

INTERVIEW GUIDE – ORGANIZED INTERESTS
Comparative Research on Interest Group Politics in Europe (INTEREURO)

BASIC INFORMATION ON THE INTERVIEW AND INTERVIEWEE

Proposal ID:

Name of interviewee:

Name of organization:

Organization ID:

Phone number:

E-mail (if available):

Position in the organization during the past four years:

Position at time of interview:

Date of interview:

Place of interview:

Time of interview:

Interview carried out by

PRELIMINARY REMARK

This interview is part of a research project on interest group involvement in EU decision-making. The project is carried out by research teams in nine different countries under the auspices of the European Science Foundation. For this project, we are currently conducting a survey with officials from various EU-level interest organizations on a sample of 100 legislative proposals.

Would you object to us listing you in the acknowledgements of our project? If you prefer to remain anonymous, we can guarantee that you will not be mentioned in our acknowledgements, that your responses to our questions will be treated confidentially, and that you will not be identifiable in any of the publications that result from this project. The interview is structured in an efficient way, with some closed questions, which enables us to conduct the interview very effectively.

In this interview, I want to talk with you about the Commission proposal [...]

Identification of the issues

1. Often, EU legislative processes are characterized by several lines of conflict around specific issues. Our research on this proposal reveals that there has been conflict with respect to the following issues. Would you agree that these were the main conflictual issues during the legislative process?

Issue 1: _____

yes no from the beginning at a later stage

Issue 2: _____

yes no from the beginning at a later stage

Issue 3: _____

yes no from the beginning at a later stage

2. If not, how would you define the conflictual issues in this proposal?

Issue 4: _____ from the beginning later

Issue 5 _____ from the beginning later

3. Thinking about these issues, were they already part of the discussion at the point that the Commission adopted its proposal or was it at a later stage that these issues became important?

4. Within any organization certain issues will necessarily be viewed as more important than others. For each of the issues we have discussed, could you assess their importance compared to other issues that you are familiar with?

	<i>More important</i>	<i>About equally important</i>	<i>Less important</i>
Issue 1 _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 2 _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 3 _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 4 _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 5 _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. On each issue characterizing this proposal, did your organization invest more or fewer resources in shaping the legislative outcome compared to other issues that you are familiar with?

	More resources	About the same	Fewer resources
Issue 1 _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 2 _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 3 _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 4 _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 5 _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Coalition strategies

6. In this section we are going to talk about your strategies, namely the lobbying or advocacy activities you undertook in order to influence or affect the legislative outcome. Before we start we would like to know whether

7. Based on an extensive analysis of media sources and expert interviews with policymakers we identified the following list of advocates [SHOW LIST 1].

a) Can you check this list and see whether there are actors missing who actively tried to influence the legislative outcome? [By actors we mean interest groups, firms, civil society organizations or regional representations. **We are interested in advocates who were both successful and unsuccessful in their attempts to influence the outcome.**]

Thinking about the issues we have talked about, at times actors may cooperate with one another. We are particularly interested in the exchange of information between different advocates. We define “information” broadly. It may include advice on the best political strategy to be used, knowledge about others’ strategy, as well as a range of sometimes confidential technical and scientific expertise.

b) With regard to this issue, how frequently did you exchange information with the actors on this list? Was this never, rarely, sometimes, frequently or very frequently?

c) Can you please indicate up to five actors who were the most active in lobbying on this proposal?

D to G are open questions. Write down the answers carefully.

d) In order to influence EU policies advocates may forge coalitions. We understand coalitions as explicit agreements between you and other actors, aimed at coordinating efforts to influence EU legislation, for instance through the issuing of joint statements. If you were involved in this type of activity can you indicate with whom you formed a coalition to influence the legislative outcome of this proposal?

e) Possibly there were other coalitions involved. What policies were these other coalitions seeking and who were members of these coalitions?

f) Who took the lead in establishing all these coalitions, including the coalitions to which you belong?

g) Which of these groups, including your own, was influential in European policymaking on the proposal concerning [Proposal description]? Please also consider stakeholders that took a different position than [NAME ORGANISATION].

Interactions with other actors

In order to influence legislation, interest groups, politicians, and public officials often interact with each other. In these interactions information plays a vital role. Such information may concern advice on how to approach other policymakers, knowledge about others' lobbying strategies, or technical and scientific expertise.

