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The Internal Legitimacy of European Interest Groups

Analyses of National Interest Groups Perspectives

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Abstract

As a response to the EU legitimacy crisis, the European institutions strive to increase the legitimacy of the EU by including civil society in the decision-making process. For years, EU institutions have informed, consulted and worked with European interest groups (EIGs), which gather together national interest groups (NIGs). During the last decade, the EU shifted its EU-society relations model from the promotion of consultations with European groups (partnership model) to a system where citizens and national groups should play a more important role (participatory model). This shift constitutes a challenge for EIGs, which see their position as privileged interlocutors of institutions as threatened. At the same time, we observe disconnections between NIGs and EIGs. National groups are not always involved in EIGs' internal structures and some are totally ignorant about their European representatives' activities. Overall, we know little about the perspective of NIGs themselves and how they perceive their European organisations: how do NIGs assess the legitimacy of their European representatives?

The puzzling disconnection between national interest groups and European interest groups lies at the core of the dissertation. The research aims to investigate the relations between NIGs and EIGs through the prism of organisational legitimacy. For that purpose, the research sets out to unpack this concept by means of two research questions corresponding to two empirical analyses of European groups' legitimacy. The two research questions structuring the dissertation are the following:

(RQ1) What are the perceptions of “European interest groups legitimacy” by national interest groups?

(RQ2) Under which conditions do national interest groups perceive their policy positions as congruent (or not congruent) with the policy positions of their European interest groups?

Each question corresponds to a different approach of legitimacy. The first concerns the perspectives of the represented (subjective approach): how the represented assess the legitimacy of their representatives. Legitimacy is understood as a perception. The second question concerns the assessment of legitimacy against a predefined norm (norm-guided approach). Here, legitimacy is understood as an assumption: in order to consider an EIG as legitimate, its member organisations (NIGs) have to perceive their EIG's positions as congruent with their own positions.

In order to answer RQ1, an inductive qualitative analysis (conceptual thematic analysis) was conducted on transcripts of interviews. For the purpose of RQ2, a Qualitative Comparative Analysis was processed. Concerning data collection, a total of 111 interviews with NIGs' staff members were conducted in five EU member states. The strategy of data collection was to get the closest possible to national groups and conduct interviews in the different countries. This strategy allowed to reach many national groups that are usually not addressed by research on EU issues.

The results of both empirical analyses are summarised in the following points. Firstly, socialisation mechanisms seem to be significant when it comes to explain positions alignment (perceived congruence) between NIGs and EIGs. The QCA allowed to identify conditions that participate in the understanding of positions alignment between national and European groups (RQ2). While the vast majority of NIGs perceive their EIGs' positions as congruent with their own, this might be explained by interactions and familiarity between national and European

actors. A small staff having frequent contacts within a single ‘European networking venue’, constitutes a configuration that better explains perceived congruence of positions than the environment within which NIGs work. This indicates the importance of socialisation. It also highlights that alignment depends on variables upon which actors can act. More importantly, it means that alignment is not a matter of factors in which national groups are de facto and ad infinitum embedded in. This is a promising conclusion when considering the potential emergence of an effective and vivid European civil society, beyond Brussels.

Secondly, EIGs are legitimised by their members for what they are, and less for what they do (RQ1). Indeed, the conceptual thematic analysis revealed that EIGs are not legitimised by NIGs as transmitters of an aggregated version of their positions. EIGs are rather legitimised as trusted champions of broad political objectives, to which NIGs generally adhere. If EIGs should be treated as representatives of NIGs at the EU level, the analysis of NIGs’ perceptions suggests that they must be considered first and foremost as acting as trustees of their constituencies and not as delegates. This great diffuse support enjoyed by EIGs from their members is the consequence of NIGs’ beliefs that their EIGs fulfil EU institutions’ requirements to be considered as a relevant stakeholders in consultations on EU issues. This conclusion is even more relevant when considering the shift of the EU-society relations model as embodied by the participatory turn that was initiated in the last decade. NIGs have not (yet) taken advantage of this participatory turn observed in the EU to “enter the game” of the European interest representation system. European groups managed to keep their privileges intact and still occupy the central position in the EU interest representation system. This situation is not seen as problematic by NIGs which acknowledge a division of labour between European and national actors. The scarcity of resources and the need to prioritise (the level of) advocacy actions explain the satisfaction of national groups with an arrangement corresponding to the previous partnership model.

Concerning the contribution to the literature on interest group, this dissertation’s main input is an innovative approach to study interest groups’ legitimacy. By adopting a subjective approach, this research takes into consideration the point of views of the ‘first concerned’, the national groups, that are represented by their European umbrellas. Following an inductive and empirically grounded approach of organisational legitimacy, this dissertation overcomes the mainly critical tone of previous research on the subject, which were based on predefined normative criteria. Without contradicting the results of previous studies, this research brings another perspective on European interest groups’ legitimacy.

As regards to the contribution of this dissertation to the societal debate on the role of European groups and their relations with national civil society organisations, this research illustrates the persistence of the central position of EIGs when it comes to lobby EU institutions. Many national groups delegate their advocacy function on EU issues to their EU umbrella organisations. This situation of division of labour seems to satisfy the vast majority of the actors. The participatory turn initiated by the Commission has thus not changed this arrangement so far. This reveals a situation where European groups – of which the creation resulted from the Commission’s consultation practices – become now the organisations to bypass for institutions to enhance the legitimacy of the EU, by favouring the involvement of citizens and national actors on European issues.

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List of abbreviations

CSO	Civil society organisation
csQCA	Crisp-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis
ECI	European Citizens' Initiative
EIG	European interest group
EU	European Union
fsQCA	Fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MEUSAC	Malta-EU Action and Steering Committee
MS	Member state (of the EU)
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIG	National interest group
PA	Principal-agent
QCA	Qualitative Comparative Analysis
REFIT	Regulatory Fitness and Performance Program
SME	Small and medium enterprise

List of national and European interest groups' acronyms

AdTF	Les Amis de la Terre France
AGPB	Association Générale des Producteurs de Blé et autres céréales
AIMCC	Association française des industries de produits de construction
AirClim	The Air Pollution & Climate Secretariat
APCMA	Assemblée Permanente des Chambres de Métiers et de l'artisanat
BLE	Birdlife Europe
BLM	Birdlife Malta
CEJA	European Council of Young Farmers
CEMBureau	The European Cement Association
CEPF	Confederation of European Forest Owners
CGPME	Confédération Générale des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises
CNMCCA	Confédération Nationale de la Mutualité, de la Coopération et du Crédit Agricoles
COPA-COGECA	Committee of Professional Agricultural Organisations-General Confederation of Agricultural Cooperatives
CPE	Construction Products Europe
DOPPS	Društvo za opazovanje in proučevanje ptic Slovenije
EAA	European Anglers Alliance
EBM	Društvo Ekologi brez meja - Ecologists without Borders
ECSA	European Community Shipowners' Associations
EEB	The European Environmental Bureau
EFNCP	European Forum for Nature Conservation and Pastoralism
EL	Ekologiska Lantbrukarna - Swedish Ecological Farmers Association
ELO	European Landowners Organisation
EPO	European Policy Office-World Wild Fund
ERF	European Union Road Federation
ESPO	European Seaports organization
ETOA	European Tour operators Association
ETUC	European Trade Union Confederation
EUDA	European Dredging Association
EuLA	European Lime Association
EURELECTRIC	Union of the Electricity Industry
EuroGîtes	The European Federation of Rural Tourism
Euromines	European Association of Mining Industries, Metal Ores & Industrial Minerals
Euromontana	European association of mountain areas
Europêche	Association of National Organisations of Fishery Enterprises
EUSTAFOR	European State Forest Association
EWEA	European Wind energy association
EZS	Energetska Zbornica Slovenije - Slovenian Chamber of Commerce, Energy Association
FACE	Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU
FEAP	Federation of European Aquaculture Producers
FECOF	European Federation of Municipal and Local Community Forests

FFA	Fédération Française d'Aquaculture
FFS	Fondation François Sommer
FGdF	Fédération Nationale des Gîtes de France
FIF	Fédération des industries ferroviaires
FKNK	Federazzjoni Kaċċaturi Nassaba Konservazzjonisti
FMAP	Federation of Maltese Aquaculture Producers
FNAB	Fédération nationale d'agriculture biologique
FNC	Fédération Nationale des Chasseurs
FNE	France Nature Environnement
FNSEA	Fédération Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles
Focus	Focus — Društvo za sonaraven razvoj
FoEE	Friends of the Earth — Europe
FoEM	Friends of the Earth — Malta
Företagarna	Sveriges största företagorganisation
FPF	Fransylva — Forestiers Privés de France
FSF	Föreningen Sveriges Fäbodbrukare - Swedish Association for Transhumance and Pastoralism
GdF	Les Gîtes de France
GF	Générations Futures
GNI	Groupement national des indépendants
GRTU	Malta Chamber of Small and Medium Enterprises
Hotrec	European trade association of hotels, restaurants and cafés
IFOAM	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements
IMA-Europe	Industrial Minerals Association-Europe
INE	Inland waterways Europe
ITR	Inštitut za trajnostni razvoj — Institute for Sustainable Development
IOGP	The International Association of Oil & Gas Producers
JA	Jeunes Agriculteurs
JV	Jordens Vänner
KGZS	Kmetijsko Gozdarska Zbornica Slovenije - Chamber for Agriculture and Forestry of Slovenia
KM	Koperattivi Malta
KRAV	Swedish Organic Agriculture Association
LRF	Lantbrukarnas Riksförbund - Federation of Swedish Farmers
LRFS	LRF Skogsägarna — The Federation of Swedish Family Forest owners
LRFU	Lantbrukarnas Riksförbund Ungdomen — Young LRF
LZS	Lovska zveza Slovenije - Hunters' Association of Slovenia
MBB	Malta Business Bureau
MCCEI	Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry
MEDEF	Mouvement des Entreprises de France
MHRA	Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association
MKG	Miljöorganisationernas kärnavfallsgranskning - Swedish NGO Office for Nuclear Waste Review
MOAM	Malta Organic Agriculture Movement
NTM	Nature Trust Malta
OZS	Obrtno-podjetniška zbornica Slovenije - Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia
RZS	Ribiska Zveza Slovenije
SER	Syndicat des équipements de la Route
SFIC	Syndicat Français de l'Industrie Cimentière

