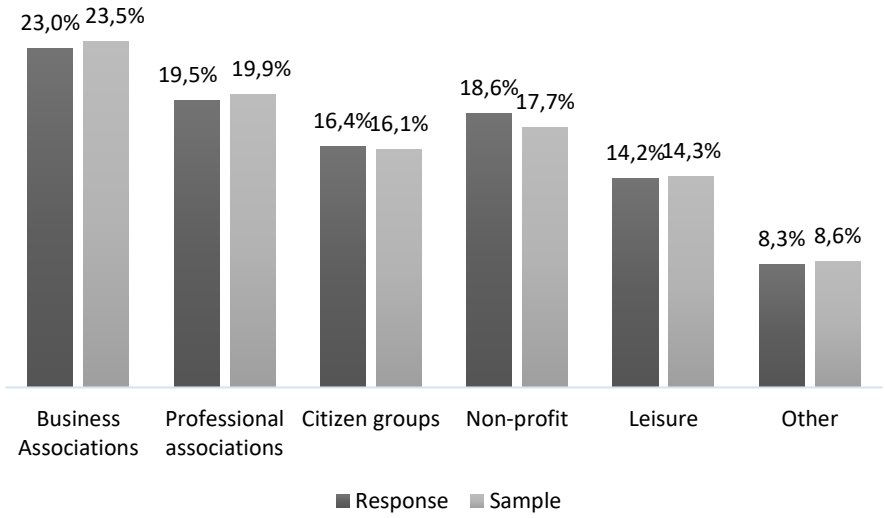
	Very influential
Association of businesses	48%
Association of professionals	43%
Trade unions	58%
Cause group	48%
Identity group	35%
Leisure organisation	31%
Institutional association	50%
Rest	46%

Appendix: Writing Blank Checks

Representativeness sample

The distribution of organisation type in the response dataset (n=727) is highly similar to the distribution in the set of sampled organisations we invited for the survey (n=1691). We can therefore conclude that the set of respondents is highly representative (see www.cigsurvey.eu).

Figure 1A. Sample distribution by organization type



Qualitative data collection

For our content analysis, key legislative acts were selected in policy domains for which, across the levels of government in Belgium, substantial funding streams directed at interest organisations are present. For example, in environmental, socio-cultural policy or development cooperation a substantial amount of funding is aimed at supporting organised interests. We selected legislative acts in domains for which the governments hold exclusive competences (development cooperation at the national level and environmental and socio-cultural policy at the subnational level) as well as shared competences (gender policy). In total we analysed 37 legislative acts (laws and decrees and their accompanying implementing decisions); an

overview by Numac (the unique identifier in *Moniteur Belge*) can be found in Table A5. We specifically looked at the articles in those legislative acts focusing on application (1), spending (2), and control (3) criteria. In addition, we refer to a number of websites of government administrations to illustrate how project funds are regulated, as application and spending requirements for these type of funds are often not spelled out in legislative acts. The target, extent of regulations, and examples of the funding criteria used in the main text are summarized in Table 1A.

Furthermore, we conducted nine expert interviews with interest organisations' senior staff as well as with government officials. Experts were selected to represent different types of organised interests active in the above mentioned policy domains. The face-to-face interviews lasted on average 64 minutes and were carried out in March 2018. Although most interviewees agreed to be quoted, given that full anonymity was guaranteed, two interviewees declined. The material from these interviewees was therefore not used in this article. Discretion was operationalised via questions probing into the effects of the rules and requirements attached to (1) the application, (2) spending, and (3) control of government funding on advocacy behaviour. For each of the three procedural steps in funding (application, spending, and control), we focused on technical as well as political criteria that may impact advocacy activities. Furthermore, we asked these experts, when possible, to compare these funding rules and requirements between the national, Flemish, and Francophone levels of government.

Measurement of the dependent variable

To construct these variables, we asked respondents in the survey the following question: '*How frequently has your organisation contacted the following sets of governmental actors in the last 12 months?'*. The list of national and European actors both included seven types of governmental actors. For the Flemish, the French-Speaking Community and Walloon Region each battery contained six actors. The items in each battery contained the most relevant governmental actors

for this level. Governmental actors included for the executive branch are ministers and cabinet staff; for the legislative branch majority and opposition parliamentarians; and for the administrative branch staff in the various ministries and departments. The answer options were, *'(0) we did not seek access, (1) at least once, (2) at least once every three months, (3) at least once a month, or (4) at least once a week'*. So, for example, an organisation that contacted all seven governmental actors at the national level of government, 'at least once a week', gets a maximum score of 28 (namely all seven entities contacted, multiplied by a score of four, meaning 'at least once a week'). Furthermore, we have removed one (incorrect) outlier and we have summed counts of the Walloon Region with the counts of the Francophone Community. This had no impact on the final results.

Table A8. Summary of target, extent of regulation and key examples of funding criteria

Policy domains by government level	Competences	Target of regulation	Extent of regulation	Type of criteria	Examples of funding rules	Legislative act: Numac
National						
Development cooperation	*Exclusive*	*Officially recognised Belgian organisations*	*Strongly*	*Application*	"having activities that cover the whole of Belgium"	2016015088
				Spending	"stimulus to work in consortia across the language border" "regular policy dialogue"	2016015088
Cultural policy	*Very limited*	*All Belgian organisations*	*Limitedly*	*Specific project funding rules*	Through the website of the National Lottery	2017031161
Environmental policy	*Limited*	*All Belgian organisations*	*Limitedly*	*Specific project funding rules*	Through the website of the National Lottery	2017031161
Flemish						
Cultural policy	*Exclusive*	*Officially recognised Flemish organisations*	*Strongly*	*Application*	"relevance and appearance of the Dutch-speaking community"	2017020648