8. The following questions concern the different political institutions your organization might have provided information to with the purpose of influencing the legislative outcome. I will show you a list with different political institutions and I would like to know how regularly you provided these institutions with information. Was this never, rarely, sometimes, frequently or very frequently?

SHOW LIST 2

9. With respect to the proposal concerning [Proposal description] Initiative, did you provide information to any DGs and services in the European Commission? If so, which ones? And how frequently did you provide information to these DGs (rarely, sometimes, frequently or very frequently)

If yes, name DG or service	1	2	3	4
	rarely	sometimes	frequently	very frequently
DG/service1_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DG/service2_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DG/service3_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DG/service4_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. With respect to proposal concerning [Proposal description] company did you provide information to the Commissioners and/or their Cabinets? If so, which ones? And how frequently did you provide information to Commissioners and/or their Cabinets (rarely, sometimes, frequently or very frequently)

If yes, name Comm/Cab	1	2	3	4
	rarely	sometimes	frequently	very frequently
Comm/Cab1_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comm/Cab2_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comm/Cab3_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comm/Cab4_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. With respect to the proposal concerning [Proposal description] did you provide information to the member-state delegations? If so, which ones?

If yes, name MS	1	2	3	4
	rarely	sometimes	frequently	very frequently
MS1_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
MS2_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
MS3_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
MS4_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
MS6_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
MS7_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
MS8_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. About these contacts with the member-state delegations. In general, at which level did these contacts take place. Was this at the level of

	1 never	2 rarely	3 sometimes	4 frequently	5 very frequently
Ambassadors, diplomats in the Permanent Representations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
National officials in the specialized working groups of the Council	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ministers, the ministerial level of the Council	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. Are there specific European regulatory agencies you consider important for this legislative proposal and whom you provided information to? If yes, who are they? And did you engage in such exchanges with them rarely, sometimes, frequently or very frequently?

If yes, name	Was this			
	1 rarely	2 sometimes	3 frequently	4 very frequently
1 _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. Looking back at this particular proposal, who, among all the actors we have been talking about, policymakers and societal interests (**but not your members**), would you say have been your most important sources of information?

[Try to get three, and with a rank order]

15. Information flows in two directions: Who, among all the actors we have been talking about, policymakers and societal interests (**but not your members**), have you most frequently provided information to?

[Try to get three, and with a rank order]

Other activities

16. Which of the following activities did [NAME ORGANISATION] undertake to try to affect or influence legislative outcomes? How frequently were these activities used? (never, rarely, sometimes, frequently or very frequently).

	1 never	2 rarely	3 sometimes	4 frequently	5 very frequently
1. Organize press conferences or distributed press releases	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Publish research reports and brochures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Active involvement in media debates such as giving interviews, editorials, opinion letters...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Place advertisements in newspapers and magazines	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Contact reporters and journalists to increase media attention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Encourage members and supporters to lobby policymakers, start a letter-writing campaign or to sign petitions directed at public officials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Stage protest activities involving members and supporters (strikes, consumer boycotts, public demonstrations)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Publish statements and position papers (on your own website)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Hire commercial consultants (agents who are paid to try to influence policy-makers on behalf of your organization)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. Did any stakeholder that was on your side (who pursued the same policy goals) initiate or support legal proceedings (sues) that were related to the content of this proposal (**before, during or after the legislative process**)?

Yes No

IF YES

Did this happen...

Before the Commission adopted its proposal	<input type="radio"/>
During the legislative process	<input type="radio"/>
After the Council and the Parliament adopted the legislative act	<input type="radio"/>

18. How much time and energy does your organization spend on monitoring the implementation of this directive/regulation? Is this

We do not spend time and energy on monitoring implementation	<input type="radio"/>
Monitoring happens occasionally and rarely	<input type="radio"/>
We invest strongly in monitoring, but less than we spend during the legislative process	<input type="radio"/>
We invest in monitoring, almost the same as during the legislative process	<input type="radio"/>
Monitoring is very important; we spend more energy on it than during the legislative process	<input type="radio"/>

19. Did the Commission involve you in the implementation of this directive/proposal after the Council and the Parliament adopted the legislative act?

Yes No

IF YES

Which form does this involvement take (regular meetings with EC committees, informal contacts, participation in the EU projects, actual implementation of the directive...)?

