

## Fieldwork report of the Antwerp team

Inter EUR 

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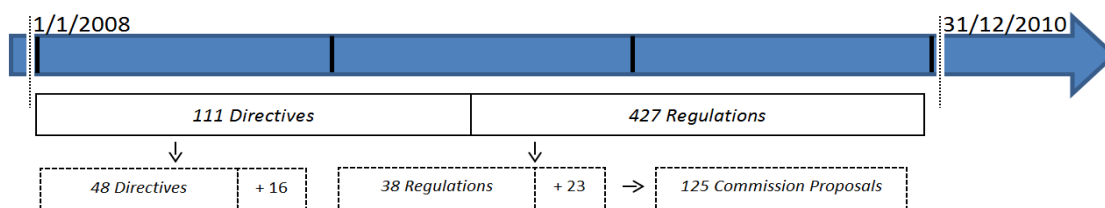
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## INTRODUCTION

Within the INTEREURO project, the Antwerp team was specifically occupied with the contacting and interviewing of EU-level organized interests. In the end, we were able to interview **143** Brussels-based interest groups, hereby covering a great variety of interests. This report gives an overview of the fieldwork. It clarifies the different steps we took and provides some insightful details into how the Antwerp team proceeded with the selection and interviewing of the respondents and the datasets we established. The report is structured as follows. First, we provide some details about the sample of legislative proposals we interviewed interests organizations on. Second, we give an overview of how we sampled the prospect respondents and to what extent we were able to successfully do this. In the third section we reflect upon the interviewing procedure itself and in the fourth section we briefly describe the datasets we established.

## SELECTION OF PROPOSALS



The starting point of our interview project was a sample of **125** legislative proposals adopted by the European Commission (EC) between 2008 and 2010. These proposals were selected according to a specific sampling strategy (Beyers et al. 2014). The sample was stratified in the sense that we overweighed proposals which gained a minimum level of public attention, namely at least two hits in five media outlets (*European Voice*, *Agence Europe*, *Financial Times*, *Le Monde*, *Financial Times* and *the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*). In this way we identified **48** proposals for directives and **41** proposals for regulations. To avoid a sample with only publicly salient proposals, we added a randomly selected control group of **9** proposals for directives and **9** proposals for regulations that did not meet the threshold. Finally, we included all other **18** proposals for directives and regulations for which public consultations had been held and consultation documents are available. This process resulted in a sample of **125** proposals, which breaks down to **64** proposals for directives and **61** proposals for regulations. Some proposals were part of a larger package of legislation and could thus be considered as ‘organically related’. We therefore treated these separate proposals as one proposal. This means that **16** proposals within our sample were clustered into **7** sets of organically related proposals. Which proposals are related can be consulted in the INTEREURO sample file. So in fact, we worked on **116** legislative proposals and clusters of organically related proposals. In the remainder of this memo we will keep these **116** proposals as the reference of sampled proposals. The interviews we conducted with organized interest always focused on one or an organically related cluster of these EC proposals.

One of the goals of this interview project was to go into the interviews with prior information about the issues that characterized the proposals and its actors (obtained from interviews with policy officials). This is why we prioritized different types of proposals in the course of the interview fieldwork. We first prioritized proposals that were part of the so called Multi-Level Governance sample (MLG). This is a smaller sample of **21** proposals that gained substantial attention and for which additional data was collected at the national level, such as interviews with national interest groups and Council officials. Afterwards we prioritized proposals on which interviews were done with Commission officials and /or MEP’s. In a final stage we also performed interviews on proposals where no EC or EP interview was conducted. In sum, we conducted interviews on **72** proposals of the sampled **116**. Table 1 gives an overview of the number of proposals where an EC and/or EP interview was conducted.

It was not possible to conduct interviews on all **116** proposals because of two reasons. First, **38** proposals were dropped from the interview project because no lobbying took place and no interest group active on the proposal could be interviewed. This was verified by conducting a series of smaller interviews near the end of the interviewing project. Second, **7** proposals were labeled as failed because we were not able to convince any interest groups to cooperate on this proposal or nobody within the organization had a memory of the specific proposal. One of these failed cases was organically related with one of the dropped cases, which was discounted in the fieldwork. When departing from the sample of **116** we count these two cases as dropped. When departing from the sample of **125** proposals we divided the separate cases as respectively dropped and failed. In the Annex we provide an overview of the cases.