					"active use of the Dutch language by the organisations' staff and members"	
				Spending	/	
Environmental policy	*Exclusive*	*Officially recognised Flemish organisations*	*Strongly*	*Application*	"having activities in at least three out of five provinces – with the provinces in the other regions counting as one"	2016035174
				Spending	"being a member of an advisory council"	2016035174
					"a stimulus to work in consortia within the own region – consolidating the local and provincial level"	
					"direct environmental organisations to focus advocacy activities on policy priorities determined by the government"	

Development cooperation	*Limited*	*All Flemish organisations*	Limitedly	*Specific project funding rules*	"narrowly aimed at development education"	2013200236 2007036209
Francophone/Walloon						
Cultural policy	*Exclusive*	*Officially recognised Francophone organisations*	*Strongly*	*Application*	/	
				Spending	"two broader awareness campaigns in the French-language community per year on concrete themes specified by decree"	2003029435
Environmental policy	*Exclusive*	*Officially recognised Walloon organisations*	*Strongly*	*Application*	"having activities in at least three out of five provinces – with the provinces in the other regions counting as one"	2014200854
				Spending	"being a member of an advisory council" "a stimulus to work in consortia within the own region – consolidating the local and provincial level"	2014200854

					"direct environmental organisations to focus advocacy activities on policy priorities determined by the government"	
Development cooperation	*Limited*	*All Francophone/Walloon organisations*	*Limitedly*	*Specific project funding rules*	"narrowly aimed at development education"	Project calls launched by Wallonie-Bruxelles International
European						
European Social Funds	*Shared between the EU and the Member State*	*Domestic organisations: respectively Flemish and Francophone/Walloon organisations*	*Strongly regulated by the subnational agencies*	*Application & Spending*	/	2015036252 2002029465

Measurement policy domains

To gauge in which policy domain an interest organisation is active, we asked the following question: '*Which (policy) areas is your organisation involved in?'*. Multiple boxes could be ticked by the respondent, as interests organisations can be active in multiple domains at the same time. In total we identified 23 policy domains. Based on this question and following Beyers & Bursens (2013: 287) we created three dummies: policy domains for which the subnational or national levels of government are exclusively competent, and shared policy domains between these levels of government. By creating three separate dummies we take into account that an organisation can have multiple interests across different government levels.

Table A9. Distribution of policy domains in Belgium, based on Beyers & Bursens (2013)

	Policy domains
Subnational	Education, scientific research, cultural, transport and mobility, youth, agricultural and environmental policy
National	Migration and asylum, energy, civil rights, human rights, development aid, foreign affairs, defence, justice and crime
Shared	Economic, budgetary and monetary, consumer protection, employment, manufacturing, health, social affairs, gender

Type of organisation

For determining organisational type we used the information available on the website of each interest organisation. Coders were instructed to identify for each organisation the type of members it has and to classify organisations accordingly.

Table A10. Type of organisation

Organisation type	Description
Non-profit	Associations with an emphasis on service provision (e.g. development cooperation organisations and self-help groups)
Association of professionals	Associations of professionals or of a certain occupation (e.g. doctors, lawyers, and bakers)
Citizen group	Associations of citizens with an emphasis on political action (including trade unions)
Business association	Associations of businesses
Leisure organisation	Associations with an emphasis on supporting members' leisure activities (e.g. sports, arts).
Other	Organisations not fitting in the above categories (e.g. associations of institutions or public authorities, networks and platforms)

Table A11. Distribution of dependent, independent and control variables (n=577)

Variables	Mean	SD	Freq.	Min	Max
Contacting Flemish gvt.	4.17	5.0	-	0	24
Contacting Francophone gvt.	6.2	9.1	-	0	40
Contacting National gvt.	4.7	5.2	-	0	28
Contacting European gvt.	1.9	3.2	-	0	23
Funding Subnational	0	0.5	-	-0.38	1.07
Funding National	0	0.5	-	-0.20	1.87
Funding European	0	0.5	-	-0.13	5.47
Subnational competences (0=no)	-	-	167	-	-
(1=yes)	-	-	410	-	-
National competences (0=no)	-	-	359	-	-
(1=yes)	-	-	218	-	-
Shared competences (0=no)	-	-	224	-	-
(1=yes)	-	-	353	-	-
Resources (1= <Median, ref.)	-	-	181	-	-
(2= Median)	-	-	221	-	-
(3= >Median)	-	-	175	-	-
Type (1= Non-profit, ref.)	-	-	92	-	-
(2= Professionals)	-	-	115	-	-
(3= Citizen groups)	-	-	107	-	-
(4= Business)	-	-	143	-	-
(5= Leisure)	-	-	81	-	-
(6= Rest)	-	-	39	-	-
Age (log)	3.4	0.89	-	0	5.1
Members origin (1=National, ref.)	-	-	199	-	-
(2= Flemish)	-	-	234	-	-
(3= Francophone)	-	-	144	-	-