PROBE FOR THE FORM (COMMITTEE...), THE INTENSITY, AND OTHER ACTORS INVOLVED

20. If you consider all the resources that your organisation spent on getting its message across on this same proposal, roughly what percentage was spent

	percentage
at the national level	
at the EU level	
outside the EU	

21. With respect to the same legislative proposal, roughly what percentage of your efforts consisted of activities that were addressed to the public and what percentage concerned efforts to gain direct access to policymakers?

	percentage
activities addressed to the public	
activities addressed to policymakers	

Some concluding questions on this proposal

22. Interest groups and civil society organizations might use different arguments when they try to communicate their message as effectively as possible. Did [NAME ORGANISATION] present different arguments to different political institutions on this proposal?

No, we convey the same message to all political institutions	O	<p>➔ What was the main message that you put forward?</p> <p>WRITE DOWN CAREFULLY THE WORDING OF THE RESPONDENT</p>
Yes, we vary our message depending on the institutions that we targeted	O	<p>➔ If yes, in what way did you message vary depending on whether you targeted the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of European Union or the European Council?</p>

23. Irrespective of your message, did you emphasize different aspects of this proposal when approaching different institutions? For instance [PUT CROSS IF APPLICABLE],

	Technical and scientific aspects	Economic consequence (for instance for employment, costs for stakeholders...)	Legal and administrative implications	Political consequence (voters, members, public opinion...)
for the European Commission did you talk mostly about				
for Members of the European Parliament				
when approaching member-state delegations				

Are there any of these types of arguments you deliberately avoided when approaching a specific institution?

24. We have discussed different issues that have been the cause of conflict in the proposal and different actors that have been involved. Now, I would like to ask you what you think is at stake in this proposal at a more general level – or, in other words, what is the essence of this proposal at a more general level?

IF RESPONDENTS COMES UP WITH MULTIPLE ISSUES ASK FOR A RANKING (THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE)

25. For each issue, were the activities you and your supporters used aimed at...

	1. <i>Supporting the Commission</i>	2. <i>Shaping specific parts of the proposal, not blocking it</i>	3. <i>Shaping most of the proposal, not blocking it</i>	4. <i>Blocking the whole proposal</i>
Issue 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 5	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

26. To what extent is the outcome on the different issues consistent with your organization's initial preferences? Is this outcome identical to your initial preferences (1), close to, but not identical to your initial preferences (2), a long way from your initial preferences (3) the exact opposite of your initial preferences (4)?

	<i>Identical</i>	<i>Close To</i>	<i>A Long Way</i>	<i>The Opposite</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
Issue 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 5	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

27. How would you rate [NAME ORGANISATION]'s influence on the different issues compared to that of your opponents or other organizations?

	<i>More influence than opponents</i>	<i>Roughly the same influence as opponents</i>	<i>Less influence than opponents</i>	<i>Don't know</i>	<i>There were no opponents</i>
Issue 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 5	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How did your organization establish its policy position

28. Did you, during this legislative process, organize surveys among your constituency, supporters or members in order to learn more about their views?

Never	<input type="radio"/>
Rarely	<input type="radio"/>
Sometimes	<input type="radio"/>
Frequently	<input type="radio"/>
Very frequently	<input type="radio"/>

29. Given the fact that your organization might need to consult or involve its members, how long did it take for [NAME ORGANISATION] to adopt its position at the point when the Commission adopted its proposal in 2010? Was this a matter of

A few days	<input type="radio"/>
One week	<input type="radio"/>
Two week	<input type="radio"/>
One month	<input type="radio"/>
Two months	<input type="radio"/>
Three months	<input type="radio"/>
Four months (WRITE DOWN HOW LONG_____)	<input type="radio"/>
Members are not regularly consulted on such issues	<input type="radio"/>
We have no members	<input type="radio"/>

30. How did [NAME ORGANISATION] involve the members in the internal decision making with regard to this proposal?

31. With respect to this legislative proposal, roughly what percentage of your activities were aimed at influencing policymakers and what percentage concerned the involvement of your members in establishing and updating your organization's position?

	percentage
advocacy, influencing policymakers	
involving members	

32. Thinking about the different issues in this proposal. Was your position established by?

	<i>Consensus among members</i>	<i>Voting among the members</i>	<i>No members were involved in this issue</i>	<i>The organizational leadership</i>
Issue 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 5	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

33. How easy or difficult was it for your organization to establish its position on the different issues in this proposal? Was this?

	<i>Very easy</i>	<i>Easy</i>	<i>Difficult</i>	<i>Very difficult</i>
Issue 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Issue 5	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

34. If there were difficulties, to what extent were such difficulties exceptional or unexceptional for your organization?

