

Multi-level governance and organized interests¹

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To be published in: Michael Zürn, Henrik Enderlein, Sonja Wälti (eds.): Handbook of Multi-Level Governance.

1. Introduction

Organized interests are an integral part of modern policy making. Private actors, corporate and collective, not only lobby for their interests but have also taken on much bigger roles as experts, administrators and facilitators of public goods, as well as private regulators. The shift of the debate from 'government' to 'governance' was partly induced by the increasing importance of private actors in policy-making. Organized interests are therefore located at and have gained access to all levels of governance regimes. This, however, has not diminished the role of the state in governance. As Theda Skocpol points out in the opening chapter of the edited volume 'Bringing the State Back In', political theory in the 1970s was heavily dominated by approaches which prioritized socio-economic forces to explain politics at the expense of the autonomy and capacity of states and their agencies (Skocpol 1985). This has led to a resurgence of academic interest in state activities and the autonomy and capacity of the state to pursue its own agenda independent of socio-economic interests. The reorientation in the political science literature over the last three decades thus has less to do with a rebalancing of private vs. public or society vs. state but more with a shift of focus from structures and amorphous socio-economic (capitalist) interests to specific actors and processes.

The more recent political science approaches seek to reconcile and thereby redefine the relationship between society, business, and the state by balancing autonomous state action and the pursuit of private interests. These approaches are embodied in governance literature. However, their theoretical and conceptual understanding of the role of organized interests as an expression of societal and economic influences on public policy making in multi-level governance has remained confined to some very distinct areas. The different types of organized interests have been analyzed in specific categories of literature on social movements, trade unions and employers' associations (in the corporatism literature), as well as in literature on lobbying at the national and European level (Coen 2007, Woll 2006). However, a comprehensive theoretical

¹ I would like to thank the editors of the handbook for their patience and Nora Gatewood and Anna van Santen for their outstanding research assistance.

approach towards the analysis of organized interests in multi-level governance regimes is still lacking.

This chapter conceptualizes the role of organized interests in multi-level governance from the perspective of the organizational properties of private actors. It argues that the capacity of private actors to engage in and contribute to multi-level governance regimes – as denoted in the interaction between different levels – varies and is dependent on the type of interests and organizational structure. In other words, the role of organized interests in multi-level governance (MLG) regimes varies with the type of MLG as defined in the introductory chapter. The constitutionally defined type of MLG I, which is based on a clear division of power in a hierarchical setting, corresponds to highly institutionalized private actors, particularly to associations. In more fluid policy networks, the MLG II regime, organized interests tend to be less institutionalized and more fragmented.

Historically, organized interests have evolved in interaction with the polity they face. As the nation state had become the most important reference point for public policy, organized interests also concentrated their resources and their activities at the national level. This is also due to the fact that nation states and their regulatory powers present the most important foundation for organized interests by far. National governments give incentives and disincentives for collective organization, as well as structure the access points to policy-making procedures. They have remained the anchor point for organized interests, as lobby groups without a national base hardly exist and are mainly found in the context of EU policy-making. Recently, however, organized interests have become increasingly important in the context of new fluid multi-level governance arrangements (MLG II) in which private actors are included in policy networks. This is because they act as a bridge between the different levels of governance and provide expertise for possible policy solutions.

2. Organized interests and multi-level governance – a theoretical approach

Organized interests are representatives of various societal spheres – based on culture, social issues, citizenship rights, ethnic or religious communities or economic interests – with a clear dominance of socio-economic interests groups in policy making. Theoretically speaking, they are composites of individuals, firms or associations, and can be classified as collective actors in the policy-making arena. They can take different organizational forms, depending on the types of goals they are trying to achieve and their control over resources. As such, they are likely to deal differently with problems of multi-level governance.