Table A12. Overview of legislative acts by policy domain and level of government

National	**Legislative acts**
Development cooperation (exclusive)	11 SEPTEMBER 2016. - Koninklijk besluit betreffende de niet-gouvernementele samenwerking (Numac 2016015111)
	16 JUNI 2016. - Wet tot wijziging van de wet van 19 maart 2013 betreffende de Belgische Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (Numac 2016015088)
	23 AUGUSTUS 2015. - Koninklijk besluit tot wijziging van het koninklijk besluit van 25 april 2014 betreffende de subsidiëring van de actoren van de niet-gouvernementele samenwerking (Numac 2015015122)
	25 APRIL 2014. - Koninklijk besluit betreffende de subsidiëring van de actoren van de niet-gouvernementele samenwerking (Numac 2014015123)
	9 JANUARI 2014. - Wet tot wijziging van de wet van 19 maart 2013 betreffende de Belgische Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (Numac 2014015030)
Culture/Sports/Arts (limited)	19 APRIL 2002. - Wet tot rationalisering van de werking en het beheer van de Nationale Loterij (HOOFDSTUK VII. Numac 2002014105)
	30 AUGUSTUS 2017. - Koninklijk besluit tot bepaling van het voorlopig verdelingsplan van de subsidies van de Nationale Loterij voor het dienstjaar 2017 (Numac 2017031161)
Gender (shared)	12 JANUARI 2007. - Wet strekkende tot controle op de toepassing van de resoluties van de wereldvrouwenconferentie die in september 1995 in Peking heeft plaatsgehad en tot integratie van de genderdimensie in het geheel van de federale beleidslijnen (Numac 2007002011)
Flemish	
Development cooperation (limited)	22 JUNI 2007. - Kaderdecreet inzake ontwikkelingssamenwerking (Numac 2007036209)
	7 DECEMBER 2012. - Besluit van de Vlaamse Regering tot uitvoering van het kaderdecreet van 22 juni 2007 inzake ontwikkelingssamenwerking (Numac 2013200236)

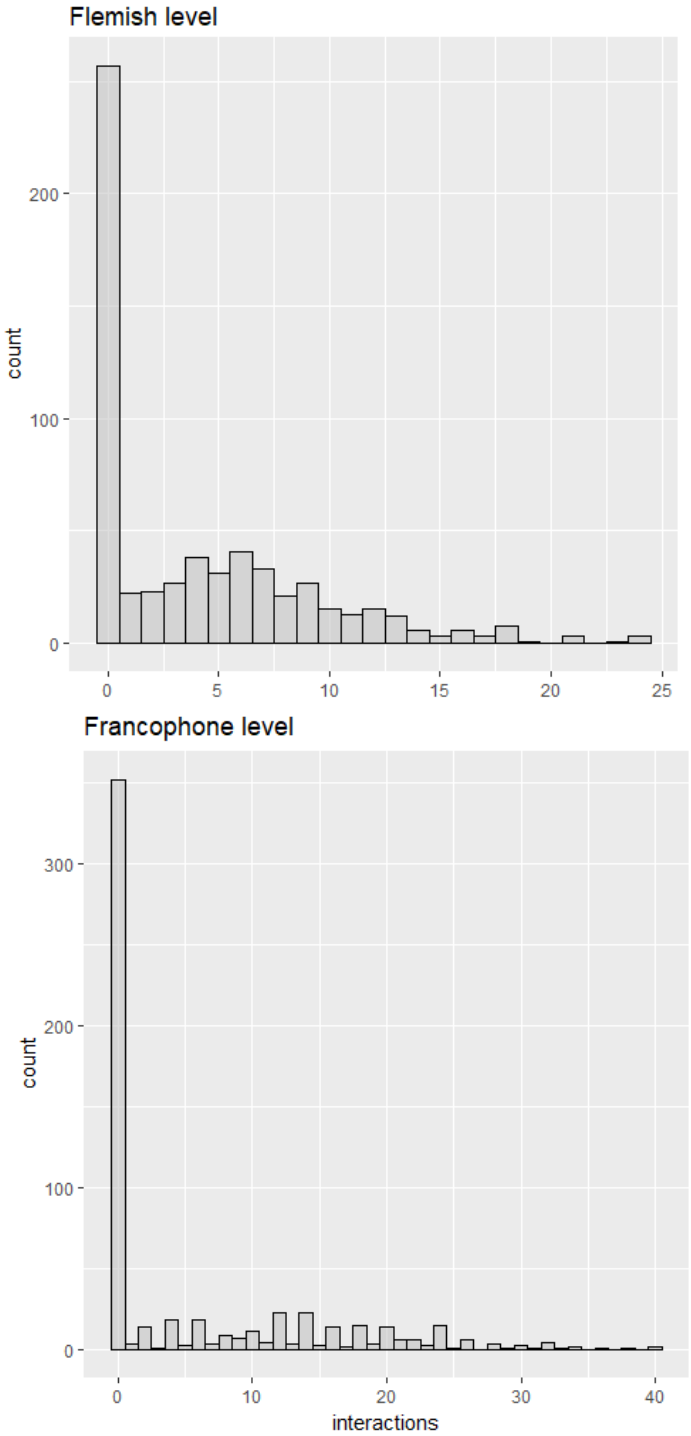
Culture (exclusive)	7 JULI 2017. - Decreet houdende de subsidiëring en erkenning van het sociaal-cultureel volwassenenwerk (Numac 2017020648)
	27 OKTOBER 2017. - Besluit van de Vlaamse Regering betreffende de uitvoering van het decreet van 7 juli 2017 houdende de subsidiëring en erkenning van het sociaal-cultureel volwassenenwerk (Numac 2017031708)
Nature and environment (exclusive)	18 DECEMBER 2015. - Besluit van de Vlaamse Regering houdende de erkenning en subsidiëring van milieu- en natuurverenigingen (Numac 2016035174)
Arts (exclusive)	13 DECEMBER 2013. - Decreet betreffende de ondersteuning van de professionele kunsten (Numac 2014035384)
	1 OKTOBER 2015. - Ministerieel besluit houdende de procedurele aspecten bij aanvragen, beoordeling, subsidietoekenning, voorschotten, betaling en toezicht in het kader van het decreet van 13 december 2013 houdende de ondersteuning van de professionele kunsten (Numac 2015036257)
	24 FEBRUARI 2017. - Decreet houdende de ondersteuning van cultureelerfgoedwerking in Vlaanderen (Numac 2017030163)
	6 JULI 2012. - Decreet houdende het Vlaams cultureel-erfgoedbeleid (Numac 2012204732)
	22 DECEMBER 2000. - Decreet betreffende de amateurkunsten (Numac 2001035244)
	7 SEPTEMBER 2007. - Besluit van de Vlaamse Regering houdende de uitvoering van het decreet van 22 december 2000 betreffende de amateurkunsten (Numac 2007036673)
	20 DECEMBER 2013. - Decreet tot wijziging van diverse bepalingen van het decreet van 22 december 2000 betreffende de amateurkunsten (Numac 2014200334)
Youth (exclusive)	22 DECEMBER 2017. - Decreet houdende de subsidiëring van bovenlokaal jeugdwerk, jeugdhuizen en jeugdwerk voor bijzondere doelgroepen (Numac 2018010241)
Sports (exclusive)	10 JUNI 2016. - Decreet houdende de erkenning en subsidiëring van de georganiseerde sportsector (Numac 2016036114)
	16 SEPTEMBER 2016. - Besluit van de Vlaamse Regering tot vaststelling van de algemene erkennings- en subsidiëringsvoorwaarden voor de georganiseerde sportsector (Numac 2016036553)