SH	Sveriges Hamnar - Swedish Ports
SN	Svenskt Näringsliv - Swedish Enterprises
SOF	Sveriges ornitologiska förening - BirdLife Sverige
Solcem	Slovenian Cement Producers Association
Sportfiskarna	Sveriges Sportfiske och Fiskevårdsförbund
SRF	Skärgårdarnas Riksförbund - National Association for the Swedish Archipelago
SSNC	Naturskyddsföreningen - Swedish Society for Nature Conservation
SveMin	Swedish Association of Mines, Mineral and Metal Producers
Swedenergy	Energiföretagen Sverige
Swedtrain	Föreningen Sveriges Järnvägsindustrier
Sweship	Swedish Shipowners' Association
SYNHORCAT	Syndicat National des Hôteliers, Restaurateurs, Cafetiers et Traiteurs
TGZ	Turistično gostinska zbornica Slovenije - Tourism and Hospitality Chamber of Slovenia
TNS	Društvo Temno nebo Slovenije - Dark Sky Slovenia
UAPF	Union des Armateurs à la Pêche de France
UEAPME	European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
UEPG	European Aggregates association
UFE	Union française de l'électricité
Umanotera	Umanotera — The Slovenian Foundation for Sustainable Development
UMIH	Union des Métiers et des Industries de l'Hôtellerie
UNIFE	Union of European Railway Industries
UPA	Union Professionnelle de l'Artisanat
UPC	UP'Chaux — Union des Producteurs de Chaux
UPF	Union des Ports de France
URF	Union Routière de France
USIRF	Union des Syndicats de l'industrie routière française
USSE	Union of Forester Owners from Southern Europe
Visita	Swedish Hospitality Industry
WWFS	Världsnaturfonden - WWF Sweden
ZDS	Združenje Delodajalcev Slovenije – Employers' Association of Slovenia
ZLGS	Zveza Lastikov Godzov Slovenije — The Forest Owners Association of Slovenia
ZRSVN	Zavod Republike Slovenije za varstvo narave - Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation
ZSPM	Zveze slovenske podeželske mladine
ZTKS	Združenje turističnih kmetij Slovenije - Association of Tourist Farms of Slovenia
ZWF	Zero Waste France
ZZS	Zadružna Zveza Slovenije - Cooperative Union of Slovenia

General Introduction

0.1. Object of study and research questions

European interest groups claim to represent their member organisations, which are national interest groups. However, it appears that national groups are, to a certain extent, disconnected from their European umbrella groups. The following example provides an illustration of such disconnections. Amongst the replies to the stakeholder consultation of the ‘fitness check’ of the EU Nature Legislation organised by the Commission in early 2015, we can read the contributions of European business groups, such as EURELECTRIC or European environmental groups, such as Friends of the Earth Europe¹. In their replies, these European interest groups (EIGs) claim that they *represent* respectively, the “*electricity sector (production, supply and distribution) – national associations*” (EURELECTRIC, 2015) and “*Friends of the Earth Europe and its national member groups*” (Friends of the Earth Europe, 2015). This kind of discourse is expected from the EIGs as their *raison d’être* is to represent their members. However, in the exploratory interviews conducted at the early stages of this research with representatives of Belgian organisations, it appeared that national groups member of these EIGs were largely ignorant of this consultation. This also was further confirmed by interviews with representatives of French, Maltese, Slovenian and Swedish national groups².

This is only one amongst various indications of some disconnections between national level organisations and their European representative groups. This disconnection is all the more bewildering in this case, given the pre-eminent role of the European Union (EU) in environmental policy (Delreux & Happaerts, 2016) and the popular enthusiasm observed during the subsequent public consultation on this biodiversity issue. From a democratic perspective, this situation might be considered as problematic. And indeed it has been considered so by

¹ These responses can be downloaded on the following webpage:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/fitness_check/evidence_gathering/index_en.htm

² It is interesting to note that EURELECTRIC’s document acknowledges this point by highlighting that they received “*Full answer from the UK only + comments from Sweden*” (EURELECTRIC, 2015).

scholarly literature on interest groups in the European Union (see details in the literature review, in Chapter 1, point 1.3). However, we know little about the perspective of national groups themselves and how they perceive their European representative organisations: how do national interest groups (NIGs) assess the legitimacy of their European representatives?

The puzzling disconnection between national interest groups and European interest groups lies at the core of this dissertation. This research aims to investigate the relations between NIGs and EIGs through the prism of organisational legitimacy. More precisely, this research focuses on EIGs' *internal* legitimacy, i.e. legitimacy as perceived by the EIGs' members, namely the NIGs³. *Internal* legitimacy is in fact a matter of relationship(s), of linkage. It will therefore be analysed as dyadic relations between each national member organisation and its respective EIG. European interest groups are understood here as EU-level peak or umbrella organisations. Analysing the structural arrangements between NIGs and EIGs is crucial to acquire a thorough understanding of roles and input of civil society actors⁴ (both European and national ones) in the policymaking process of the EU. As will be explained and justified further below, the focus of this research is laid on national actors. Indeed, data were collected mainly via interviews with representatives of national groups. The original perspective chosen focuses on the perceptions of national actors, in order to 'investigate the Brussels Bubble from outside the Bubble'.

This dissertation strives to provide a comprehensive understanding of the internal legitimacy of European interest groups. For that purpose, this research sets out to unpack the concept of organisational legitimacy by means of two research questions corresponding to two successive empirical analyses of EIGs internal legitimacy. Each empirical analysis corresponds in fact to a different approach of legitimacy. The two research questions structuring the dissertation are the following:

RQ1: What are the perceptions of "EIGs legitimacy" by national interest groups?

RQ2: Under which conditions do national interest groups perceive their policy positions as congruent (or not congruent) with the policy positions of their European interest groups?

³ The term '*internal* legitimacy' aims to differentiate the assessment of EIGs' legitimacy by their members (NIGs, being 'internal components' of EIGs) from the assessment of EIGs' legitimacy that might be done by other actors (e.g. the EU institutions or the general public).

⁴ 'Civil society' is understood in this dissertation in its largest definition and includes all non-states actors, economic as well as civic ones. As noted by Saurugger (2010, p. 5), this definition is also found in the majority of official EU documents (from the 2000s).

The first empirical analysis adopts a subjective approach of internal legitimacy. EIGs' legitimacy is studied through an analysis of the viewpoint of national interest groups. The second empirical analysis adopts a norm-guided approach of internal legitimacy. EIGs' legitimacy is studied through an analysis of NIGs' perceived congruence between their positions and their EIGs' ones. NIGs' perspectives are also the focus of the second question, but there are analysed through a norm considered as participating to the legitimacy of EIGs, which is positions congruence. Here below, the overall context of the research is set and its purpose is clarified, before the detailed explanations of both empirical analyses.

The object of this study – the internal legitimacy of European interest groups – is analysed in view of a broader societal issue which is the relations between EU institutions and society. Since the early 2000s, the relations between EU institutions and society experienced a shift from a *partnership* model to a *participatory* model (Bouza García, 2015b; Quittkat & Finke, 2008). EU institutions changed their agenda from the promotion of a neo-corporatist setting (*partnership* EU-society relations model) to a model of neo-pluralist inspiration where citizens and civil society organisations beyond Brussels are expected to play an active role (*participatory* EU-society relations model). The *partnership* model was based on strong EIGs aggregating and representing the interests of causes or sections of society (from different member states) at the European level. The *participatory* model, currently promoted and implemented by EU institutions (and particularly the Commission), is based on open and multilevel consultations with a particular focus on transparency and participation (Bouza García, 2015b). In this changing context, this dissertation analyses the internal legitimacy of European interest groups whose status of central players in EU-society relations might be challenged (Oleart & Bouza, 2017; Ruzza, 2015).

The first research question addresses the perceptions of NIGs about their EIGs and how the former legitimise these 'European representatives' which are supposed to represent them in Brussels. As literature on the issue currently stands, we know little about the views and perceptions of the members of EIGs (Sanchez Salgado & Demidov, 2018) and on the extent to which their opinion is in line with the discourse of the EU institutions or the conclusions of previous research about the '*unlegitimate*' character of European umbrella organisations (Johansson & Lee, 2014; Rodekamp, 2013). On the one hand, while EIGs were considered for years by EU institutions as faithful and legitimate transmitters of the opinions expressed by national groups and their constituencies, their central position in the interest representation model is challenged by a '*participatory turn*' promoting the inclusion of citizens and

organisations beyond the EU-level (Bouza García, 2015a; Oleart & Bouza, 2017; Saurugger, 2010). On the other hand, previous analyses, based on democratic criteria, assess negatively the legitimacy of EIGs as intermediary organisations between NIGs and EU institutions (Johansson & Lee, 2014). However, the role of national groups within EIGs has been little discussed by interest groups scholars. Under those circumstances, examining the perceptions of national members vis-à-vis their European umbrella organisations is crucial to put conclusions of previous studies about democratic-legitimacy of EIGs into perspective and to shed further light on the consequences of the *participatory* model promoted and implemented by the EU.

To answer the first question, a qualitative analysis (more precisely, a thematic analysis⁵) is conducted on transcripts of interviews with NIGs' representatives. The outcome of this analysis takes shape of a thematic tree (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016). This thematic tree presents aggregated results and provides an overview of how NIGs across the EU perceive the legitimacy of their EIGs. Being not based on *a priori* conceptions of what EIGs legitimacy is, this analysis goes beyond the assessment of interest groups legitimacy as regards to predefined democratic criteria as already done by previous research. As an additional step, an analysis with ideal types is conducted (Psathas, 2005). It mobilises the thematic tree resulting from the first analysis. This second qualitative analysis aims to establish whether the discourse of NIGs unveil the integration by national actors of norms related to the *participatory* model currently promoted by the Commission, or the persistence of norms related to the *partnership* model. The elements identified in the discourse of NIGs through the thematic analysis are classified and confronted to two ideal types representing these two contrasted EU-society relation models (the participatory one and partnership one).

The second analysis is based on a norm-guided approach of legitimacy. This means that the analysis is based on the following assumption: in order to consider an EIG as legitimate, its member organisations (NIGs) have to perceive their EIG's positions as congruent with their own positions. This choice to study perceived congruence of positions is justified in the dissertation as regards to the role EIGs should play in the interest representation model of the EU. EIGs are meant to feed EU institutions with information about NIGs' needs and opinions (Wolff, 2013). One may argue that the legitimacy of EIGs is anchored in their function to represent NIGs and in the fact that they act in accordance with their member organisations. If

⁵ Thematic analysis is a data reduction process used to synthesise a data corpus with labels called 'themes'. The basic idea is to answer a generic question: what is fundamental about the issue *x* in the data corpus *y*? (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, p. 235). Thematic analysis is a particular type of content analysis (Crespy, 2015).