Fritz W. Scharpf (1997, 55) distinguishes between four types of collective actors:

1. Clubs are groups of actors who have individual goals but share resources. These are typically industry associations who form interest organizations in order to influence government regulations.
2. Associations consist of groups of actors who share both goals and resources. They are based on membership dues and have elaborate decision-making procedures in order to reflect the positions of the group as a whole.
3. Social movements are groups of actors who have shared goals but individual resources. Each participant contributes to the production of a common good without establishing an organizational structure.
4. Coalitions are individual actors who engage in temporary collective action when pursuing their own interests. They share neither purpose nor resources. They are usually lobby firms commissioned to pursue the interest of companies.

The different types of organized interests are associated with different types of organizational forms, decision making procedures and therefore also embody different capacities for strategic action. Coalitions and movements can only act after reaching a broad consensus, if not unanimity, among their members, since no organizational structures enable leaders to rest their decisions on a majority vote. In contrast, in both clubs and associations, leaders are more independent of their membership and able to take decisions which do not reflect all members. In some circumstances, leaders of associations can even decide in the interest of only a minority of their membership. Their room for maneuver is therefore greater and capacity for strategic action is more developed, as they can potentially move the focus of the organization as a whole from one level to the next.

However and in contrast, organized interests that do not share resources and are therefore limited in terms of collective action are organized more fluidly, which makes them more flexible. Coalitions can be set up on an ad hoc basis and movements might emerge in opposition to political developments at any level for brief periods of time (i.e. the Seattle anti-globalization movement). Durable commitments are replaced by fluid adjustments when policy-issues move from one level to another one.

This approach does not distinguish per se between civil society and corporate interests, although there might be good reasons for doing so. Civil society organization – non-governmental organizations but also welfare associations and self-help groups – often pursue goals that are not just in the interest of specific particularistic groups but represent the common good. They frequently take the form of social movements. Compared to corporate interests – generally in the form of clubs – and industry associations, civil society organizations do not only face collective action problems and scarce resources.

In addition, they play different roles in the context of democratic legitimacy. Democratic decision-making depends on an active civil society in which alternative solutions to societal problems are openly discussed. Civil society organizations and movements are a necessary component of these discourses – unlike the pursuit of corporate interests. While modern problem-solving increasingly depends on the willingness of corporate actors to contribute resources, management skills and logistics to the process, the discourse element of democratic decision-making is embodied in civil society organizations; not in corporate participation in public policy-making.

Table 1: A typology of organized interests

Actor	Purpose	Control over Resources	Stability	Organizational Structure	Access to Policy-making Process
Associations	Collective purpose	Collective control	Stable, permanent	Stable, corresponding to governance structure	Institutionalized
Clubs	Separate purpose	Collective control	Stable, permanent	Stable, corresponding to governance structure	Institutionalized
Social Movements	Collective Purpose	Separate control	Fluid, temporary	Flexible, corresponding to issue and involved actors/institutions	Informal
Coalition	Separate Purpose	Separate Control	Fluid, temporary	Flexible, corresponding to issue and involved actors/institutions	Informal

Source: Adapted from Scharpf (1997), own extension

In other words, organized interests are collective non-state actors participating in governance. Civil society organizations and corporate interest groups are the two main sub-groups of organized interests in governance settings. While both participate in democratic policy-making,

they occupy different roles and functions: civil society organizations participate in the development of policy alternatives and legitimate policy positions. Corporate actors contribute expertise, resources and managerial capacity, while pursuing individual corporate interests at the same time.