For every proposals we aimed at identifying the conflictual issues that characterized the legislative process. We see issues as topics where some actors disagreed and where contestation occurred. For the proposals on which EC interviews were conducted, we started with the issues that were mentioned in the EC interviews. Almost all the EC issues (**97%**) were confirmed in our interviews. For proposals where no EC interview took place we started from the issues mentioned in the EP interviews. When no EP nor EC interview were conducted we started from scratch. Next to confirming the issues we probed in the interviews for new issues that we did not yet know of. From all the **339** issues identified, **173** were added by organized interests.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The low level of confirmation of the IG identified issues can be explained by the fact that we used the same questionnaire for all the interviews of a particular proposal. So issues identified in subsequent interviews were not added to the questionnaire of the following interview.

	Number of proposals	Number of proposals with IG Interviews	Total number of interviews with IG's
Proposals with an EC and EP interview	25	24	55
Proposals with only an EC interview	42	37	65
Proposals with only an EP interview	7	4	13
Proposals with no EP nor EC interview	42	7	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>143</b>

*Table 1: Legislative proposals on which interviews were conducted with interest organizations*

	N proposals	N extra organically related proposals	N proposals including organically related
Proposals where interviews were conducted	72	6 (four sets)	78
Proposals dropped because no lobbying took place	38	2 (two sets)	40
Proposals dropped because decline or no memory	6 <sup>2</sup>	1 (one set)	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>9 (seven sets)</b>	<b>125</b>

*Table 2: Legislative proposals dropped in the interview project*

	Number of issues	Percentage confirmed by (other) interest group
Issues identified in EC interviews	125 <sup>3</sup> (36,8%)	97%
Issues identified in EP interviews	38 (11,2%)	42%
Issues identified in IG interviews	176 (51,9%)	15%

*Table 3: Distribution of issues and confirmations*

<sup>2</sup> The proposals ID 393 (Anchovy TAC) & 231 (Anchovy stock) were organically related but ID 231 is labeled as a failed case and ID 393 as a dropped case

<sup>3</sup> In the Salzburg dataset 115 issues are included and we included 125 EC issues. This is because we also included issues that were not fully covered in the EC interviews, but mentioned by the EC official in the beginning of the interview.

# SELECTION OF RESPONDENTS

For each proposal we selected respondents on the basis of a carefully crafted sampling strategy. Our main purpose was to interview interest groups on both sides of the conflictual issues identified in the EC interviews. The groups were selected based on the list of groups mentioned in the EC interviews and the groups identified in the media analysis as making statements on the proposal. We prioritized Brussels based EU-level organizations. When no EU-level organizations could be identified, we contacted international interest organizations, national interest associations or firms (respectively).

The selected interest groups were contacted via a personalized introductory letter and afterwards via telephone. For almost all of the interviews multiple contact attempts were needed to persuade respondents to cooperate and make an appointment. The average time it took to arrange interviews with EU lobbyists was about 30 days – between the first call/email and walking through the door, with several cases taking more than three months or up to a year.

In the end we were able to conduct **143** interviews. Some groups were interviewed twice (**13**) or even three (**5**) times if they were identified as crucial actors for several proposals. EFAMA was interviewed **4** times and Business Europe **7** times. In total we interviewed **111** different interest organizations of which **86%** are EU umbrellas, **9%** are international umbrella’s and **5%** are national interests. **Table 4** gives an overview of the distribution in terms of the types of interest organizations we interviewed.