EIGs are considered as representatives of NIGs in EU consultations, this function must have a substantive foundation. Accordingly, messages and positions transmitted by EIGs to EU institutions must be perceived by NIGs as congruent with their own positions. If EIGs' function is to represent their members, the messages of EIGs must be at least endorsed by national groups. In return, the transfer of information from EIGs to EU institutions and the NIGs' perception that it meets their own positions, participate to the EU legitimacy enhancement (Smismans, 2006). This normative consideration is the basis of the choice to study perceived congruence. Moreover, EIGs themselves claim that they represent their members. This part of the dissertation thus scrutinises the alignment between NIGs and EIGs. Nevertheless, one should note that if NIGs' perceived congruence is the focus of this second empirical analysis, it does not mean that it is considered as the *only* valid element to take into consideration in order to assess EIGs' internal legitimacy. It must be stressed here that the point of this dissertation is not to confuse organisational legitimacy and perceived congruence. It only constitutes one of many potential elements fostering legitimacy of EIGs⁶. This will be incidentally revealed by the results of the first empirical analysis. Moreover, it is important to note that the second empirical analysis does not stem from the findings of the first empirical analysis. However, the examinations of the results of both analyses together will prove to be enlightening.

The second empirical analysis resorts to the Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)⁷ method (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009; Schneider & Wagemann, 2012) to reply to the second question. QCA is based on the concept of "multiple conjunctural causation" which is in line with the objective of identifying different (combinations) of conditions explaining perceived (non-)congruence. This analysis has an exploratory purpose. Indeed, no coherent theoretical set or propositions exist in order to explain policy positions' congruence between EIGs and their member organisations. Therefore, this part of the dissertation strives to provide some first, tentative explanatory paths to better understand the (absence of) congruence between NIGs' and EIGs' positions. The exploratory nature of this analysis has dictated many methodological choices and influences the nature of the results obtained. The 11 conditions tested (see Chapter 5, section 5.3.3) are selected and operationalised on the basis of literature on (europeanisation of) interest groups as well as field-based knowledge.

⁶ Based on other normative considerations, other research might choose to study for instance, the existence of accountability channels inside the structure of EIGs or how EIGs achieve lobbying success.

⁷ QCA can be described as follows: the method "*provides an original toolbox enabling one to handle multiple cross-case comparisons, to test models laying more emphasis on causal complexity, and to conduct formal/computer-run analyses while also keeping an eye on the 'qualitative' specificities of given cases*" (Rihoux, 2017, p. 383).

As noted above and as will be discussed in detail in Chapter 1, both analyses focus on national interest groups' perspectives. Bringing NIGs into the picture is one of the ambitions and added values of this dissertation. As noted by Sanchez Salgado and Demidov (2018), such a perspective contributes to a new understanding of the role of interest groups in the EU. The vast majority of research on interest groups is focused on 'Brussels dynamics', thereby largely ignoring, for instance, the interactions of EIGs with their members. A move beyond Brussels brings to light NIGs' potential when it comes to the scrutiny and oversight of EU policies at the national level. It also allows to unpack the representative claim of European umbrella organisations and investigate the perspectives of the represented.

0.2. Structure of the dissertation

Table 0.1 presents the structure of the dissertation. The organisation of the document is detailed regarding the two empirical analyses constituting the research. The last two columns (coloured cells) show whether each part of the dissertation concerns one empirical analysis, the other, or both.

The opening chapter of the dissertation addresses the role of interest groups in the EU polity by explaining the different models of relations between the European Union and society. It introduces the concept of legitimacy and the different perspectives that can be used to study EIGs legitimacy from the perspective of their members. A literature review closes this Chapter 1 with the identification of academic gaps the research aims to fill.

Chapter 2 sets up the theoretical framework for both empirical analyses of the dissertation. First, overall information about European and national interest groups are provided. More importantly, the chapter outlines the sociological institutionalist theory in which this research is embedded. Chapter 2 is also dedicated to theoretical considerations related to the first empirical analysis and introduces the concept of *polity norm*. Finally, the choice to analyse *perceived congruence* as a criteria to assess the internal legitimacy of EIGs (second empirical analysis) is explained and justified.

Chapter 3 presents the research design of the dissertation. The first part of the chapter is organised in two parts corresponding to the methods used for each research question: on the one hand, the thematic analysis and the analysis based on ideal types (RQ1), and on the other hand, the Qualitative Comparative Analysis (RQ2). Sections about case selection and data

collection complete this third chapter, along with an overview of the empirical cases under scrutiny.

Table 0.1 Structure of the dissertation

Chapter	Chapters' topics	Details	RQ1 & first empirical analysis	RQ2 & second empirical analysis
Chapter 1	Studying organisational legitimacy	Why study the internal legitimacy of European interest groups?		
		How to study organisational legitimacy?		
		✓ A subjective approach		
		✓ A norm-guided approach		
		Literature review: what we know and what we do not know		
Chapter 2	Theoretical framework	Setting the scene: national and European interest groups		
		A sociological institutionalist analysis of EIGs legitimacy		
		1 st empirical analysis' framework: Looking for the internalisation of a polity norm		
		2 nd empirical analysis' framework: Analysing perceived congruence between NIGs' and EIGs' policy positions		
Chapter 3	Research Design	Methodology		
		Method: Thematic analysis and analysis based on ideal types		
		Method: QCA		
		Case selection		
		Data Collection		
Chapter 4	EIGs' legitimacy: NIGs' viewpoint	Thematic analysis: Three readings of the corpus + discursive analysis [4.1 →4.5]		
		Second level analysis: analysis based on ideal types [4.6]		
Chapter 5	Explaining NIGs' perceived congruence	QCA		
Conclusion	Lessons from analyses of NIGs' perspectives	Discussion of the main findings Limitations of the research Potential avenues for further research		

While first three chapters set up the basis of both empirical analyses, Chapter 4 is exclusively dedicated to the first empirical analysis and the presentation of its outcome. The thematic analysis is first presented. It consists of a four-steps analysis: three readings and a discursive analysis (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, pp. 235-318). The three readings aim at identifying and categorising relevant themes present in the corpus analysed (outcome = a thematic tree). The last step (discursive analysis) aims at analysing in detail each category of themes identified and conceptualised through the three readings of the corpus. The purpose of the thematic analysis is to answer the first research question and to understand the perceptions of NIGs about their EIGs and how the former legitimise these ‘European representatives’ which are supposed to represent them in Brussels. A second level analysis completes this Chapter 4: an analysis based on ideal types. It builds upon the thematic tree resulting from the thematic analysis. This second qualitative analysis aims at establishing the extent to which the discourse of NIGs unveils the integration, by these national actors, of norms related to the *participatory* model currently promoted by the Commission, or conversely the extent to which norms related to the *partnership* model persist.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to the second empirical analysis. A qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) aims at replying to the second research question of this dissertation. It is important to stress the exploratory nature of this analysis. This Chapter strives to identify explanatory paths to better understand the (absence of) NIGs’ perceived congruence between their positions and their EIGs’ ones. The exploratory nature of this analysis has dictated several methodological choices and must be kept in mind while reading the analysis and its results.

Finally, the conclusion summarises the main findings and discusses them with regard to the understanding of the EU interest representation system. The findings’ implications for interest group studies and interest group politics are also discussed. Finally, limitations of the dissertation are reported and potential avenues for further research are outlined.

1

Studying organisational legitimacy **The internal legitimacy of European interest groups**

This Chapter opens the dissertation, following the overview of its content in the general introduction. Chapter 1 first addresses the role of interest groups in the EU polity by explaining the different models of relations between the European Union and society. The first section demonstrates the necessity to research the internal legitimacy of European interest groups (EIGs) in view of the societal issues surrounding the question of the role of interest groups in the European Union (1.1). Second, organisational legitimacy is defined in order to lay the ground for a research on internal legitimacy of European interest groups (1.2). This part introduces the concept of legitimacy and the different perspectives that can be used to study this concept. The third part of the Chapter presents the results of previous research on the legitimacy of interest groups in Europe and demonstrates the academic gap the research aims to fill (1.3). Considering all the elements developed in this first Chapter, the conclusion sets the broad lines of the research by explicitly stating what this dissertation does and does not study (1.4).

1.1. Why study the internal legitimacy of European interest groups?

This section addresses the EU institutions' discourses on civil society and the role assigned to interest groups by the EU over time. Three successive EU-society relations models promoted by EU institutions are presented. This section concludes with an explanation of the necessity to study internal legitimacy of EIGs to better understand the role of interest groups in the EU polity.

1.1.1. Interest groups participation as a response to the EU legitimacy crisis

The EU is regularly criticised for its lack of legitimacy (Kohler-Koch & Rittberger, 2007). However, *“structural limitations in models of representative democracy have enhanced the space for other mechanisms of legitimacy in the European Union, including participatory models in which organized civil society interests are significant players”* (Greenwood, 2007, p. 333). *“Alongside the given formal structures of intermediate democratic legitimisation of the Council, and the direct legitimisation of the EP, substitute elements of democratic legitimisation can be identified in the European polity. Among them, H  ritier names what one can consider as civil society’s participation in European governance, namely the establishment of ‘supportive networks’ that seek to secure input-legitimisation by allowing the actors concerned to take part in policy-shaping”*⁸ (Smismans, 2006, p. 307). For instance, as a response to the legitimacy crisis, the last structural reform of the EU (the Treaty of Lisbon) strives to increase the legitimacy of the EU by recognizing the importance of dialogue between European institutions and civil society. The Article 11 of the consolidated versions of the Treaty on European Union mentions that *“institutions shall, by appropriate means, give citizens and representative associations the opportunity to make known and publicly exchange their views in all areas of Union action. [...] The institutions shall maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with representative associations and civil society. [...] The European Commission shall carry out broad consultations with parties concerned in order to ensure that the Union’s actions are coherent and transparent”* (European Union, 2008).