In the context of the distinction between MLG I and II (Hooghe and Marks 2003), different types of organized interests can be expected to coincide with different types of multi-level governance. MLG I as the general purpose governance arrangement with a limited number of non-overlapping jurisdictional boundaries at a limited number of levels (Hooghe and Marks 2003) is likely to be associated with more institutionalized types of organized interests, where collective actors share resources and are set up on a more permanent basis. It should feature more associations and clubs which can engage in credible commitments and therefore assume governance functions themselves. As an example, one can observe very stable interaction between organized interests and governments in the golden years of post-war development, since highly organized interests were included in policy making by taking over partial governing functions in the provision of public goods.²

The type MLG II describes a complex, fluid patchwork of innumerable, overlapping jurisdictions (Hooghe and Marks 2003). This governance structure is functionally limited to one policy area and thus not constitutionalized. It is likely to attract more flexible interest groups who are driven by ad hoc policy issues and who are therefore unlikely to share their resources. Organizational structures are weaker and internal decision-making processes underdeveloped. Thus, movements (such as anti-globalization) and coalitions (such as business round-tables) are more likely to be found in an MLGII context than associations and clubs. This should not be mistaken as a more pluralist setting (in contrast to corporatist) but as an entirely different way of organizing governance capacity. MLG II is associated with a public policy response to new societal problems, for which there is no predefined level of problem-solving. Environmental policy which is dealt with at all governance levels would be a good example for how different private actors have formed coalitions to influence governance on this specific policy issue.

The distinction between MLG I and II and the different roles of organized interests within it also allows a dynamic perspective on the evolution of governance regimes. As multi-level governance systems have evolved from the regional level upwards and have been accompanied by a process of constitutionalization, we should expect to find more arrangements of MLG I at the national and sub-national level, while MLG II is predominant at the European, world-regional and global level. Consequently, associations/clubs are predominantly established in stable governance settings locally, regionally and nationally and might find it harder to Europeanize and globalize. Coalitions

² Another example is C. Mahoney's paper, which discusses the higher number of formal coalitions in the US as compared to the EU.

and movements, while to be found at any level, might be more effective and prevalent at the supranational level. They correspond more easily to the fluid nature of policy-specific MLG II regimes as coalitions, and movements also form around specific issues.

Focusing on the difference between “formal ad hoc issue coalitions” and informal cooperation in “loose networks”, Mahoney (2007) also finds that the type of organized interests depends on the institutional structure, i.e. the type of governance they interact with. Comparing coalition building in the US and the EU, she finds that the political system is one of the main factors which influence whether interest groups form coalitions or act as single entities.

Another distinction between the different types of organized interests in the two MLG systems is how private actors gain access to the policy-making process and how they introduce their issue to government agendas. As various studies in comparative politics have shown, the policy-making process is determined by the institutions in which the process takes place. Institutions have been regarded from different angles in the analysis of policy-processes: First, institutions can be seen as ‘veto points’ or ‘veto players’ in the policy making process (Immergut 1992, Tsebelis 2002). From this view, they are seen as impeding change and blocking those issues that do not find a Pareto equilibrium within the institutional setting. From the agenda-setting perspective, however, institutions can also be seen as opportunity structures. Thus, institutions offer access-points to the policy-making process to organized interests and facilitate change (Baumgartner, Green-Pedersen and Jones 2006).

Using this agenda-setting perspective, one can distinguish the role of organized interests in the different types of MLG by how they gain access to the policy-making process. Corporate actors such as associations and clubs are more dominant in an MLGI setting, where they have institutionalized/centralized access to the policy-making process through their involvement in advisory committees, social and economic councils, and in the administration of welfare state institutions. More fluid actors such as social movements and coalitions have fewer institutionalized access-points to political institutions and mainly gain access to the particular policy issue by using ‘voice strategies’, such as public opinion campaigns, media events, demonstrations, etc. (Beyers 2004, 216 – 217).

3. Organized interests and national/sub-national policy making

National governance regimes are in themselves multi-level governance systems, since they are based on the interplay of national, regional and local policy-making structures. However, these national governance regimes tend to follow the classification of a MLG I. While co-decision making rights between various levels do exist, they are clearly defined and constitutionalized. In national governance systems, the decision-making power and jurisdiction of each level of governance are usually legally set.

In addition to territorial levels of governance (federalism), there are also functional levels of governance which are based on co-decision making rights by private and quasi-public actors (quangos). Here, the levels are not hierarchical but divided by policy fields or issue areas. They range from consultation and lobbying to the delegation of public authority to private actors, as in the administration of social security systems. The combination of both territorial and functional layers of representation results in a complex matrix of decision-making (table 2).