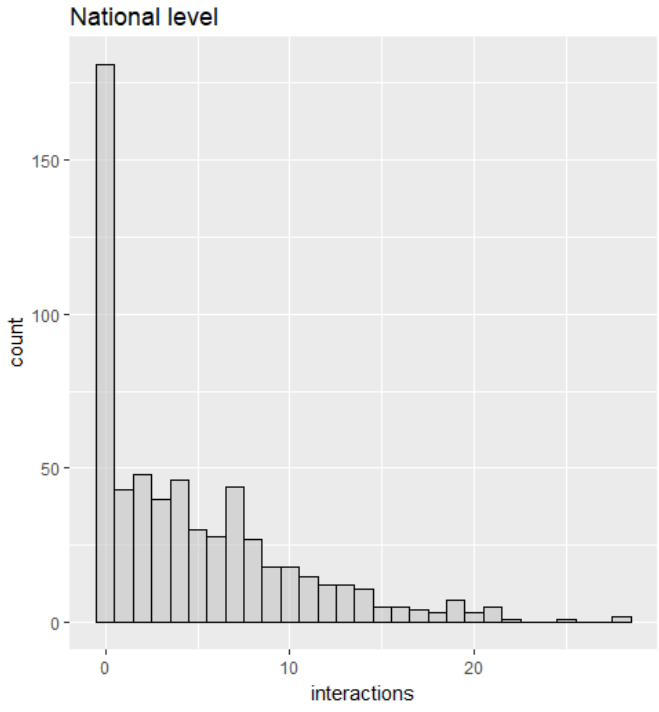
	16 SEPTEMBER 2016. - Besluit van de Vlaamse Regering betreffende de uitvoering van het decreet van 10 juni 2016 houdende de erkenning en subsidiëring van de georganiseerde sportsector inzake de vaststelling van de voorwaarden om een subsidie te verkrijgen voor de uitvoering van de beleidsfocussen jeugdsport, laagdrempelig sportaanbod, innovatie en sportkampen (Numac 2016036465)
Gender (shared)	No legislative acts found, see http://www.gelijkekansen.be/Praktisch/Subsidies.aspx
ESF	25 SEPTEMBER 2015. - Besluit van de Vlaamse Regering betreffende steun aan projecten in het kader van het Europees Fonds voor de Regionale Ontwikkeling en het Europees Sociaal Fonds (Numac 2015036252)
	30 OKTOBER 2015. - Decreet houdende de wijziging van het decreet van 8 november 2002 houdende de oprichting van de v.z.w. ESF-Agentschap (Numac 2015036442)
	8 NOVEMBER 2002. - Decreet houdende de oprichting van de v.z.w. ESF-Agentschap (Numac 2002036509)
Francophone/Walloon	
Development cooperation (limited)	No legislative acts found, but see project calls launched by Wallonie-Bruxelles International (http://www.wbi.be/)
Culture (exclusive)	22 FEVRIER 2018. - Décret modifiant le décret du 24 octobre 2008 déterminant les conditions de subventionnement de l'emploi dans les secteurs socioculturels de la Communauté française (Numac 2018040111)
	2 JUIN 2016. - Décret modifiant le décret du 24 octobre 2008 déterminant les conditions de subventionnement de l'emploi dans les secteurs socioculturels de la Communauté française (Numac 2016029309)
	24 OCTOBRE 2008. - Décret déterminant les conditions de subventionnement de l'emploi dans les secteurs socioculturels de la Communauté française (Numac 2008029570)
	30 AVRIL 2014. - Arrêté du Gouvernement de la Communauté française relatif au soutien de l'action associative dans le champ de l'éducation permanente (Numac 2014029520)
	17 JUILLET 2003. - Décret relatif au soutien de l'action associative dans le champ de l'Education permanente (Numac 2003029435)