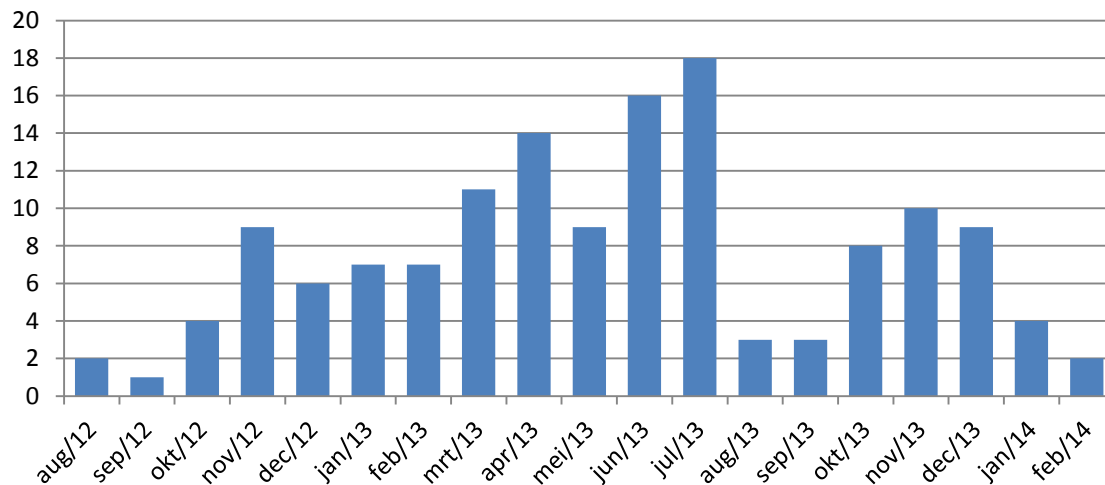
	Frequency	Percentage
NGO	31	28%
Business association	71	64%
Labor union	2	2%
Professional organization	5	4%
Firm	2	2%
Total	<b>111</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Table 4: Type of interest organizations interviewed*

This means that we were able to successfully apply our sampling strategy for **62** proposals. For **9** proposals, however, (excluding three organically related cases) the sampling strategy was only partially successful. Which means we were able to interview at least one actor, but not on all sides identified for the proposal in the EC interviews. For **8** proposals the strategy failed (see ANNEX). This is due to the fact that during the process of contacting respondents we came across some declines and other troubles. About **14** interest groups were not willing to cooperate with us, even after multiple attempts to persuade them otherwise. A tight time schedule or no added value were mentioned as reasons for refusal. Another **14** organizations had no adequate memory of the proposal and were thus not able to cooperate. In some occasions, however, we were able to interview lobbyists who did not work anymore at the selected interest organization. Despite some of these minor caveats we are confident to say that overall the contacting of respondents went very well. In conclusion it has to be remarked that finding and contacting the right persons was far more demanding in terms of time and energy than conducting the actual interview.

## INTERVIEWS

The interviews were conducted by researchers<sup>4</sup> who received an adequate on-the-job training by Iskander De Bruycker and Jan Beyers. The shortest interview lasted **20** minutes whereas the longest interview lasted for **2** hours and **15** minutes. On average an interview lasted about **1** hour and **15** minutes. Almost all the interviews were conducted in Brussels with some exceptions in Ghent (**2**) and Antwerp (**3**). Although we preferred face-to-face interviews, the respondent could also opt for a telephone interview. In total we conducted **110** face-to-face interviews and **30** telephone interviews. The main reason to do the interview over the telephone was because the respondent was abroad. Graph 1 gives an overview of the number of interview over time.



Graph 1: Number of interviews over time

The questionnaire contained 50 questions and was divided into several sections. The first section dealt with the main conflictual issues related to this Commission proposal. We asked which issues were more important than others, in which issues the interest organization invested relatively more or less resources and whether there were other conflictual issues that we had not detected. In the second section, we focused on how the interest organization collaborated with other stakeholders during the legislative process. We asked whether the interest organization exchanged information with these actors, which actors were most active in lobbying and whether the interest organization forged coalitions with other stakeholders. The third section was concerned about the relation of the interest organization with different political institutions. We asked to what extent they exchanged information with DG's, Commissioners, member-state delegations, party groups in the European Parliament, etc. in order to shape the legislative outcome. In the fourth section, we asked which other advocacy tactics they developed, e.g. publish research reports, participate in media debates, etc. Other questions in this section concerned how they divided efforts between activities addressed to the public and activities directly addressed to policymakers. The fifth part of the questionnaire focused on the outcome of the legislative process. E.g. to what extent is the legislative outcome consistent with the organization's initial preferences for the different issues that are part of this proposal?