The EU’s official discourse on civil society has been developed even before the Treaty of Lisbon. For years, some institutions, namely the European Commission and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), have built a discourse on civil society (Smismans, 2003). In contrast, the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union or the Committee of the Regions have not issued particular documents on the subject. Through their discourses, the concerned institutions are pushing forward their interest within the institutional architecture of the EU: *“the E[E]SC has developed a discourse on civil society in order to redefine its proper position within the European institutional set-up, whereas the Commission has used the discourse first to build support for Community social policymaking and subsequently as a broader means of administrative reform and legitimisation in reply to the Brussels’ legitimacy crisis”* (Smismans, 2003, p. 503). Consequently, civil society has been

⁸ See the reference: H  ritier (1999).

associated with the EU policymaking process – in particular to the drafting of new policy measures – with different intensities and structural arrangements depending on the period (Smismans, 2003).

1.1.2. The successive EU-society relations models

Quittkat and Finke (2008) distinguish three successive models of interest groups consultation corresponding to different stages of European integration and shifts in the EU's political objectives: a 'consultative model' in the 1960s-80s, the 'partnership model' till the late 1990s, and subsequently a 'participatory democracy' model (see table 1.1: three successive EU-society relations models).

The first model (the *consultative* model) is based on the idea that the EU (or more accurately, the European Economic Community, EEC) acquires its legitimacy through output legitimacy via consultation of economic experts. The idea of output legitimacy is based on the assumption that the efficiency of EEC's economic policies will lead to the support of European institutions by different societal actors (Scharpf, 1999). For the European Commission, the rationale is that the involvement of important business actors and their assent to policy orientations are a prerequisite for the efficient implementation of European policies (which are the basis of support for the EEC). Under this model, the process of consultation is mostly informal, allowing the Commission the largest possible degree of discretion in its exchange with societal actors (Quittkat & Finke, 2008, p. 187).

The second model (the *partnership* model) appeared in the context of an increasing critical stance in the member states about European integration, of which the climax was the failure of the Maastricht Referendum in Denmark (Quittkat & Finke, 2008, p. 188): "*Cooperation between the Commission and civil society became a legitimising factor for the European institutions under national pressure*" (Saurugger, 2010, p. 8). This model is based on the idea of adding an input legitimacy stream (Scharpf, 1999) to the EEC legitimacy building. Input legitimacy is acquired via consultation of strong European associations. This setting with strong 'representative' associations of EU-wide constituencies can be likened to a neo-corporatist system of interest intermediation at the European level. The Commission promotes the principle of 'partnership' with civil society organisations in order to design European policies: "*the Commission was no longer exclusively focussing on the factual quality of its policy proposals but became concerned with a broader public acceptance of EU politics in the member states*" (Quittkat & Finke, 2008, p. 188). In order to gain this public acceptance, the EU encourages the

establishment of European associations. These European organisations are expected to promote EU policies across the Union. Brussels opens the dialogue to general interest representatives (or ‘diffuse interest’, see Chapter 2, point 2.1.2) and implements funding programmes to create these European associations. The Commission promotes networking amongst NGOs and supports the establishment of multi-stakeholder forums in the form of EU umbrella associations (Quittkat & Finke, 2008, p. 188). Consultation and funding instruments are adjusted and extended to these new actors entering the ‘European arena’. A broad range of societal interests (beyond employers and unions) is accepted as ‘partners’ of institutions in Brussels⁹. Civil society is mainly conceptualised by the Commission in terms of ‘functional participation’ and ‘functional representation’: *“In the particular case of the European Commission, the necessity for functional representation is amplified even more by the lack of parliamentary control in certain policy fields, low administrative resources, and strategic needs of their position vis-à-vis the European Parliament and the Member States”* (Wolff, 2013, p. 4).

The third model (the participatory model) is based on the ideas of participatory democracy¹⁰. The introduction of open consultation and a particular attention given to transparency of policy making process are expected to enhance the democratic legitimacy of the EU. The ambition is to include more civil society organisations from the different levels of the EU’s multilevel polity as well as individual citizens in the EU consultation design¹¹.

⁹ Beyond the texts presented in the Table 1.1., see also: The communication from the Commission “Promoting the role of voluntary organisations and foundations in Europe” (European Commission, 1997), the Commission discussion paper “The Commission and non-governmental organisations: building a stronger partnership” (European Commission, 2000).

¹⁰ For an in-depth analysis of how the norm of ‘participatory democracy’ has emerged at the EU-level, see Saurugger (2010). According to the author this discourse on participatory democracy emerged in the 1990s and was followed by a *“continued activism of an elite forum, consisting of political and administrative actors as well as academics, [which] created the momentum that brought the concerned actors to accept the participatory norm and to play the roles required by it”* (Saurugger, 2010, p. 1).

On a broader perspective, beyond a European point of view, some authors highlight the emergence of a “world participatory turn”. See for instance, the special issue of *Participations* entitled *“Un tournant participative mondial ?”*, introduced by Mazeaud, Nonjon, and Parizet (2016) or Gendron, Yates, and Motulsky (2016) for a Canadian illustration.

¹¹ Beyond the texts presented in the Table 1.1., see also: : The communication from the Commission “Towards a reinforced culture of consultation and dialogue - General principles and minimum standards for consultation of interested parties by the Commission” (European Commission, 2002) and the Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions “Commission’s contribution to the period of reflection and beyond - Plan-D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate” (European Commission, 2005).

Table 1.1. Three successive EU-society relations models

Model	Consultative model	Partnership model	Participatory model
Time frame	From the beginning of the European economic integration – Mid-1980s	Mid-1980s – 2000s	2000s – ...
Principal Official texts	- None <i>Informal practices</i>	- 1987 Single European Act - 1992 Maastricht Treaty - 1993 An open and structured dialogue between the Commission and special interest groups <i>Institutionalisation of the European Social Dialogue and opening of consultation to general interests</i>	- 2006 European Transparency Initiative - 2006 White Paper on a European Communication Policy - 2007 Treaty of Lisbon (Article 11) <i>Introduction of online consultations and implementation of European Citizens' Initiative</i>
Ideas	- Based on output legitimacy (= based on efficiency of policies) via consultation of economic experts - Involvement of powerful business actors is expected to participate in efficient implementation of policies. - Informal procedures ensuring high degree of discretion for Commission in its exchanges with societal actors.	- Based on input legitimacy via strong European associations in a neo-corporatist setting. - Focus on public acceptance of European politics (not only factual quality of policies) - European associations expected to promote European policies across the continent. - Dialogue opened to general interest representatives - Funding programmes for European associations (NGOs). - Support for establishment of multi-stakeholder forums.	- Based on participatory democracy via open consultation - Focus on transparency of decision-making process - Aim = enhance the democratic legitimacy of European politics by including more civil society organisations (from the different levels) and individuals in the consultation design.
Central actors	- European federations of trade and industry associations, farmers, and other professional interests of employers and trade unions.	- Former actors (cell on the left) - European associations of diffuse interests (human rights and women's rights, environment and consumers protection)	- Citizens - Organisations from the different levels of the EU's multilevel polity
Consultation features	- Intense but informal and irregular ad hoc dialogue addressing a selective group of societal actors - Bilateral or multi-lateral meetings and issue-oriented hearings with experts and stakeholders.	- Institutionalisation of consultation instruments opened to general interests. - Introduction of a 'European Social Dialogue' (employment and social affairs). - Broader range of societal interests representatives considered as 'partners' by institutions	- Extension of scope and variety of consultation instruments. - Introduction of 'online consultations' - Implementation of the European Citizens' Initiative
Sources	Quittkat and Finke (2008, p. 187)	Quittkat and Finke (2008, pp. 187-189); Bouza García (2015b)	Quittkat and Finke (2008, pp. 189-190); Bouza García (2015b)

It is interesting to point out the elements that triggered the emergence of this third and currently promoted model. In the early 2000s, the cornerstone of the discourse of the European Commission on civil society participation was the White Paper on European Governance. The Commission “*proposes opening up the policy making process to get more people and organisations involved in shaping and delivering EU policy*” (European Commission, 2001, p. 2). This White Paper constitutes a pivotal moment which spans on both the partnership model and the participatory model.

The White Paper illustrates the momentum of the Commission having started to promote a model focused on more openness and transparency and began to use a ‘participatory rhetoric’. In the same time, the Paper is still based on functionalist ideas of an ‘organised civil society’ participating in the decision-making processes to make policies more effective. With this in mind, it is interesting to note that the discourse of the Commission on participation is not clear-cut: “*The analysis of the official documents shows a tension between the aim to include as many actors as possible in the concept of civil society and the attempt to institutionalise the consultation of this civil society at the European level*” (Saurugger, 2010, p. 12). However, the White Paper constitutes a shifting moment opening a path toward more inclusion of citizens and civil society organisations beyond the EU-level in the EU decision-making.

The White Paper was also the occasion for the Commission to clarify the boundaries of what it considers is the ‘civil society’: “[c]ivil society includes the following: trade unions and employers’ organisations (‘social partners’); nongovernmental organisations; professional associations; charities; grass-roots organisations; organisations that involve citizens in local and municipal life with a particular contribution from churches and religious communities” (European Commission, 2001, p. 11). The Commission’s definition is inclusive and serves as a basis of an “*all-including legitimating narrative*” (Smismans, 2003, p. 504). The Commission states in its White Paper that the legitimacy of EU governance is related to the involvement of civil society (similar reflections also happened at the national level, see for instance: Grossman and Saurugger (2006)). The White Paper specifies that “*civil society organisations need to tighten up their internal structures, furnish guarantees of openness and representativity, and to prove their capacity to relay information or lead debates in their member states*” (European Commission, 2001, p. 14).

This shift is associated with the appointment of the Prodi Commission in 1999, which had to deal with a general sense of crisis after the resignation of the Santer Commission (Bignami, 2005; Smismans, 2003, p. 488): “*the new Commission's response was to adopt legal measures*

guaranteeing that civil society – citizens and organized interests – would be consulted in the lawmaking process, hence improving its democratic credentials in the eyes of the European public and creating allies among the civil society groups that were to be consulted” (Bignami, 2005, p. 245). In fact, the *“Participatory democracy’ – put into practice through partnership with ‘civil society’ – became a model to enhance the democratic legitimacy of European politics”* (Quittkat & Finke, 2008, p. 189). As a response to an ongoing debate on the legitimacy deficit of the EU, the Commission responded by extending more and more the scope and variety of consultation instruments (e.g. internet online consultations). The importance of ‘civil society’ was further underlined by introducing the necessity of an *“open, transparent and regular dialogue with representative associations and civil society”* in the Treaty of Lisbon as mentioned above. The Commission decided to listen more to ‘grassroots actors’ and to engage locally and not only at the EU level: *“As part of the listening process, the Commission intends to use and improve existing tools for collecting feedback directly from citizens, consumers and business”* (European Commission, 2005, p. 9).