Nature and environment (exclusive)	23 JANVIER 2014. - Décret relatif à la reconnaissance et au subventionnement des associations environnementales et modifiant le Livre Ier du Code de l'Environnement et le décret du 6 novembre 2008 portant rationalisation de la fonction consultative (Numac 2014200854)
	15 MAI 2014. - Arrêté du Gouvernement wallon relatif à la reconnaissance et au subventionnement structurel des associations environnementales et modifiant le Livre Ier du Code de l'Environnement (Numac 2014204154)
Arts (exclusive)	13 JUILLET 2016. - Décret modifiant le décret du 30 avril 2009 relatif à l'encadrement et au subventionnement des fédérations de pratiques artistiques en amateur, des Fédérations représentatives de Centres d'expression et de créativité et des centres d'expression et de créativité (Numac 2016029346)
	3 AVRIL 2014. - Arrêté du Gouvernement de la Communauté française portant exécution du décret du 30 avril 2009 relatif à l'encadrement et au subventionnement des fédérations de pratiques artistiques en amateur, des fédérations représentatives de centres d'expression et de créativité et des centres d'expression et de créativité (Numac 2014029224)
	30 AVRIL 2009. - Décret relatif à l'encadrement et au subventionnement des fédérations de pratiques artistiques en amateur, des Fédérations représentatives de Centres d'expression et de créativité et des centres d'expression et de créativité (Numac 2009029715)
Youth (exclusive)	17 JANVIER 2018. - Arrêté du Gouvernement de la Communauté française portant exécution de l'article 44, § 1er, 1°, alinéa 3, du décret du 20 juillet 2000 déterminant les conditions d'agrément et de subventionnement des maisons de jeunes, centres de rencontres et d'hébergement et centres d'informations des jeunes et de leurs fédérations (Numac 2018011023)
	26 MARS 2009. - Décret fixant les conditions d'agrément et d'octroi de subventions aux organisations de jeunesse (Numac 2009029312)
Sports (exclusive)	8 DECEMBRE 2006. - Décret visant l'organisation et le subventionnement du sport en Communauté française (Numac 2007029009)
Gender (shared)	No legislative acts found, see https://www.transversal.cfwb.be/sub/extranet/dispositif-consulter.sub?sigle=gEC-SFC-18
ESF	5 MEI 1999. - Decreet houdende goedkeuring van het samenwerkingsakkoord betreffende de coördinatie en het beheer van de door de Europese Commissie verleende steun inzake human resources en betreffende de oprichting van het Agentschap

	Europees Sociaal Fonds, op 2 september 1998 te Brussel gesloten door de Waalse Regering, de Regering van de Franse Gemeenschap en de Franse Gemeenschapscommissie van het Brussels Hoofdstedelijk Gewest (Numac 1999029514)
	4 SEPTEMBER 2002. - Besluit van de Franse Gemeenschapsregering tot vaststelling van de uitvoeringswijzen van het samenwerkingsakkoord betreffende de coördinatie en het beheer van de door de Europese Commissie verleende steun inzake human resources en betreffende de oprichting van het Agentschap Europees Sociaal Fonds, gesloten te Brussel op 2 september 1998 tussen de Waalse Regering, de Franse Gemeenschapsregering en het College van de Franse Gemeenschapscommissie van het Brussels Hoofdstedelijk Gewest, goedgekeurd bij decreet van de Raad van de Franse Gemeenschap van 5 mei 1999 (Numac 2002029465)

Figure 2A. Distribution of the dependent variables. Four histograms of interaction measures for the four levels of government (n=577)




National level
150
100
50
0
count
0
10
20
interactions

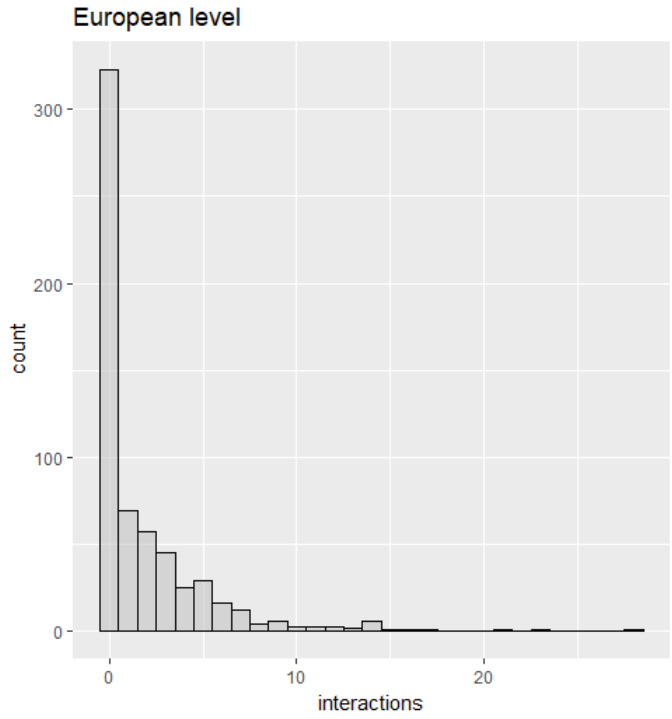

European level
300
200
100
0
count
0
10
20
interactions

Table A13. Models without indicators of advocacy behaviour towards other levels of governments