Table 2: Examples of functional and territorial representation

	Political authority	Functional representation of organized interests
National	Federal parliament	Economic and social councils, advisory committees, administration of national welfare institutions
Regional	State parliament	Regional councils, functional representation in regional authorities and supervisory boards of public agencies such as universities, chambers, media organizations; regional welfare institutions
Local	Local councils	Functional representation on governing boards of schools, hospitals and other local institutions.

Moreover, the interaction between organized interests and the state has taken profoundly different forms in different countries, as the neo-corporatist literature has emphasized. In advanced industrialized countries, the starkest contrast can be observed between pluralist systems, in which organized interests can lobby governments but do not have public authority, and corporatist systems, in which highly centralized organized interests have been charged with functions that reach much beyond the status of lobby. They not only sit on supervisory boards of public or quasi public agencies but also self-administer welfare functions whose budgets are underwritten by the state.

The neo-corporatist literature argues that the relations between governments and producer groups in countries with highly centralized trade unions and employers' associations are based on a political exchange. Trade unions, representing employees' interests, are capable of mobilization and can prevent governments' policy goals by opposing them in the political process. In a political exchange with the government, however, the trade unions waive their mobilization capability in order to achieve and maintain their own policy goals and in return receive legal and political protection for their members in labor law, as well as benefits for their own organizations within the political system (Molina and Rhodes 2002; Pizzorno 1978; Streeck 1984). Moreover,

they communicate the governments' policy goals (e.g. low wage increases) to their members and thereby legitimize them.

The exchange moderates the trade unions' policy interests (from radical wage demands to labor law) and ensures their continued institutional power by way of an increase in tasks performed by them in the implementation of public policy (for instance in labor market and social policy). As an effect, immediate policy interests (e.g. higher wages) are translated into long-term policy interests (e.g. protection against dismissal) and into the pursuit of power interests in the form of trade unions' institutional participation in political decisions (on advisory boards and in tripartite institutions).

As a consequence, the main representatives of economic interests - trade unions and employers – in many continental-European countries are represented on national economic policy councils. These were set up in the interwar years or after 1945 to provide for regular meetings and discussions between labor, business and the government. The Netherlands, for example, set up a tripartite Social and Economic Council after the war and similar bodies exist in Belgium and Austria. Some of these have, usually narrowly circumscribed, constitutional rights to advise the government or the parliament on matters of economic policy, or to comment on current legislation. Moreover, trade unions, usually together with employers and sometimes also with the government, sit on the boards of a variety of quasi-public or parafiscal agencies administering labor market policy or social insurance programs. In part, such agencies were created at a time when national states incorporated in their compulsory social insurance programs the friendly societies and mutual aid funds founded for their members by unions and small business associations in the nineteenth century. Bipartite and tripartite bodies of this kind emerged in particular in the so-called Bismarck countries, where social insurance was funded through contributions by workers and employers rather than by general taxes. The parafiscal agencies collecting and administering such contributions provided for representation of those paying them.

While in federalism the different governance levels are generally constitutionally defined, the coordination between different levels of neo-corporatist decision making is organized in part by the relatively high organizational structures of the private actors and in part through the national party system. Committee seats are generally delegated to organizations according to their representativeness. Highly representative organizations such as centralized trade union bodies tend to have seats at all levels of decision-making. The delegates from these organizations are in turn representative for the economic interest they are meant to represent, such as labor, small and large business, religious groups, farmers, culture and the handicraft sector. These organizations therefore adjust their own organizational structure to the polity in which they operate. In other words, in federal systems, organized interests tend to reflect different levels of territorial governance in their own organizational structures. Regional structures are generally

drawn in line with federal states. Electoral procedures and boards of organized interests also reflect territorial governance levels.³

While the interaction of state-society relations is affected by Europeanization and internationalization, some argue that the patterns of internationalization follow domestic rules. For instance, Jan Beyers (2002, 592-593) argues: “One can hypothesize that especially well-embedded domestic interest associations are better prepared as well as inclined to Europeanize their political strategies. This would suggest that well-elaborated and institutionalized relations between state actors and interest associations carry over to the European level. As a result, Europe seems to reinforce existing patterns of domestic interest representation.”