EU institutions shifted their agenda from the promotion of a strict neo-corporatist setting with strong EIGs to a neo-pluralist model where citizens and civil society beyond Brussels should play an active role. Bouza García (2015b, p. xiii) notes that the Commission moved its civil society participation agenda from *“fostering input legitimacy via a strong association in a neo-corporatist setting towards a system of open consultation focusing on transparency”*. The implementation of the new model includes the European Transparency Initiative (European Commission, 2006a), an increased usage of open online consultations (Quittkat, 2011) and the possibility of proposing European Citizens’ Initiatives (ECI) following the entry into force of Article 11 of the Treaty of Lisbon (Bouza García & Greenwood, 2014). A more recent illustration of the shift towards a participatory model is the launch of the ‘consultations citoyennes sur l’Europe’ (in France and other EU member states)¹².

This new model challenges the central position of European interest groups when it comes to lobbying the EU level. For instance, the campaigns implemented in the framework of the ECI can be considered to some extent as challenging for European interest groups as individual citizens and national initiatives (including actions of NIGs) may bypass EIGs and still be heard

¹² More information about the French initiative: https://www.touteleurope.eu/fileadmin/_TLEv3/Consultations-citoyennes/Dossier-de-presse-Consultations-Citoyennes-Europe.pdf

in Brussels (Oleart & Bouza, 2017). In brief, the EU has moved from a ‘European preference’ to a multilevel approach of consultation.

1.1.3. The Commission’s ‘European preference’ and its erosion

EU institutions, and the Commission informed, consulted, and worked with European interest groups for years (and more precisely from the mid-80s and the beginning of the Partnership model, as explained above). Due to its institutional interests (see point 1.1.1.), the Commission identified ‘European civil society’ with these European interest groups rather than also including national organisations (Smismans, 2003). The Commission preferred to deal with associations organised at the European level, and not to consult and negotiate with a myriad of national interest groups (Greenwood, 2010; Hallstrom, 2004; Kröger, 2012). These European associations represent EU-wide constituencies rather than national ones. This ‘European preference’ was also reflected in the financial support by the European Commission to create or maintain such European-level umbrella associations (Sanchez Salgado, 2014a; Wolff, 2013, p. 187). This ‘European preference’ seems to be shared beyond the sole European Commission: *‘Policy-makers in Brussels from different institutions – be it the European Commission, the Parliament, or the European Economic and Social Committee – are strongly convinced that civil society in Brussels needs to present itself in the form of umbrella organisations and thus in a structured way’* (Rodekamp, 2013, p. 265).

The aggregation of interests of various groups was thus ‘outsourced’ by the Commission to large platforms representing a ‘European’ voice (Michel, 2008). In turn, some of these European interest groups support this institutional arrangement in order to strengthen their position as principal partner organisations of the Commission (Greenwood, 2010). This situation could be considered as problematic for the European democracy (see box 1.1, hereafter), for instance in terms of ‘representativeness’ of these ‘representative’ European organisations (Greenwood, 2010; Pérez-Solorzano Borrigan & Smismans, 2012).

Box 1.1 ‘Representativeness’, an exploited concept at the EU-level

In a Chapter entitled Regulating NGO Participation in the EU; a De-Facto Accreditation System Built on ‘Representativeness’?, Greenwood (2010) asks: *“how appropriate is the criterion of ‘representativeness’ in a context where most interest groups are associations of other associations?”*. The analysis of several communications and practices of the European Commission leads to the result that group ‘representativeness’ seems to be translated into a minimum threshold for participation and becomes an accreditation scheme in the participatory model of the EU. However, *“the prospects for development of a ‘participatory democracy’ legitimacy strand for the EU seem unlikely to be enhanced, because ‘representativeness’ provides no foundation for equal treatment for groups whose legitimacy is quite reasonably based instead upon raising a cause and injecting it for treatment by public policy”* (p. 213). In fact, alternatives to ‘representativeness’ exist. Interest groups can apply criteria appropriate to the type of legitimacy they claim, be it expertise or deliberation (p. 210).

The use of ‘representativeness’ becomes problematic at the EU level, where the arena is predominantly occupied by European interest groups which are associations of other associations. For these European groups, ‘representativeness’ is easy to meet – depending on which criteria they push forward (geographic distribution, number of supporters) – but also becomes *“a ready weapon to use to establish one’s own credentials and to challenge those of others”* (p. 214). European Business groups are federated at the EU level and *“are likely to continue to use ‘representativeness’ as a convenient weapon against NGOs. EU NGOs themselves are overwhelmingly federated in nature, and in a power struggle to reach the top of the tree they are likely to become drawn into arguing for a system of accreditation based on who is the most representative – whether of the ‘geographic’ or ‘encompassingness’ type”* (p. 214). The author notes that this institutional arrangement leaves smaller interest groups aside. These groups defend perhaps less popular causes *“but nonetheless sharply felt and which have never needed to build a large constituency of ‘members’”* (p. 214).

The ‘European preference’ of the Commission also meets the normative claims of scholars such as Pieter Bouwen¹³: “*EU institutions should preferably interact with collective forms of business interest representation [...] because they can make the most important contribution to the legitimacy of the EU institutions*” (Bouwen, 2006, p. 291). The author includes national organisations in these ‘collective forms’ of representation at the EU-level but repeats the Commission’s preference to deal with associations at the European level rather than with national associations.

As a consequence of this ‘European preference’, a large majority of regional or national interest groups representing individuals, public institutions or companies joined EU-level umbrella associations to monitor and influence EU political activities (Eising, 2004; Grossman & Woll, 2007). Beate Kohler-Koch *et al.* (2013) note that “*while the number of associations has grown over the years, the number of those having contact with EU level institutions has decreased compared to 1999*”. The authors witness a trend towards the delegation of EU lobbying activities to peak associations, reflecting the growing importance of this type of organisations which, goes hand in hand with the ‘European preference’ developed by the Commission, corresponding to corporatist tendencies of the EU till the early 2000s (Bouza García, 2015b).

In the last decade, the Commission shifted its agenda from the promotion of a neo-corporatist setting with strong EIGs towards the encouragement of large, open and multilevel consultation with a particular focus on transparency (Bouza García, 2015b). This new agenda accompanied by new practices (usage of open online consultations, implementation of the European Citizens Initiative) constitutes a challenge for the central position of EIGs (Oleart & Bouza, 2017). The ‘European preference’ of the Commission is thus eroding. Consequently, is describing EIGs as central players and gatekeepers to have access to EU institutions still valid?

1.1.4. Intermediate conclusion: the societal implications of the research

As a response to the EU legitimacy crisis, EU institutions opted for a model of interest representation where civil society is intended to participate in the decision-making process. Various scholars as well as the European Commission have strengthened the idea that legitimacy would be fostered by improving civil society involvement (Hüller & Kohler-Koch, 2008, p. 145). The conception of which actors should be included in participation designs, as well as sets of consultation instruments to put in place, have evolved over the years.

¹³ It is here interesting to note that Pieter Bouwen works for the Commission since 2004.

From the mid-80s–90s , the Commission implemented a partnership model where EIGs were considered as central players: *“The Commission, in particular, counts on interest groups to play a legitimisation role through their own involvement in decision-making processes, as a potential link between European decision makers and the citizens”* (Saurugger, 2010, p. 5). The Commission developed a ‘European preference’ concerning the stakeholders’ organisations it consults. Consequently, the importance of EIGs, defined broadly (including business interest groups as well as ‘NGOs’) as representative of national groups (and their constituencies) has grown in every sector and type of interests at the EU level.

Subsequently, the Commission shifted its agenda from the previous neo-corporatist approach promoting strong EIGs to a neo-pluralist model where citizens and civil society from different levels of the European polity are encouraged to participate in the EU decision-making process. At the same time, expertise from stakeholders is still transmitted to the institutions through different instruments and via the consultation of EIGs: *“The Commission outsources expertise and seeks to legitimate its policy proposals by referring to the demands of organized civil society. This often means creating and financing associations, umbrella organizations or platforms”* (Guiraudon, 2011, p. 134).

However, the consultation systems may also have negative effects on the legitimacy of EU institutions’ decisions: information received by decision makers could be incomplete, biased or even misleading (Dür & Mateo, 2012). Beyond the discourse of the Commission promoting a participatory model, functional representation through EIGs is still dominant in the consultation process. The central tension between the different model of EU-Society relations is the prioritisation of functional representation over democracy, or the other way around (Wolff, 2013, pp. 265-286). Moreover, the upgrading of multilevel CSOs’ and citizens’ participation via open consultation falls short of any legally binding provisions which could be judicially enforced (Bignami, 2003, p. 17, cited in Quittkat and Finke, 2008). The complexity and the contrasts of this situation is highlighted in the literature. There is no consensus regarding the issue of the potential contribution to EU legitimacy by interest groups¹⁴: *“To some observers, such actors are likely only to aggravate already problematic input legitimacy. A range of less hostile approaches also prevail, from a neutral standpoint through to those sharing the*

¹⁴ For an example, see Kohler-Koch and Finke (2007) who propose two conceptions for a systematic assessment of the democratic potential of the European Commission’s consultation regime.

perspective of EU policy practice where such actors are seen as a complementary mechanism of democratic input” (Greenwood, 2007, p. 333).

In this context, it is crucial to scrutinise the internal legitimacy of European interest groups. Whereas input legitimacy from European interest groups to the EU decision-making process is already broadly debated, it is necessary to open the black boxes of these European associations and address the issue of their internal legitimacy and analyse their relations with NIGs (Greenwood, 2010). The rhetorical use of ‘representativeness’ by both interest groups and EU institutions raises a lot of questions. Moreover, while a new participatory agenda is promoted by the Commission, the continuing and growing predominance of associations of other associations at the EU level (Kohler-Koch et al., 2013) is a political phenomenon that has to be studied. How is the promotion of citizens’ inclusion addressed by NIGs in their EU-level advocacy? How is ‘representativeness’ conceived by the member organisations of European groups? And behind ‘representativeness’, what about other sources of legitimacy such as expertise or deliberation? Is the idea of a ‘multi-level civil society’ internalised by NIGs? The transmission of information and policy positions between national stakeholders and EU institutions through European interest groups could be defaulting. National interest groups are not always informed about European policies and consultations concerning their sector or the causes they advocate¹⁵. One could also ask if the positions of European interest groups reflect the positions of their constituencies, namely national organisations. Do NIGs have integrated the shift in the Commission’s agenda and changed their perception of their European umbrellas?