	Flanders	Francophone	National	European
Zero-inflated Model				
Intercept	-0,26 (0,15)*	-0,08 (0,14)	-2,04 (0,28)***	-0,87 (0,27)***
Member (National, ref.)	-	-	-	-
Member (Flemish)	-3,03 (0,49)***	3,19 (0,35)***	1,25 (0,32)***	0,52 (0,28)*
Member (Francophone)	4,09 (0,6)***	-2,57 (0,37)***	1,25 (0,34)***	0,47 (0,32)
Count Model				
Intercept	1,46 (0,18)***	2,12 (0,2)	0,84 (0,21)	0,02 (0,31)
Subnational Funding	0,04 (0,09)	0,28 (0,09)***	-0,30 (0,10)**	-0,29 (0,14)**
National Funding	-0,14 (0,09)	0,05 (0,08)	0,06 (0,09)	-0,36 (0,13)***
European Funding	0 (0,07)	0,02 (0,07)	-0,07 (0,08)	0,18 (0,1)*
Subnational competences	0,18 (0,08)**	0,08 (0,09)	0,07 (0,08)	0,5 (0,14)***
National competences	0,14 (0,08)*	0,18 (0,08)**	0,42 (0,08)***	0,39 (0,13)**
Shared competences	0,1 (0,08)	0,13 (0,09)	0,16 (0,09)*	0,14 (0,13)
Resources (<med) (ref.)	-	-	-	-
Resources (med)	0,31 (0,09)***	0,36 (0,09)***	0,27 (0,1)***	0,15 (0,16)
Resources (>med)	0,42 (0,1)***	0,38 (0,1)***	0,4 (0,1)***	0,51 (0,16)**
Type: Non-profit (ref.)	-	-	-	-
Type: Professional	0,24 (0,14)*	0,4 (0,14)***	0,49 (0,15)***	0,15 (0,22)
Type: Citizen groups	0,15 (0,13)	0,36 (0,12)***	0,47 (0,14)***	0,25 (0,2)
Type: Business	0,24 (0,13)*	0,28 (0,12)**	0,41 (0,14)***	0,03 (0,21)
Type: Leisure	-0,14 (0,15)	0,25 (0,15)*	-0,01 (0,19)	-0,82 (0,26)***
Type: Rest	0,42 (0,17)**	0,52 (0,16)***	-0,02 (0,19)	-0,53 (0,29)*
Age (log)	-0,06 (0,04)	-0,07 (0,04)	0,02 (0,04)	0,04 (0,07)
Log(theta)	1,5 (0,15)***	1,38 (0,13)***	0,97 (0,14)***	0,51 (0,23)***
Log-likelihood	-1109,13	-1054,02	-1423,60	-965,18
Observations	577	577	577	577

Appendix: Live to fight another day?

NACE classification

Most European countries have a similar register and use a related classification (following the so-called NACE classification system, based on a standardization used by EUROSTAT and the OECD). NACE is the abbreviation of the French “Nomenclature statistique des activités économiques dans la Communauté européenne”. This European industry classification system consists of a 4 digit code and is used in most national statistical data-systems.

The definition of S94 reads as follows: “This division includes activities of organizations representing interests of special groups or promoting ideas to the general public. These organizations usually have a constituency of members, but their activities may involve and benefit non-members as well. The primary breakdown of this division is determined by the purpose that these organizations serve, namely interests of employers, self-employed individuals and the scientific community (group 94.1), interests of employees (group 94.2) or promotion of religious, political, cultural, educational or recreational ideas and activities (group

Table A14: Coding organization types

Organization type	Description
Service organization	Associations with emphasis on service provision (e.g. development organizations and self-help groups)
Association of Professionals	Associations of professionals or a certain trade (e.g. doctors, lawyers, and bakers)
Citizen/cause groups	Association of citizens with emphasis on political action (also including trade unions)
Association of businesses	Associations of businesses
Leisure organization	Associations with emphasis on supporting members leisure activities (e.g. sport).
Rest	Organizations not fitting in the above categories (e.g. associations of institutions, associations of public authorities, networks and platforms)

Table A15: Regression analysis chapter five, with all political insiderness, membership involvement, formalisation and professionalisation

	Flemish level	Francophone	National level	European level
Zero-inflated Model				
Intercept	-0,32 (0,16)**	-0,14 (0,16)	-2,46 (0,38)***	-1,69 (0,64)
Member (National, ref.)	-	-	-	-
Member (Flemish)	-2,89 (0,46)***	3,42 (0,42)***	1,67 (0,41)***	0,48 (0,54)
Member	3,92 (0,61)***	-2,36 (0,39)***	1,68 (0,43)***	0,83 (0,57)
Count Model				
Intercept	0,93 (0,22)***	1,79 (0,27)***	0,45 (0,25)*	-0,45 (0,49)
Subnational Funding	0,1 (0,07)	0,3 (0,09)***	-0,21 (0,08)**	-0,17 (0,15)
National Funding	-0,01 (0,07)	0,04 (0,07)	0,22 (0,07)***	-0,19 (0,13)
European Funding	0,02 (0,05)	0,03 (0,06)	-0,15 (0,07)**	0,28 (0,11)**
Subnational competences	0,17 (0,07)**	0,11 (0,08)	-0,16 (0,07)**	0,31 (0,15)*
National competences	-0,11 (0,06)*	-0,08 (0,08)	0,21 (0,07)***	0,08 (0,14)
Shared competences	-0,01 (0,06)	0,08 (0,08)	0,04 (0,07)	-0,02 (0,13)
Resources (<med., ref.)	-	-	-	-
Resources (med.)	0,02 (0,09)	0,14 (0,09)*	-0,01 (0,09)	-0,15 (0,17)
Resources (>med.)	-0,04 (0,1)	0,03 (0,1)	-0,04 (0,1)	-0,13 (0,2)
Flemish contacts	-	-0,01 (0,01)	0,02 (0)***	0,01 (0,01)
Francophone contacts	-0,01 (0)**	-	0,03 (0,01)***	0 (0,01)
National contacts	0,04 (0,01)***	0,03 (0,01)***	-	0,06 (0,01)***
European contacts	0 (0,01)	0,01 (0,01)	0,05 (0,01)***	-
Type: (Non-profit, ref.)	-	-	-	-
Type: Professional	0,03 (0,11)	0,21 (0,12)	0,21 (0,12)*	-0,37 (0,22)*
Type: Citizen groups	-0,08 (0,1)	0,12 (0,11)	0,19 (0,11)*	-0,17 (0,2)
Type: Business	0,03 (0,1)	0,03 (0,12)	0,18 (0,11)	-0,24 (0,21)
Type: Leisure	-0,18 (0,12)	0,27 (0,13)**	0,02 (0,16)	-0,92 (0,26)***
Type: Rest	0,17 (0,13)	0,34 (0,14)**	-0,4 (0,16)**	-0,75 (0,3)*
Age (log)	-0,03 (0,03)	-0,02 (0,04)	0,06 (0,04)*	0,07 (0,08)
Insiderness	0,07 (0,01)***	0,06 (0,01)***	0,06 (0,01)***	0,09 (0,03)***
Membership inv.	0,02 (0,01)*	0 (0,01)	0,01 (0,03)	-0,01 (0,06)
Formalisation	0,02 (0,03)	0,01 (0,03)	-0,01 (0,01)	0,01 (0,01)
Professionalisation	0,01 (0,01)*	0,01 (0,01)*	0 (0,01)	0,02 (0,01)
Log(theta)	3,37 (0,47)***	2,14 (0,18)***	2,25 (0,25)***	0,64 (0,34)*
Observations	471	471	471	471