Although the respondents never received the questionnaire before the interview, the interviewers made sure that the respondents had a good idea of what kind of question they could expect. Thanks to this strategy we encountered few cases in which the respondent refused to answer certain questions. Even the more sensitive questions about influence or budget were almost always answered.

<sup>4</sup> Interviews were conducted by Iskander De Bruycker, Sarah Arras, Frederik Heylen, Meta Novak, Patrycja Rozbicka, Brendan Carrol, Douwe Truyens and Jan Beyers.

In these expert interviews, where the relationship is characterized by a large asymmetry of information, the interviewer had to find a delicate balance between appearing knowledgeable and appearing uninformed. On the one hand, appearing knowledgeable could speed up the interview, yet, at the risk of missing out on valuable information. At the other hand, appearing uninformed, could stimulate the respondent to be more complete and also greatly improves the atmosphere, yet, at the risk of losing control of the interview itself. One interviewer commented that freely letting the respondent introduce the subject at hand, before starting with the actual structured questionnaire is a good way to break the ice. Additionally, this strategy helps the respondent to refresh and structure his or hers memory. It has any case proven to be of the utmost importance to be well prepared as interviewer. Preparation included reading the Commission proposal, the resulting legislation and position papers of the interest groups. In the end, none of the interviews failed and the atmosphere during the interviews was generally quite conversational.

After every interview the interviewer quoted the quality of the interview with a degree ranging from A to F. The median score is 'A', with only a set of **13 (9%)** interviews scoring less than 'B'. This indicates that the overall quality of the interviews is very good. The most common problem the interviewers had to face were memory problems, this was certainly the case for the more difficult and detailed questions. Another common problem was the tight time schedule of the respondents, which incidentally led to a lower quality of responses.

We also assigned 31 interviews to researchers that were part of the INTEREURO project , but not based at the University of Antwerp. 16 of those so called 'outsourced interviews' were successfully conducted. After negative responses some additional contact attempts were conducted by the Antwerp team which resulted in two additional successful interviews for these cases.



## DATASETS

The comprehensive questionnaire contained over **200** variables that were coded into **7** different datasets. Table 5 gives an overview of the different datasets. For each of these datasets we established a detailed codebook. For enquiries about the codebook and the datasets please contact [Jan.Beyers@uantwerpen.be](mailto:Jan.Beyers@uantwerpen.be).

Name Dataset	Number of Variables	Status
codebook_INTEREURO_strategies	207	Online
coalition File	13	Online
active/influence File	47	Not in online archive
top_down_mapping	9	Online
issue master File	12	Online
issue input File	18	Online
network File	16	Not in online archive

*Table 5: overview of data files*

In the **coalition** file we coded the data about coalition formation. It is coded on the coalition X proposal level, meaning that every row constitutes a new coalition, given a particular proposal. Each coalition we identified during the interview project receives its own unique identification number. For each coalition we then coded key information such as, coalition leaders, members and coalition homogeneity.

The **active/influence file** covers who was perceived to be most active and who was perceived to be most influential on a particular case. This file is coded on interview level, meaning that every row contains the information of one interview. For the sake of clarity, the two questions are coded into separate tabs. This file is **not available** in the online archive.

The **top\_down\_mapping file** contains all the organizations identified as being active on one of the proposals in our sample. It is coded on organizational level X proposal level, meaning that every row constitutes an organization which was active on a given proposal.

The **Issue master file** lists all the issues identified during this project. It is coded on the issue level, meaning that each new row contains a unique issue. For each issue we coded its origin, the sides and which actors mentioned or confirmed the issue.

The **Issue Input file** contains the information we gathered in the IG interviews for all the issues that were confirmed or mentioned by the IG's. This file is coded on the issue X interview level, meaning that every row contains an issue, given the IG interview in which it was mentioned or confirmed. For each combination we coded the position of the organization, use of resources, what the organizations wanted to achieve for this issue and what the organization achieved in the end.

The **network file** maps which organizations our respondents did or did not contact during the legislative processes. This file is divided into three parts. The first **5** columns make up the first part, these columns contain the identification variables of the interviewed organizations. The first **10** rows make up the second part, these rows contain the identification variables of all the organizations which were active on a given proposal (based on list1). The third part, the field, contains the actual network information, in which the organizations in the rows and columns are linked by indicating the intensity of the contact. This file is **not available** in the online archive.