In addition to formal participation in state councils or quasi-public agencies, even in MLG I governance regimes, informal inclusion of private actors in sectoral, regional and international policy networks seems to have become increasingly important in recent years. These new forms of governance below, within and above the national state depend on bringing together all concerned parties to collect expertise, provide for mutual information on policy preferences, and increase as much as possible the legitimacy of jointly devised policies. Rather than conflict, policy networks emphasize cooperation in the pursuit of common objectives and the improvement of collective infrastructures that cultivate joint comparative advantage. Although policy networks have no constitution and there are no formal rights to inclusion, care is taken in most cases to ensure that private actors participate to gain the general support of their members and to tap their expertise with respect to economic development, culture and general societal support (Marin and Mayntz 1991; Benner, Reinicke and Witte 2004).

This combination of an institutionalized inclusion of organized interests in the policy-making process on the one hand and a looser cooperation of interest coalitions on the other hand is particularly eminent in the European Union.

4. Organized interests and EU integration

The EU is a paradigmatic case for multi-level governance, as it has been described as a “system of continuous negotiation among nested governments at several territorial tiers—supranational, national, regional and local” (Marks 1993, 392). It combines both of the MLG types, a constitutionally defined division of responsibility, and more fluid policy-networks on specific issues. As Grande (1996) describes it, “the EU is neither a hierarchically organized ‘super-state’ dominated by a supranational ‘super-bureaucracy’ nor an international ‘regime’ in which national actors and interests dominate.” Moreover, the EU is in a state of flux, with many procedures and issues of legitimacy unsettled. Thus, we find a variety of different types of

³ Also see Skocpol, Ganz and Munson (2000)

organized interests at the European level which use different access points to influence European policy-makers.

In this context, the study of organized interests in the process of EU integration is highly developed; often more highly than the role of organized interests in national policy-making.⁴ The reason for the high level of attention to organized interests is manifold: first, Europeanization of many policy issues has opened up new avenues for private actors in policy-making. In contrast to national systems of governance, where access to policy-making has evolved over long periods of time, Europeanization has proceeded fast and is still developing, so that private actors still need to find their roles and access points in European policy-making. Second, in the context of debates on the democratic deficit of EU institutions and growing opposition against Europeanization, organized interests have been employed by the Commission and the Council of Ministers to reassure voters about the EU's social agenda (Greenwood 2007; Saurugger 2007). And third, the increasing regulatory functions of the EU in the process of market-making are of great interest for many producer groups who seek access to decision-making procedures (Broscheid and Coen, 2007; Bouwen and McCown, 2007).

Given the wealth of studies on organized interests in the EU and the role of Europeanization as an arrangement of multi-level governance, this literature can serve as a more general pool of information on the role of organized interests in the European multi-level governance system. There are several strands of literature to distinguish:

The first focuses on the dynamic process of Europeanization as a movement from the national to the European level. Rainer Eising and Beate Kohler-Koch refer to the 'Beharrungsthese' (obstinacy thesis), where a negative correlation is found between the extent to which a group is integrated in domestic policy networks, and the extent of its integration in Europeanized networks (2004: 46; see also Cram 2001 and Eising 2004). In the same vein, Cram argues that the domestic evolution, structure and resources of interest groups influence how they can act at the European level. In return, the degree of their success in influencing European policy-making gives them either more or less leverage on the domestic playing field (2001, 610 – 612)