Index: parameter estimates (standard errors between brackets); *= $p < 0.1$, **= $p < 0.05$, ***=$p < 0.01$

Table A16: Regression analysis chapter four, with alternative measurement for membership involvement, political insiderness and with government dependency.

	Model I	Model II
Intercept	-	-
1/2	-2,62 (0,39)***	-2,98 (0,4)***
2/3	1,37 (0,38)***	1,03 (0,39)**
Country: Sweden (ref)	-	
Country: Belgium	0 (0,14)	0,01 (0,14)
Country: EU	-0,15 (0,16)	-0,14 (0,16)
Country: Italy	1,56 (0,23)***	1,58 (0,23)***
Country: Lithuania	0,92 (0,2)***	0,92 (0,2)***
Country: The Netherlands	0,73 (0,19)***	0,72 (0,19)***
Country: Slovenia	-0,54 (0,23)*	-0,49 (0,23)*
Type=Business (ref)	-	-
Type 2=Professional	0,1 (0,15)	0,1 (0,15)
Type 3=Labour	0,45 (0,27)	0,38 (0,27)
Type 4=Identity	0,19 (0,18)	0,2 (0,18)
Type 5=Cause	-0,19 (0,15)	-0,19 (0,16)
Type 6=leisure	-0,25 (0,19)	-0,27 (0,19)
Type 7=Institutions	-0,06 (0,24)	-0,05 (0,24)
Type 8=Rest	0,14 (0,29)	0,19 (0,29)
Number of individual members	-	-
Number of individual members	-0,46 (0,14)**	-0,46 (0,14)**
Number of individual members	-0,65 (0,12)***	-0,65 (0,12)***
Number of business members	-	-
Number of business members	-0,18 (0,13)	-0,21 (0,13)
Number of business members	0,04 (0,12)	0,04 (0,12)
Age (log)	0,03 (0,06)	0,02 (0,06)
Number of staff (log)	-0,04 (0,03)	-0,44 (0,11)***
Formalisation (index)	-0,04 (0,04)	-0,04 (0,04)
Decision made by (ref=members)	-	-
Decision made by (members)	-0,04 (0,17)	-0,07 (0,17)
Decision made by (board)	-0,82 (0,14)***	-0,83 (0,14)***
Decision made by (board)	-0,75 (0,16)***	-0,75 (0,16)***
Decision made by (staff)	-1,5 (0,2)***	-1,49 (0,2)***
Decision made by (other)	-1,07 (0,29)***	-1,11 (0,29)***
Membership involvement	0,07 (0,01)***	0,05 (0,01)***
Government dependency	0 (0)	0 (0)
Political Insiderness index	0,07 (0,02)***	0,07 (0,02)***
Staff: involvement	-	0,02 (0)***
N	2231	2231

Index: parameter estimates (standard errors between brackets); ***=<.001; **=<.01; *=<.05

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[1]The equivalence between both SMOs/CSOs and TSOs/NPOs can be disputed. However, discussing these differences is beyond the scope of this paper' (instead see Halpin 2010, Chapter 2).

[2]Similar to Burstein I use 'interest organisations' to signify the collection of SMOs, IGs, and TSOs, whilst I use the term 'intermediary organisation to denote the collection of interest organisations and political parties (1998:3).

[3] This review is a complete or systematic oversight of all the works on institutionalisation (instead see, Scott 1995).

[4] Some LGBT organisations recently added Q (queer or questioning), I (intersex), A (asexual or ally).

[5] However, Saurruger writes: *'In the 1990s: the social movement literature transferred their interest from informal movements on the well-structured and transnational non-state actors, commonly called NGOs.'* (2012: 75)

[6] However, McCarthy and Zald (1973: 3), remark in a note in a footnote: *'As an aside it is worth noting that political scientists use the phrase "interest groups" and sociologist write about "social movement organizations" without acknowledging their overlapping functions and processes.'*

[7] This does not mean that such organisations cannot become politically active. Some IG scholars refer to these organisations as latent interest groups.

[8] In everyday use, the term interest group has a certain connotation. And some organisations could do without being labelled as such. This hints to the fact that the distinction between IGs and the other types of intermediary organisations is (partially) based on normative assumptions.

[9] According to some authors, there might still be some sort of minimal democratic feedback mechanism in place. I.e. members still retain the right to vote with their feet. In this highly competitive and fluid landscape, the leadership of IGs need to tread carefully to avoid the exit of their members or clients. Similarly to companies, IGs need to carefully manage their public image (Maloney 2015).

[10] The Swedish team used an approach between bottom-up and top-down approach.