The **INTEREURO strategies** file was established at the BIGGS University of Bremen by Arndt Wonka and one student-assistant. It contains all the remaining data that can be linked to the organizational-proposal level. This means that one row constitutes on organization active on a sampled proposal. This dataset contains

information on interest group strategies, the internal decision making processes and some key organizational features.

## ANNEX

**TABLE 1: LIST DROPPED PROPOSALS**

<b>ID</b>	<b>PROPOSAL</b>	<b>TAG</b>
49	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION fixing for 2009 and 2010 the fishing opportunities for Community fishing vessels for certain deep-sea fish stocks	Fish_Stocks
123	Proposal for a COUNCIL DIRECTIVE on requirements for the budgetary frameworks of the Member States	Budget_Reqs
110	Proposal for a COUNCIL DIRECTIVE on administrative cooperation in the field of taxation	
134	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION on certain procedures for applying the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, of the other part, and for applying the Interim Agreement between the European Community, of the one part, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, of the other part	Stab_Assoc_Agreement
382	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION (EU) No .../2010 on restrictive measures against Iran and repealing Regulation (EC) No 423/2007	Iran_Measures
119	Proposal for a COUNCIL DIRECTIVE amending Directive 2000/75/EC as regards vaccination against bluetongue	Bluetongue_Vaccine
185	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION imposing certain specific restrictive measures in respect of Guinea	Guinea_Measures
376	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing a Programme to support the further development of an Integrated Maritime Policy	Intgd_Mar_Policy
107	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION amending Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 establishing a common organisation of agricultural markets as regards the marketing standards for poultrymeat	Poultry_Standards
125	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION amending Regulation (EC) No 765/2006 concerning restrictive measures against President Lukashenko and certain officials of Belarus	Lukashenko_Regulation
364	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)	Rural_Dev
266	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on the European Earth observation programme (GMES) and its initial operations (2011–2013)	
292	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION on the establishment of an evaluation mechanism to verify the application of the Schengen acquis	Schengen_Acquis
526	Proposal for a REGULATION (EU) OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Council Regulation (EC) No 732/2008 applying a scheme of generalised tariff preferences for the period from 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2011	
92	Proposal for a COUNCIL DIRECTIVE amending Directive 2006/112/EC as regards an optional and temporary application of the reverse charge mechanism in relation to supplies of certain goods and services susceptible to fraud	Rev_Charge_Mechanism
29	Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Directive 98/8/EC concerning the placing of biocidal products on the market as regards the extension of certain time periods	Biocidal_Products

32	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Regulation (EC) No 808/2004 concerning Community statistics on the information society	Info_Society_Stats
33	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION on the Community legal framework for a European Research Infrastructure (ERI)	ERI
67	Proposal for a DIRECTIVE ../.../EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles and their trailers (Recast)	Roadworthiness_Test
111	Proposal for a COUNCIL DIRECTIVE concerning mutual assistance for the recovery of claims relating to taxes, duties and other measures	Tax_Mutual_Assistance
306	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION establishing a European financial stabilization mechanism	EU_Fin_Stability_Mech
372	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Regulation (EC) No 460/2004 establishing the European Network and Information Security Agency as regards its duration	EU_Network_Security
527	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION fixing the fishing opportunities and associated conditions for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in the Baltic Sea for 2009	Baltic_Sea_Fishing
531	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 establishing common rules for direct support schemes for farmers under the common agricultural policy and establishing certain support schemes for farmers	CAP_Support_Scheme_A
532	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION (EU) amending Regulation (EC) No 1467/97 of 7 July 1997 on speeding up and clarifying the implementation of the excessive deficit procedure	Excessive_Debt_Procedure
156	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION terminating the partial interim review pursuant to Article 11(3) of Regulation (EC) No 384/96 of the anti-dumping duty on imports of ammonium nitrate originating, inter alia, in Ukraine	Anti_Dumping_Ukraine
163	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Regulation (EC) No 638/2004 on Community statistics relating to the trading of goods between Member States	Community_Stats
13	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 on the European Regional Development Fund as regards the eligibility of energy efficiency and renewable energy investments in housing	Energy_Eff_Housing
135	Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals in the framework of an intra-corporate transfer	Third_Cty_Ntl_Transfer
505	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on cross-border payments in the Community	Cross_Border_Payments
524	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on cosmetic products (recast)	Cosmetic_Products
42	Proposal for a COUNCIL DIRECTIVE amending Directive 2006/112/EC as regards reduced rates of value added tax	VAT_Reduced_Rate
175	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION Amending Regulation (EC) No 866/2004 on a regime under Article 2 of Protocol 10 to the Act of Accession concerning rules on goods, services and persons crossing the Green Line in Cyprus	Cyprus_greenline
330	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 as regards contractual relations in the milk and milk products sector	Milk_Products_Contracts
10	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION Amending Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 on the European Regional Development Fund, the	Reg_Dev_Fund_Fin_Mgmt