Very exceptional	<input type="radio"/>
Rather exceptional	<input type="radio"/>
Neither exceptional or un-exceptional	<input type="radio"/>
Rather unexceptional	<input type="radio"/>
Very unexceptional	<input type="radio"/>

Organizational structure

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS: Questions preceded by a L will only be asked if the Leiden coding does not provide a clear answer. We estimate that most of this data can be collected beforehand. If the data is not available the interviewer tries to find this information through web-searches, Google, Wikipedia.... Some questions might be difficult for the respondents, in particular in bigger organizations. If the respondent does not know the answer, ask for an insider's name (and email, phone-number) who is more familiar with these matters. The interviewer calls this person afterwards and tries to get as much information as possible from another expert.

L35. In which year was your organization established?

L36. We are now going to ask you some questions about your organization's members. The term "member" can cover a host of different meanings. We define it formally. Members are those whom your organisation acknowledges as members as laid down by statute. These members may pay a subscription and can have specific rights within your organization (e.g. electing office holders, or voting rights at Annual General Meetings). They may be individuals, other organisations or businesses. Do you have members in the sense we have defined?

Yes or no (if no, some follow-up questions will be asked => question L33)

If yes, does your organization have	Membership Type	And how many (approximately)
Individuals as members	<input type="radio"/>	
National interest organizations as members	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	85
Euro-level organizations as members	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	10
Companies as members	<input type="radio"/>	
Local and regional governments as members	<input type="radio"/>	
Institutions as members	<input type="radio"/>	

L37. If your organization has no members in the strict sense we have defined above, we would like to know the number of individuals, organizations, companies or local/regional governments that support your organization without being a formal member. These individuals may donate money, give gifts in kind, or volunteer time to your organization.

	Does this supportive constituency consist of	And how many (approximately)
Individuals	<input type="radio"/>	
National interest organizations	<input type="radio"/>	
Euro-level organizations	<input type="radio"/>	
Companies	<input type="radio"/>	
Local and regional governments	<input type="radio"/>	
Institutions	<input type="radio"/>	

38. Organizations are financed in a variety of ways. Can you first indicate your organization's sources of income and then indicate your best estimate of the percentage these sources contribute to the overall budget?

	You gain money from	%
membership subscriptions	<input type="radio"/>	
payments for services and sales to government agencies, firms, or other organizations	<input type="radio"/>	
payments from national projects and programs	<input type="radio"/>	
payments from EU projects and programs	<input type="radio"/>	
donations from individuals	<input type="radio"/>	
donations from foundations, companies, or other organizations	<input type="radio"/>	
income from savings and investments	<input type="radio"/>	
other [specify]	<input type="radio"/>	

39. How much competition does your organization face in getting these resources?

no competition from other actors	<input type="radio"/>
little competition from other actors	<input type="radio"/>
moderate competition from other actors	<input type="radio"/>
strong competition from other actors	<input type="radio"/>
very strong competition from other actors	<input type="radio"/>

L40. How many full-time staff does your organization employ in its Brussels' office? With 'staff' we refer to the number employees on your pay-roll? Please give the number of paid full-time equivalents (FE), not the number of individuals.

41. There are possibly non-staff members that are strongly involved in the general activities of [NAME ORGANISATION]. This may include people who attend meetings on a regular basis, who assist you with the organisation of activities and conferences or who carry out studies or prepare policy positions. Some of these people may be volunteers, others are could be professionals paid by member organizations or firms. The latter group may consist of seconded experts from the member organizations.

How many people do you roughly count in these categories?

	None	Volunteers	Professionals
Number			

42. Thinking more generally and beyond this specific proposal we would like to know whether [NAME ORGANISATION] has:

	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>
1. paid third parties such as consultancy firms or research institutes to carry out policy research	O	O
2. has staff specialized in external communication, a communication department that monitors the relations with the media and organizes public oriented activities	O	O
3. hire consultancy firms, public relations firms or lobbyists for the purpose of influencing policymaking processes	O	O
4. poll the general public on policy issues of general concern to you	O	O
5. organizes surveys among your constituency, supporters or members in order to learn more about their interests	O	O

Thank you for your time today and for answering our questions. Is there anything that you would like to comment upon or feel that we have overlooked? Where there any questions you found particularly challenging or difficult to answer? Where you surprised that we didn't ask you any specific questions?

Immediately after the interview, please write down your judgment on the "quality" of the interviewee; that is, how well informed the interviewee appeared? (A-E Scale)