As shown above, EIGs were considered as the link between EU institutions and the genuine needs, requests and opinions expressed by national interest groups. But other norms related to participatory democracy have emerged in the debate at the EU level and the new agenda of the Commission is challenging the central position of EIGs. Moreover, the Commission is increasingly asking European interest groups to be held accountable: “*which interests they represent? How inclusive that representation is?*” (European Commission, 2006a, p. 7). Consequently, analysing the structural arrangements (European interest groups vis-à-vis national interest groups) participates in the understanding of the legitimacy input of interest groups organised at the national level within the EU policy making process. On the one hand,

¹⁵ This situation is not the consequence of a lack of circulation of information from EIGs. On the contrary, in many cases, NIGs’ staff members do not have the time (or do not prioritise such a task) to read and manage all information sent by their EIGs. The information received by EIGs are also perceived as too sophisticated or too abundant (Rodekamp, 2013). This kind of messages was also heard during the interviews. Moreover, the ‘informational gap’ between NIGs and EIGs was also noticed during interviews for the particular case of the stakeholder consultation on the EU Nature legislation.

this research explores the perception of national interest groups themselves about the legitimacy of their European groups. Which norms are integrated by NIGs when they consider the role of their EU-level representative organisations? On the other hand, the dissertation explores the perceived policy congruence of European groups vis-à-vis national groups (for a discussion about the relationships between internal legitimacy and policy congruence, see Chapter 2, section 2.4).

1.2. How to study organisational legitimacy?

As reflected in the very rich and diverse social science literature on the subject, legitimacy is a concept that is difficult to grasp. In order to better understand ‘organisational legitimacy’, it is necessary to start with more general considerations about ‘legitimacy’.

While some authors argue that it should not be used at all in academic research (O’Kane, 1993), others point the issue of legitimacy as the master question of political science (Crick, 2001, p. 150). The concept was traditionally used in the context of state power and more particularly to discuss the legitimacy of government. However, Max Weber, the initiator of empirical analyses of legitimacy, referred to many kinds of relationships of power and subordination under this concept of legitimacy, both in the public and the private spheres (Weber, 1978, p. 213, cited in Steffek & Hahn, 2010a). Legitimacy can be addressed in many different ways and can concern many different political objects (from heads of states to NGOs).

Multiple issues are inherent to the study of such a concept. Legitimacy research is confronted with deep-rooted conceptual problems. The normative underpinnings of the concept tend to interfere with the facticity of legitimisation (von Haldenwang, 2017). Despite the existence of a vast body of academic research, the collection of data to study this concept in different contexts is still debated. Additionally, the concept has proven to be elusive regarding its operationalisation and measurement (von Haldenwang, 2017).

The following sections will thus shed light on the concept of legitimacy in order to frame the dissertation. The different perspectives to study legitimacy will be exposed, with a particular focus on the analysis of the legitimacy of organisations (organisational legitimacy). Sections 1.2.2 and 1.2.3 both conclude with the elaboration of working definitions that lay the ground for an analysis of the internal legitimacy of European interest groups through normative or subjective lenses.

1.2.1. Studying legitimacy: different perspectives

Political science scholars study the legitimacy of any political object: actors, institutions, states, systems. In other words, the issue of legitimacy can be addressed at different levels: at the macro level (e.g. studying the legitimacy of a political system), at the meso level (e.g. studying the legitimacy of an organisation), or at the micro level (e.g. studying the legitimacy of an individual actor). Research on legitimacy can focus on the outcomes of a political subject (e.g. studying the legitimacy of a public policy implemented by an administration) or address the broader question of the legitimacy of the political object in itself, as an entity (e.g. studying the legitimacy of an administration itself).

The current research focuses on the legitimacy of European interest groups themselves, as organisations. This being said, legitimacy has still to be defined: what it means for an organisation to be legitimate; legitimate to whom; which criteria need to be taken into account to assess the legitimacy of these political subjects; is it possible to conclude that an organisation is legitimate or not, or half legitimate? Answering these questions requires a definition of legitimacy and an explanation of a divergence that distinguishes two types of studies of the concept (Hurrelmann, Schneider, & Steffek, 2007b). Therefore, legitimacy is used both in a normative and an empirical sense (Beetham, 1991).

For the purpose of this research, ‘legitimacy’ refers to the definition of Mark Suchman (1995, p. 574):

Legitimacy is a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions.

This definition was chosen because it is broad-based and incorporates both the evaluative and the cognitive dimensions that implicitly acknowledge the role of the audience in legitimization dynamics (Suchman, 1995, pp. 573-574). The evaluative dimension of legitimacy – legitimacy as an *assumption* – refers to the analysis of legitimacy regarding predefined values (point 1.2.2). The cognitive dimension of legitimacy – legitimacy as a *perception* – refers to the analysis of legitimacy from a subjective perspective (point 1.2.3). These two facets of the concept are useful to get a comprehensive understanding of the internal legitimacy of European interest groups. That is to say that both types of analysis lead to a better understanding of the role and input of national and European interest groups in the political system of the EU.

1.2.2. Studying organisational legitimacy: a norm-guided approach

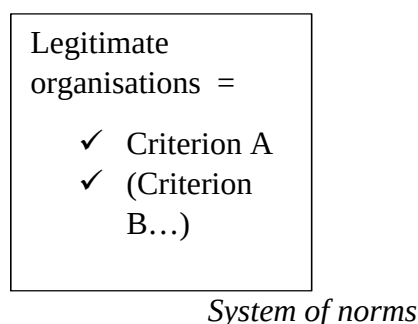
The legitimacy of organisations can be analysed based on a set of theoretical criteria. These criteria are defined and discussed by researchers on normative grounds. The objective is to “*measur[e] real-world phenomena against theory-guided expectations*” (Steffek & Hahn, 2010a, p. 7). The basic assumption of these studies through theoretical-normative lenses is that it is possible to distinguish organisations that hold organisational legitimacy from organisations that lack it. The objective is thus to investigate to what extent organisations comply with criteria that can be defended normatively (see figure 1.1.). This is the evaluative dimension of legitimacy. Legitimacy is here an *assumption*.

The selection of criteria are based on theoretical considerations (system of norms), such as: democratic theories (Abromeit & Stoiber, 2007; Steffek et al., 2010), good governance standards (Kotzian & Steffek, 2012), efficiency considerations ... However, given the different schools of thought and traditions, there is no gold standard of legitimacy that scholars converge upon. The justification of the selection of criteria and their operationalisation are inevitably central in such research.

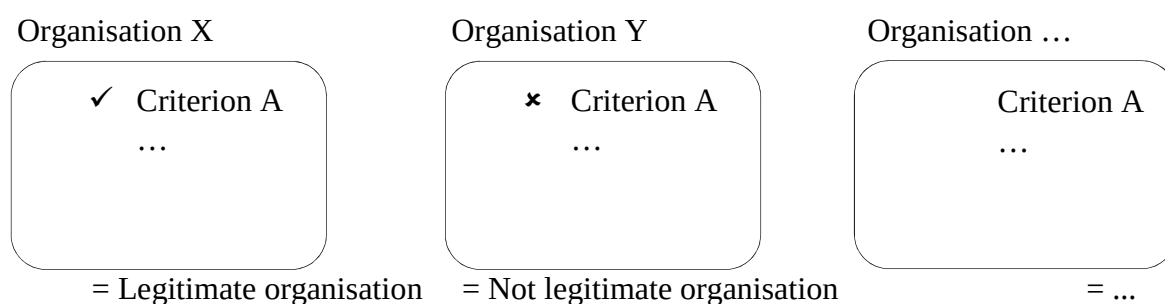
If the baseline of norm-guided approach of organisational legitimacy is theoretical considerations, it does not mean that such research cannot be empirical. Indeed, the criteria that are first theoretically set and discussed (step 1, on figure 1.1.) can be then investigated empirically by measuring if a given organisation fulfils the criteria or pass some predefined critical thresholds (step 2, on figure 1.1.). Moreover, besides the *stricto sensu* evaluative character of such research, social science can also study under which conditions or which variable explains that an organisation is legitimate, as regards to one or more criteria.

Figure 1.1. A norm-guided approach of organisational legitimacy

Step 1: Theoretical discussion



Step 2: Empirical assessment



Source: author's own elaboration

Organisational legitimacy can be addressed as a context-dependent concept. One can consider that legitimacy of one type of organisation cannot be evaluated in the same way for all types of organisations with reference to the same normative criteria. The rationale behind this is that the legitimacy of different types of organisations cannot be assessed with the same norms because these organisations have different missions, tasks, audiences, and structures. That being said, for each type of organisations (and other political objects), the literature – when existing – is divided about the criteria of legitimacy that should be applied (see, section 1.3. for a literature review about the legitimacy of CSOs and interest groups). In order to illustrate the previous explanations, it is useful to provide an example of the literature which addresses the legitimacy of European and international organisations in a norm-guided approach. The box 1.2 below provides such an example.

It is interesting to note that some authors dispute such a ‘technical’ approach of organisational legitimacy. For instance, in the field of development studies, Lister takes exception to NGO scholars arguing that legitimacy rests on some combination of accountability, performance and representativeness. She notes that: “*this very ‘technical’ approach implies that the correct*

organizational structures and procedures will ensure legitimacy. However, it masks important questions such as ‘legitimacy for whom?’ and ‘does some legitimacy matter more than other legitimacy?’ From an institutional theory perspective, legitimacy is threatened when an organization fails to conform to its environments’ expectations of it.” (Lister, 2003, p. 189). She calls for an intuitionist approach of legitimacy: “An analysis of the constructs within an organization’s environments and a consideration of what type of legitimacy is being questioned by which audiences may reveal a more nuanced understanding of some of the paradoxes surrounding [organisations]” (Lister, 2003, p. 189). This type of organisational legitimacy study is developed in the next section and in Chapter 2 (section 2.4).