The second strand of literature discusses the interaction and steering of organized interests by state actors. Focusing on informational lobbying of the Commission, Broscheid and Coen explain the Commission's need for interest input, especially in complicated regulatory policy areas or to sense member state and community level preferences. As such, the reward the Commission "pays" for this privileged information is none other than access to policy making through invitations to workshops, consultations and fora, therefore creating a structure of insider lobbying subsystems surrounding the Commission (Broscheid and Coen 2007, 348-350). The Commission

⁴ For extensive literature reviews see Woll 2006, Coen 2007.

may also provide return informational rewards to lobby insiders, including policy developments, contacts and contracts (Broscheid and Coen 2007, 352). Lastly, Broscheid and Coen “observe that the greatest level of lobbying activity clusters around the regulatory policy domains of the Commission” and “that the greatest number of fora occurs in the redistributive domain” (2007, 361). Mahoney (2004) also gives a good account of how EU institutions influence interest group activity: first by direct interest group subsidy; second by manipulation of the establishment and composition of formal arenas of political debate; and third by the system-wide expansion of competencies and selective development of chosen policy areas. She states:

“One of the most visible methods governments employ to guide activity is government contracts. By deciding what projects are to be funded and who will be responsible for bringing the projects to fruition, institutions guide policy debates and wield considerable control over interest activity. However, the demand-side techniques available to government are not limited to government contracts. Demand-side forces are at play in any governmental activity that draws interests to various areas of policy-making. Thus, the establishment of an agency or program, budgetary allocations to certain policy areas, the expansion of regulatory control and the formation of consultative committees or forums, the distribution of seats on those bodies, as well as direct subsidy of interest groups, all fall into the realm of government activity that influences the behavior of actors in the interest group community.” (Mahoney 2004, 444).

Third, the distribution of access to the decision-making process is analyzed. Authors have studied the different access points organized interests find in European institutions and which interests groups benefit the most from these structures. One common distinction between the different types of interests that has been used repeatedly in the literature on access points in the EU (Eising 2007, Beyers 2004, Coen 2007) is the differentiation between ‘specific interests’ and ‘diffuse interests’. Diffuse interests have been defined as those interests that lack a well-delineated and concentrated constituency; they defend interests that are linked to broad and general segments of society and their members generally support the issues concerned beyond their private needs. They mainly influence policy-making through public information and protest politics (e.g. round table discussion, press conferences, demonstrations, public opinion campaigns) (Beyers 2004, 216). ‘Diffuse interests’ can be compared to what we described as civil society groups (social movements and coalitions). Associations and clubs (corporate interests) on the other hand can be counted as the type of actors that have been defined as ‘specific interests’ in the EU integration literature. The literature defines ‘specific interests’ as having “a clear-cut stake in the production process and defend[ing] the interests of well-circumscribed and concentrated constituencies” (Beyers 2004, 216). Unlike diffuse interests, they mainly support issues directly related to their members’ economic, professional, social and commercial interests and influence the policy-making process by providing expert information in institutionalized

settings, such as parliamentary expert hearings and expert committees (Beyers 2004, 216 – 217).

The variety of EU institutional structures offers various access points at different levels in the policy-making process that can be targeted by the different types of interests in a varying degree. Several authors have found that while some institutions provide more access to diffuse interests, others interact more with specific interests (Beyers 2004, Eising 2007, Smith 2008).

The most important actors and institutions that offer organized interests access to European policy-making are “the national ministries and government departments within each member state, the Council of Ministers, various Directorates General of the European Commission and their Cabinets, numerous committees and sub-committees, the national parliaments, the European Parliaments” (Grande 1996, 322) and the European Court of Justice⁵. This multi-level arrangement of different institutions with constitutionalized shared powers shows elements of a general-purpose MLG I system, but also reflects elements of the more flexible policy-specific MLG II arrangement. The policy-making process can differ greatly according to the various policy issues due to the policy-oriented structure of the Council and the numerous committees that are formed on a flexible policy-specific basis.