	European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund concerning certain provisions relating to financial management	
457	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION amending Decision 2008/839/JHA on migration from the Schengen Information System (SIS 1+) to the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II)	SIS_II
528	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION on migration from the Schengen Information System (SIS 1+) to the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II)	SIS_II_Reg
235	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION amending Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 concerning general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund as regards simplification of certain requirements and as regards certain provisions relating to financial management	Euro_RDF_Requirements
90	Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on minimum standards for the qualification and status of third country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection and the content of the protection granted	Asylum_Seekers
393	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION (EU) No .../... of [...] establishing the fishing opportunities for Anchovy in the Bay of Biscay for the 2010-2011 fishing season and amending Regulation (EU) No 53/2010	Anchovy_TAC

**TABLE 2: LIST FAILED PROPOSALS**

30	Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on consumer rights	Consumer rights
2	Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on Stage II petrol vapour recovery during refuelling of passenger cars at service stations	Petrol_Vapour_Recovery
231	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION establishing a long-term plan for the anchovy stock in the Bay of Biscay and the fisheries exploiting that stock	Anchovy_Stocks
27	Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Directive 86/613/EEC	Sex_Equality
276	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION amending Council Regulation(EC) No 1386/2007 laying down conservation and enforcement measures applicable in the Regulatory Area of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation	NAFO_Measures
81	Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION instituting a temporary specific action aiming to promote the restructuring of the European Union fishing fleets affected by the economic crisis	Fisheries_Reconstruction
12	Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on labelling of tyres with respect to fuel efficiency and other essential parameters	Tyre_Fuel_Eff_Label

Attached: Contact email

Dear Mr/Ms,

I am a professor of political sciences at the University of Antwerp, leading a research project on interest group advocacy in the European Union (the INTEREUROproject). This research is conducted under the auspices of the European Science Foundation and in cooperation with 9 universities throughout Europe and the US.

We specifically examine how organized interests advocate their preferences on legislative processes initiated by the European Commission, more precisely the nature of advocacy strategies, coalitions with other interests or civil society organizations, and the effectiveness of these strategies. We are particularly interested in ORGANIZATION because, based on extensive media analyses and interviews with Commission officials, we noticed the ORGANIZATION has been involved in the legislative process concerning PROPOSAL NAME. We already talked to your colleague Ms./Mr. who directed us to you.

We acknowledge that the view of the ORGANIZATION is crucial in understanding the policy process concerning this proposal and would like to conduct a face-to-face interview with you or one of your colleagues who was closely involved in this topic. We work on the basis of an extensively tested interview guide which makes it possible to conduct the interview in about one hour. We can assure that all your responses will be treated confidentially. The interview can take place somewhere in the coming months in Brussels. When cooperating, the ORGANIZATION will be among the first to merit from our research results, as a special research report will be distributed among all cooperating organizations after all interviews are conducted.

In the next couple of weeks, one of my team members will call you to arrange this interview. As we know that people who are active in Brussels are very busy and work under severe time constraints, we take into account your schedule and will plan the interview at a moment that it will not disturb your normal activities. In case you have any preference for a moment, you can simply reply to this email and indicate which moment is most convenient to you. We would really appreciate your participation as we recognize your time is valuable.

If you have any questions, I will be more than happy to answer them.

Sincerely,