Box 1.2 The legitimacy of CSOs through normative lenses

The article *Do members make a difference? A study of Transnational Civil Society Organizations* by Peter Kotzian and Jens Steffek (2012) is an illustration of an analysis of organisational legitimacy in a norm-guided approach. The research questions of the article are the following: “*To what extent do member and non-member CSOs differ in their roles and activities? Is it plausible to argue, as it quite often happens, that CSOs with members are more legitimate than others?*”. The authors explain clearly their approach of legitimacy: “*by legitimate we do not mean that, empirically, [CSOs] are more successful in mobilizing adherence and support. We rather imply that organizations with a high degree of legitimacy fulfil certain normative expectations, in this case derived from democratic theory and notions of good governance more broadly*” (Kotzian & Steffek, 2012, p. 57). The four normative criteria of CSOs’ legitimacy applied in this study are the following: participation, transparency, accountability and inclusion. Therefore, the objective of the authors is to identify the properties of – member and non-member CSOs – that have a positive impact on their organizational legitimacy. A comparison of the activities of 60 heterogeneous CSOs lead to the result that the cases sampled “*show low levels of legitimation, typically remaining well below what is possible and what at least some CSOs achieve. Having members is no guarantee that other criteria of legitimacy, such as inclusion or transparency, are achieved. The transparency of most CSOs, according to the criteria we apply, is low. Yet again, some CSOs are outstanding in terms of transparency because they provide detailed financial reports, which are also audited on a regular basis.*” (Kotzian & Steffek, 2012, p. 79). To summarize the findings of this norm-guided analysis of organisational legitimacy, the majority of international and European CSOs cannot be considered as legitimate regarding the norms selected in this study and having a membership base does not correlate positively with compliance to such norms (except transparency).

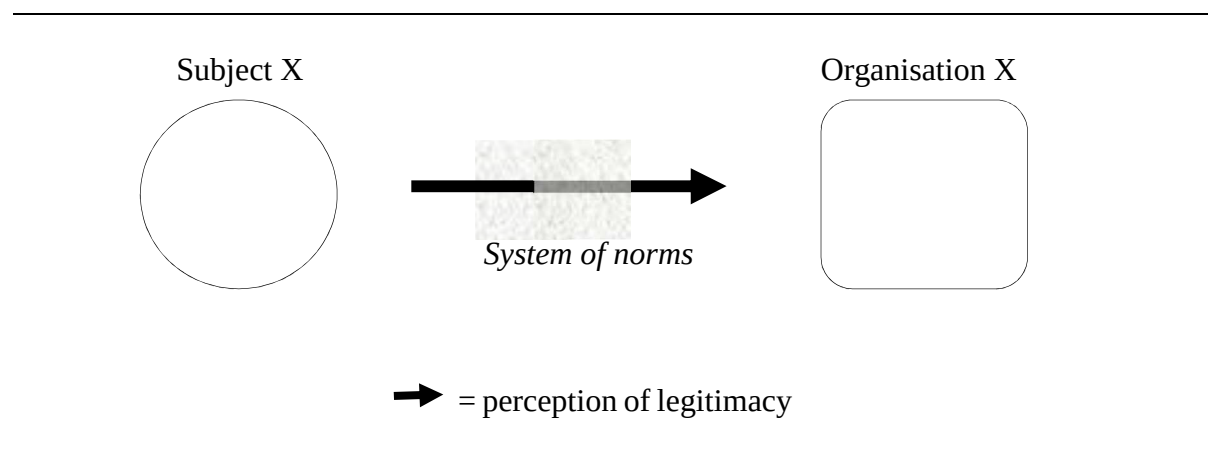
In conclusion, several definitions adapted from Suchman's (1995) are listed hereafter. These definitions will be used as working definitions for the dissertation's empirical analysis dedicated to the study of the internal legitimacy of European interest groups in a theoretical perspective (Chapter 5):

- *Legitimacy* is a generalized assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate as regards to theoretically defined criteria based on a system of norms.
- *Organisational legitimacy* is the assumption that the actions of an organisations are desirable, proper, or appropriate as regards to theoretically defined criteria based on a system of norms.

1.2.3. Studying organisational legitimacy: a subjective approach

The legitimacy of organisations can also be analysed through a subjective approach¹⁶. It designates an approach where the focus is on the considerations of political subjects (citizens, individuals, organisations...) themselves regarding the legitimacy of other political objects (a system, an organisation, or a leader)¹⁷. The results of this approach are based on observations and analysis of the perceptions of subjects, in opposition with the approach based on normative considerations, designed by the researcher.

Figure 1.2. A subjective approach of organisational legitimacy



Source: author's own elaboration

This subjective approach does not assume an *a priori* conception of legitimacy – in the sense of ‘what is or is not legitimate’. This perspective is the legacy of the seminal work of Max

¹⁶ The word ‘empirical’ could also be used here, as some scholars do (Hurrelmann, Schneider, & Steffek, 2007a; Scharpf, 2007). Instead, the word subjective has been preferred, since a norm-guided approach to organisational legitimacy can also be investigated empirically, the words ‘empirical approach’ can be misleading.

¹⁷ The words ‘subject’ and ‘object’ have to be understood in their philosophical meaning. The object is what is apprehended by a subject. The subject is ‘what apprehends’ and the object is ‘what is apprehended’, what is known. What constitutes a thing as ‘object’ is the fact of being apprehended by a ‘subject’.

Weber (1978), the founding father of the empirical approach to legitimacy. Schrader and Denskus note: *“In general, the approval of legitimacy on part of the subjects to political decision-making occurs when these procedures and institutions act upon normative values and rules regarded as steadfast and binding and when the responsible actors behave accordingly”* (Schrader & Denskus, 2010, p. 49). The analysis of legitimacy therefore has to be confronted not to *“the truth of the philosopher, but the belief of the people”* (Schabert, 1982, p. 102, quoted in Clark, 2003, p. 80). It is therefore important to note that any subjects’ perceptions are also related to theoretical considerations, *“since some normative concepts extensively discussed by theorists also inform the judgements of [political actors]”* (Steffek & Hahn, 2010a, p. 7).

In the context of organisation legitimacy analysis, the subjective approach of legitimacy aims to provide an empirical analysis of the actual support and endorsement towards an organisation by the audiences (subject) of this organisation. Therefore, organisational legitimacy can refer to the evaluation by respective audiences of almost all aspects of what organisations are and do, including their ‘representativeness’ or their accountability (see box 1.3, hereafter).

Box 1.3 Legitimacy, representation and accountability. Conceptual connections or hermetic concepts?

As noted by Jens Steffek and Kristina Hahn in their book *Evaluating transnational NGOs: Legitimacy, accountability, representation* (2010b), compared to representation and accountability, legitimacy is the most ambiguous but also the broadest and most encompassing concept. Generally speaking, *accountability* is a relationship between a political subject and an audience, in which the political subject has an obligation to explain and to justify its conduct, the audience can pose questions and pass judgement, and the political subject may face consequences (adapted from Bovens, 2007). *To represent* means to bring into presence something which is actually absent. The concept of representation does not apply *per se* to human beings nor to political subjects (Pitkin, 1967) but, in its political sense, *representation* refers to the interrelationship between one political subject standing for a larger group whose members confer rights and obligations to it (adapted from Steffek & Hahn, 2010a). Max Weber describes political representation as a state of affairs in which “*the action of certain members of a group is ascribed to the rest; or that the rest are supposed to, and do in fact, regard the action as “legitimate” for themselves and binding on them*” (Weber, 1947: quoted in Pitkin, 1967). This description highlights that the concepts are interconnected. The example of parliamentary democracy shows clearly this interconnection: “*government is legitimate when it is accountable to freely chosen representatives of the citizenry. Representation in this context is key to electoral accountability and a cornerstone of democratic legitimacy*” (Steffek & Hahn, 2010a, p. 8). Coming back to the issue of legitimacy of organisations, “*the notion of organisational legitimacy [...] can provide a conceptual umbrella under which accountability and representation may be subsumed. It is quite clear that accountability and representation are necessary elements, or at least important aspects, of organisational legitimacy, and it makes little sense to argue the reverse, that is, that legitimacy is an aspect of either accountability or representation*” (Steffek & Hahn, 2010a, p. 8). Therefore, organisational legitimacy can refer to the evaluation of almost all aspects of what an organisation is and does (Steffek & Hahn, 2010a, p. 9): act as an accountable representative, being an efficient service provider, ...

Coming back to Suchman's definition, the subjective approach concerns the cognitive dimension of legitimacy. Therefore, studying legitimacy means studying *perceptions*. In this sense, organisational legitimacy is a concept that captures the beliefs of actors regarding the conformity of an organisation with certain values and norms (Steffek & Hahn, 2010a, p. 7). A subjective analysis of organisational legitimacy addresses the issue of the appropriation of certain norms and values by the audiences of an organisation (Bitektine, 2011). These audiences assess the legitimacy of the organisation through these norms and values (cognition). This approach aims neither to analyse what organisations are nor what they should be but to understand what makes them exist within relationships with their audiences (Offerlé, 1994, p. 19). It has to be noted that legitimacy is not static. The audiences of an organisation could always argue that an organisation is not – or no more – legitimate. Legitimacy can never be fully 'achieved'. Legitimacy is not a given but is contestable and contested.

The legitimacy of an organisation can be analysed for each relevant audience of this organisation. Each organisation or each type of organisations have multiple audiences (for instance, the audiences of EIGs include European institutions, member-state institutions, other European interest groups, the media, the general public, member organisations, ...). An audience of an organisation is a group which receives or is aware of the messages, objects or actions produced by this organisation. Since there are different audiences, different perceptions have to be analysed to understand how the legitimacy of the organisation is assessed by each audience¹⁸. Each audience – or each actor within this audience – because it faces a particular context, could mobilise different norms, values, and beliefs to consider the legitimacy of a given organisation. The different audiences could have different criteria and these criteria might not always be of the same kind.

In opposition to this approach based on a predetermined set of criteria for which an organisation is whether legitimate or illegitimate, a subjective approach analyses if an organisation is more or less successful in procuring legitimacy (von Haldenwang, 2017). *Legitimation* refers thus to the processes by which legitimacy is procured to political subjects. Every political object engages in such a strategic procurement of legitimacy (Weber, 1978). As developed above, a subjective analysis of legitimacy focuses on '*the perception of legitimacy, not legitimacy*

¹⁸ See for instance, the analysis of Bitektine (2011) which discuss the legitimacy of organisations (mainly from the economic sector) through the notion of "social judgment" of organisations' different stakeholders. Bitektine highlights the relevance of "*understanding which form of judgment is most relevant to a given audience in a given social context*" to assess the legitimacy of an organisation (2011, p. 175).

according to a standard that is posited as independent of the context in which the question arises. Within this usage, it may well be more accurate to speak about ‘legitimation’, which is an open-ended process’ (Saward, 2010, p. 144). Steffek and Hahn (2010a) note that “[l]egitimation is a term that denotes the activity of making social institution appear to be legitimate”.