As Mahoney (2004) points out: “an important point of access to the policy-making process is membership of one of the Commission’s formal Consultative Committees.” In these committees, organized interests can influence the policy-making process at an early drafting stage, since the Commission refers to these committees “for expertise and broad interest input, making considerable effort to engage non-governmental interests in the policymaking process.” (Mahoney 2004, 448). Eising adds: “Enjoying a monopoly over policy initiation and monitoring compliance with Community law in the member states, the European Commission is considered to be the most important point of contact for interest groups in the [European Union]” (Eising 2007, 387). Coen (2007) points out that access to the Commission is very much biased towards business and professional organizations (i.e. specific interests), which in 2003 represented 76 percent of EU interest groups compared to 20 percent of public interests (Coen 2007, 335). Coen then typifies the regulatory/agency style of Brussels policy-making as dominated by: “elite trust-based relationships between insider interest groups and EU officials”, therefore heightening the Commission’s legitimacy. These trust based relationships are formed by information exchanges, consultations and conciliatory actions, as well as by individual interest group strategies aimed at remaining in the inner circle. Eising also notes that the European Commission is the institution that is most important for the initial stages of policy formation. With the immense number of

⁵ More generally ‘access’ can be defined as “the frequency of contact between interest organizations and EU institutions. These contacts range from informal bilateral meetings with EU officials and politicians to institutionalized committee proceedings” (Eising 2007, 386). Another way of gaining access to the policy-making process, which is often used by civil society groups, movements and coalitions, is an indirect influence through public opinion formation and the media.

different issues and policies that are conceptualized, it is only possible for those actors to influence initial policy proposals that have direct access to the Commission and are called by the relevant committee for expert information (Eising 2007, 397 -398). Different studies have shown that this is rather possible for specific interests than for diffuse interests (Beyers 2004, Coen 2007, Bouwen 2004).

Another point of access for organized interests is the European Parliament, which is more dominated by domestic and party actors than the Commission and thus offers access points to different types of interest groups than the European Commission (Bouwen 2004). Eising explains: "In general, the EP [European Parliament] is considered to represent supranational interests in the EU policy-making process. But being elected by national voters, its members are said to be more amenable to national interests than the European Commission and also more open to diffuse interests, including those representing the environment, consumers, or large groups such as the unemployed and pensioners. Some analysts regard the links forged between interest groups and MEPs [members of the European Parliament] as 'coalitions of the weak'" (Eising 2007, 388). Beyers (2004) also finds this difference between diffuse interests and specific interests, he observes "that diffuse interests gain more access to the EP than to the EC; this situation is, on average, reversed for specific interests" (Beyers 2004, 234).

The examples of the European Commission and the European Parliament show how organized interests play various roles in the two different types of MLG that are combined in the European governance system. While there are institutionalized policy processes and constitutionalized decision-making rules, the numerous institutions are determined by different policy issues, with European structures still developing and thus offering new access points for organized interests. In respect to organized interests' access, Beyers comes to the conclusion that the EU offers access points for both specific interests, such as associations and clubs, and for diffuse civil society groups. "Although the institutional supply of access favours specific interests, the European Union contains important institutional opportunities for diffuse interests that aim to expand the scope of political conflict or signal policy concerns by using public political strategies." (Beyers 2004, 211). Thus, the "EU's mixed institutional setting, with its multiple access points, contributes to such a diversified supply of access." (Beyers 2004, 218).

Referring to the different strategies used by organized interests in the EU, Coen adds: "The level of access expected and provided can vary markedly for private and public interests across sectors, directorates and policy areas. With such political uncertainty and assuming the political resources to play a multi-level and institutional game, it is logical and responsible to develop a mix of political channels to influence policy" (Coen 2007, 339). This mix of interest access channels and governance types is characteristic for multi-level governance and organized interest relations in the European Union.