[11] Organisations are themselves responsible for their own NACE-categorization. This registration procedure differs according to the venue these groups register. They can register at: (1) the 'office of enterprise' (when they adopt some legal personality), (2) via the RSZ office (Ministry of Social Affairs, in case they have staff) or (3) via the VAT-office (Ministry of Finance). Depending on their activities, some organisations have to register at the two or even at all three different venues. All these registrations are kept in the KBO and appear as different entries.

[12] Some organisations have multiple main registered offices. This is the reason why we cannot automatically link the 'main offices' and 'establishments'. Some main offices are de facto establishments of another main office, but for legal reasons they are registered separately.

[13] Later, categories sports associations (88.999) and mutualities were also included.

[14] Programming the survey and sending the invitation/reminder emails, as well as the reminder calls was conducted by a Belgian research firm.

[15] Jahn (2016) did not include the EU. It might be argued that the EU, compared to the other political systems under analysis, presents an atypical case. For instance, Coen and Richardson

(2009) characterise the EU's relation to organised interests as a specific form of 'elite pluralism'. However, including evidence of European interest organisations might be informative because one relevant feature of this 'elitism' is the fact that EU organisations, due to their confederated structure, have a 'structural remoteness from the grass roots interests they represent' (Greenwood, 2003: 52).

[16] We maintain a broad conceptualisation of membership, including not only formally registered members but also actors who regularly donate time or financial resources to the organisations (supporters). We hereby tried to limit the subjective interpretation of 'membership'. As argued by Jordan and Maloney (2007): "While studies of groups tend to adopt the useful fiction that groups have 'members', in practice the issue is far less clear-cut". In this regard, many organisations have 'supporters instead of 'members'. Like Jordan and Maloney (2007), we also include organisations with supporters because (1) supporter-based organisations are equally governed by a tension between their supporters' interests and what is good for the organisation. Additionally, (2) supporters can influence the organisation. Organisations do not always exclude them from influencing the organisation's policy position, certainly because the exit option is also a real threat in the case of supporters.

[17] The Belgian, Dutch, European, Slovenian, Lithuanian and Italian sampling strategies differ to some extent from the Swedish sampling strategy. The sampling in the former is bottom-up in that the selection of organisations started from a register of all legal personalities. By contrast, the Swedish sampling strategy is more top-down in nature, as the starting point for this sampling procedure is the government archives of all letters and consultations by interest organisations (See WEBSITE). Although Berkhout and Lowery (2008) warn that different sampling methodologies might lead to differing sizes and compositions of populations, it should be noted that the threshold for inclusion in the Swedish sample is very low.

[18] The EU was not included in this calculation as Jahn (2016) does not report evidence on the European system.

[19] Belgium is divided in three territorial regions and three linguistic communities. In Flanders, the institutions of the Flemish Region and the Dutch-speaking Community have merged, therefore we speak of the Flemish government/Flanders. The Walloon Region and Francophone Community have not merged. Substantial competences of the Francophone Community have been delegated to the Walloon Region, whilst specific Walloon regional competences are delegated to the German-Speaking Community. Hence, when we speak about Francophone level of government, we refer to both the Walloon regional government and the Francophone community government.

[20] Due to item non-response, we retain 577 organisations in the analyses.

[21] We standardise by subtracting the mean and dividing this by two times the standard deviation (Gelman & Hill 2007:57). This allows for an interpretation analogous to a dichotomous variable. Moving one unit of analysis, corresponds to moving one standard deviation below the mean, to one standard deviation above the mean.

[22] Analysed legislative acts are listed in Online Appendix Table A12 by Numac (unique identifier in Moniteur Belge), Numac also provided in text between parentheses.

[23] Vlaamse Overheid (2018). Gesubsidieerde organisaties. http://www.sociaalcultureel.be/ (consulted on 14 May 2018)

[24] European Commission (2018). Operational Programmes – Belgium - Wallonie-Bruxelles 2020.eu - ESF/YEI. http://ec.europa.eu/esf/ (consulted on 14 May 2018).

[25] Flemish model, Vuong Z-stat = 15.0 p-value= <0.001; Francophone model, Vuong Z-stat = 15.2 p-value= <0.001; national model, Vuong Z-stat = 5.7 p-value= <0.001; European model, Vuong Z-stat = 1.8, p-value= 0.03

[26] Compared to a baseline model with controls: model I ΔAIC = 3.70, model 2 ΔAIC = 18.37, model 3 ΔAIC = 26.27, model 4 ΔAIC = 8.67

[27] Online Appendix Table A13: models without the indicators of advocacy towards others levels of government.

[28] Ranging from 0="never", 1="at least once during the past year", 2="at least once every three months", 3="at least once a month", and 4="at least once a week".

[29] Ranging from "none", "up to 10", "11-100", "101-1000""1001-50,000" "50,001-100,000" "10,0001-1 million" to "more than a million".

[30] Ranging from 0="unimportant", 1="not so important", 2="neither important", 3="important", 4="very important", and 5="not applicable" (this latter value was considered as equivalent to "unimportant" and its value was truncated to 0).

[31] We tested separate models in which we controlled for resources, more precisely the annual budget during the year before we implemented the survey (2015). The results are similar to what we report here. Yet, we decided not the included this control variable in the final model as resources and staff size are strongly correlated ($r=.57$; $p<0.001$) which caused problems of collinearity.

[32] A model with age as a quadratic term did not generate a significant impact (Hung & Ong 2012; Vermeulen et al. 2016).

[33] Comparing with a more parsimonious model, namely the full model without specific competition, we observe a much lower statistical fit, which confirms that this variable makes a substantial contribution to a better model fit (ΔAIC=46.5).