5. Organized interests and global public policy

Globalization, or the expansion of all types of social and political actions beyond national boundaries, has caused governments to increasingly turn to international institutions, such as the WTO, the UN or the ILO. Thus, organized interests trying to influence national or regional policies also need to increasingly focus their attention on global institutions and policy regimes (Smith and Wiest 2005, 621). This development of a global multi-level governance system requires new strategies and more expert information for interest groups acting in the global policy arena, but also opens new access points and opportunity structures to them. International organized interests not only play an important role in constructing different international regimes, as is discussed by Jan Aart Scholte in this volume, but they also play an increasing role in enforcing internationally-generated policies and treaties adopted by states (Smith 1995; Keck and Sicking 1998).

Global multi-level governance is dominated by policy-specific regimes or policy-networks, thus we mainly find MLG II structures in global public policy-making. While the system of the United Nations could be considered an MLG I structure, it is not a 'world government', as UN-Secretary-General Kofi Annan recognized in his report to the Millennium Summit in 2000 (Held and McGrew 2007, 1). Rather, the global system of governance embraces various institutional structures such as states, international organizations, transnational networks and public and private agencies interacting in all areas of public policy. Held and McGrew describe 'global politics' today as follows:

"Global politics today [...] is anchored not just in traditional geopolitical concerns but also in a large diversity of economic, social, and ecological questions. Pollution, drugs, human rights, and terrorism are among an increasing number of transnational policy issues which cut across territorial jurisdictions and existing political alignments, and which require international cooperation for their effective resolution" (Held and McGrew 2007, 6).

While government action is focused around these and other policy issues, organized interest groups at the international level also coordinate their actions with a focus on specific policy issues. Thus, we find numerous social movements, coalitions and policy networks that try to influence global governance by acting upon national policy making and monitoring/enforcing the implementation of and compliance with international agreements. Woods (2007) finds: "They [civil society groups] bring principles and values to the attention of policy-makers and firms. They also play a role in monitoring global governance, analyzing and reporting on issues as diverse as the Chemical Weapons Treaty, negotiations on global climate change, world trade, and the actions of the IMF and World Bank" (Woods 2007, 27).

One global policy area in which organized interests have played an important role in negotiating and monitoring rules and norms across national borders is the policy issue of

international labor conventions. New actors and new ways of a global governance of labor law have evolved with the increasing internationalization of industrial relations and the growing role of multinational corporations (Hassel 2008, 232). Moving away from ILO conventions and thus from a state-based regulatory regime, the involvement of private (firms) and public (NGOs) non-state actors has led to an (initial) international convergence of global labor standards. This emerging regime of global labor governance is highly influenced by private actors such as businesses, NGOs and trade unions that form coalitions in order to convince internationally active firms to voluntarily comply with a core of acceptable behavioral norms (Hassel 2008, 232-233).

6. Conclusion

The notion of organized interests in a multi-level governance setting is still a theoretically underdeveloped field. I have suggested in this chapter that it makes theoretical sense to distinguish between MLG I and II with regard to the types of private actors and their involvement. It is assumed that we tend to find stable, institutionalized actors such as associations and clubs in MLG I settings, while issue-specific, but more fluid, temporary social movements and coalitions dominate policy-making in MGLII settings. As governance forms develop beyond the nation-state, the role of private actors and their interaction with state actors in policy-making will further evolve. Federalism and forms of MLG I will not be able to guide us in the understanding of new forms of governance and MLG II.

Globalization and regional integration have led to the emergence of new multi-level governance regimes, such as the European Union, for example, and several global policy regimes such as in labor, trade or climate change. Organized interests have not only played an important role in the creation/emergence of many of these regimes, they have also found new strategies to influence policy-makers at the different levels of governance. Organized interests in the two different types of multi-level governance influence policy-making according to the institutional structure, much in the same way that interest groups have traditionally tried to gain access to the policy-making process by using the access points provided by the institutional structure of the political system. Overall, there is still a wide field to be researched in order to conceptualize and understand the interaction of private and public actors in multi-level governance settings.

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