As noted above, legitimacy has to be observed through the perceptions of appropriate audiences. These perceptions are revealed through symbolic practices (Barker, 2001) and discourses (Steffek, 2003). These discourses procure legitimacy to a given political subject and indicate a system of norms, values and beliefs. Consequently, the concept of *legitimation discourses* will be used in this dissertation to designate the different types of discourses used by audiences to legitimate political subjects¹⁹.

In conclusion, several definitions adapted from the one of Suchman (1995) are listed hereafter. These definitions will be used as working definitions for the parts of this dissertation dedicated to a study of the internal legitimacy of European interest groups in a subjective approach (Chapter 4):

- *Legitimacy* is a perception that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms.
- *Organisational legitimacy* is a perception by the audiences of an organisation that the actions of this organisation are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms.
- An *audience* of an organisation is a group which receives or is aware of the messages or actions produced by this organisation
- *Legitimation discourse* is a discourse that procures legitimacy to a given political subject and indicated a cognitive system of norms.

1.3. The internal legitimacy of EIGs: what we know and what we do not know

The following part is dedicated to a review of academic works addressing the issue of interest groups’ internal legitimacy. The aim of this literature review is to identify potential gaps in existing research on this topic. Internal legitimacy of groups is often indirectly addressed by

¹⁹ Steffek and Hahn (2010a, p. 7) defines ‘Legitimation’: “*term that denotes the activity of making a social institution appear to be legitimate. Legitimation often takes place through discourses (Steffek, 2003), but also through symbolic practices (Barker, 2001)*”.

scholars. Many studies focus on the role or the potential role of interest groups in ‘democratising’ or ‘legitimising’ the EU, and only indirectly address the internal dynamic of European or national groups²⁰. Many of these works are referenced in the section 1.1 of this Chapter. Few studies aim precisely to study the internal legitimacy or more broadly the internal functioning of European interest groups. The review (1.3.1) is the result of a synthesis effort and is organised around two sets of research outcomes: on the one hand, conclusions assessing negatively the democratic legitimacy of European interest groups and, on the other hand, conclusions with an optimistic perspective on the legitimacy of groups. Ultimately, a discussion about previous research (1.3.2.) identifies academic gaps in studies of internal legitimacy of European interest groups.

1.3.1. What we know: review of previous studies

1.3.1.1. *European interest groups as ‘elitist’, ‘professionalized’ and being ‘the voice of some members’*

The first broadly cited work that provides interesting insights about the legitimacy of European “NGOs”²¹ is the 2001 article of Warleigh. The author addresses the role of NGOs as organisations that could socialise their membership to the EU. Behind the discussion of NGOs as agents of political socialisation for their individual members, the article provides interesting conclusions about the internal democracy of national and European NGOs: *“NGOs will be unable to act as agents of civil society Europeanization unless they are internally democratic and both willing and able to act as instruments of political socialization, with particular reference to EU decision-making and policy. I found that NGOs are as yet simply not ready to play this role [...]. [T]heir internal governance is far too elitist to allow supporters a role in shaping policies, campaigns and strategies, even at one remove. Moreover, and more disconcertingly, it appears clear that most NGO supporters do not actually want to undertake such a role”* (Warleigh, 2001, p. 635). Warleigh reaffirms his results in a monograph about democracy in the EU: *“necessary structures to allow NGOs an EU socialisation function, such as the existence of methods of internal decision-making which allow supporter input into NGO EU strategy, are in general conspicuous by their absence. So too are mechanisms by which*

²⁰ Often, scholars study a particular type of interest groups, namely CSOs (sometimes also labelled as NGOs). But ‘civil society organisations’ are defined differently by each author. The review (as well as the quotations) will stick to the original terms used by the authors.

²¹ The cases studied by Warleigh are ‘from several Member States’ but mainly British and European organisations active on consumer policy, environment, animal welfare, civil liberties, social policy or development policy.

NGO supporters or members can hold these organisations to account, or make an input into their decision-making” (Warleigh, 2003, p. 118).

This conclusion is shared by Hüller & Kohler-Koch when they assess the democratic value of civil society engagement in the European Union: *“Involving civil society does not live up to the promises of rendering the EU more democratic. The instruments have enlarged participation in terms of providing access, but hardly in terms of providing citizens with influence on outcome. Information and transparency have been improved, but do not enhance a public discourse. ‘Participatory engineering’ cannot overcome the structural impediments that keep a trans-national public sphere weak and citizens apathetic” (Hüller & Kohler-Koch, 2008, p. 173).*

In the same vein, other scholars study the internal representation of European interest groups vis-à-vis their direct members, the national groups. In her book *Their members' voice: Civil society organisations in the European Union*, Rodekamp (2013) assesses the representativeness and the internal accountability of European umbrella association of CSOs regarding different criteria. In terms of representation, she finds that within European umbrella associations, member organisations from large countries dominate over those from small, remote, and new member states. She also notes that accountability channels in CSOs lack formalisation as some members participate very little, and member organisations receive too much and too sophisticated information, too late from their Brussels offices. Rodekamp (2013, p. 262) concludes: *“From a democratic theory perspective, this means that interest aggregation is imperfect, which must be assessed negatively. EU-level CSOs are the voice of some of their members more than others and EU-level officers are also part of the choir”*. While the author acknowledges some democratic shortcomings of European umbrellas, she invites readers to have a more nuanced interpretation of these results. While the participation of all member organisations *‘would be normatively desired and empirically necessary for CSOs to contribute to the input legitimacy of policy making’* (p. 263), Rodekamp notes that this view is not shared by the member organisations (see below, in next point).

Johansson and Lee (2014) share the same observation of a democratic–legitimacy deficit for European groups. They identify *“representational gaps between the European branches of EU-based CSOs and their national members and/or wider constituencies. Although EU-based CSOs claim to represent a wide number of organisations and extensive groups of individuals, a limited number of members might in practise exercise full participatory rights in internal authorisation and accountability processes. These gaps must also be assessed in relation to*

extensive internal representational barriers (e.g. (i) lack of time for consultation, (ii) language barriers and (iii) lack of expertise and interests from the members), which contribute to a greater unresponsiveness by national and local members and hence a further detachment between the European branch and their national and local constituencies” (p. 421). Despite the implementation of descriptive forms of representation (control of leaders’ profiles) and internal participatory venues (communications with local level members), these EU-based CSOs “suffer from a similar ‘democratic deficit’ as the EU in general” (p. 421)²².

One of the identified source of this democratic–legitimacy deficit for European groups is their professionalisation. For instance, Saurugger (2006, *The professionalisation of interest representation: a legitimacy problem for civil society in the EU?*) notes that professionalisation of interest representation at the European level is increasing. Interest groups appeal more and more often to professionals lobbyists (from public relations or law firms, for instance) and they have more and more ‘in-house lobbyists’ (trained in law or communication) than staff coming from the grassroots level. Saurugger asks: *“If all this ‘professionalisation of interest representation’ is to be achieved, aren’t we confronted with a ‘legitimacy dilemma’ of the organised civil society? In order to make the European Union more democratic in linking civil society to the decision-making processes, the same civil society must show a number of structural characteristics that make it suitable to participate in this process: institutionalised structures, capacity to produce expertise, social and financial resources. This increased efficiency may however lead to a decreased democratic legitimacy and accountability. The absence of regulation entails the imbalance noticed between the actors possessing financial and social resources, as well as expertise to represent their interests and those who do not correspond to these requirements”* (Saurugger, 2006, p. 273). She notes in another article: *“Thus, grass-roots civil society participation accounting for the more democratic nature of decision-making processes can be problematic. Organized civil society — organized as groups or social movements — has a tendency to become increasingly professionalized to represent the interests of their constituency in an efficient way”* (Saurugger, 2007, p. 398)²³.

²² If the authors note that “we must critically examine EU-based CSOs’ assertions of representing thousands of CSOs, or millions of citizens across Europe, or claiming to be the authentic voice of marginal groups at local and grassroots levels”, they add that these EU-based CSOs play a role in “EU politics because they constitute one of the channels by which citizens can mobilise otherwise unrepresented perspectives in the public debate and amplify the voice of marginalised groups vis-a-vis decision makers in Brussels” (Johansson & Lee, 2014, p. 422). For a case study on the same topic, see: Johansson (2012).

²³ NB A few years after this chapter, Saurugger and Klüver have published another article on the professionalisation of interest groups. It is interesting to note the variables that could explain this professionalisation: *“It therefore does not matter whether interest groups represent private, specialized interests*

All these studies show that European interest groups perform badly regarding democratic standards. European umbrella are elitist in the sense that they are disconnected from their members. The increasing professionalisation of these organisations makes them less accountable towards their membership.

1.3.1.2. *European interest groups as ‘legitimate organisations’*

Few academic works provide (somehow) positive conclusions about the legitimacy of European interest groups. One of these works is the monography of Wiercx (2011) that focuses on the following research question: “*Given the multi-level context they work in, how can European Social Movement Organisations [ESMOs] organise and act on the European level without losing legitimacy vis-à-vis their members?*” (p. 32). Wiercx defines legitimacy as “*a generalized degree of trust of the members towards the organisation, in which trust could be the result of input and output mechanisms*” (p. 43). Input mechanisms are based on direct or indirect involvement of members in the decision-making process of the organisation (participation, representation, transparency and accountability). Output mechanism are based on the satisfaction with policy outcomes (effectiveness and problem solving capacity)²⁴.

The analysis is based on two case studies: the relations between European and Belgian organisations in the campaigns of (1) the services directive and (2) REACH, the European directive on Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals. The author found that the trust in ESMOs is very large amongst their members following which “*it can be concluded that ESMOs are legitimate organisations*” (p. 203). While the general conclusion states that “*the balance between input and output mechanisms is and must be constantly in motion for a truly legitimate ESMO*” (p. 205), the results of the analysis remain unclear as the author states that participation and transparency are not always guaranteed, representation is evaluated badly and accountability mechanisms are sometimes absent (Wiercx, 2011, p. 134 and p. 183). There is thus no adequacy between normative expectations discussed by the author and the actual ‘trust’ of the members.

such as the interests of the European automobile industry, or whether interest groups lobby for a general belief or cause such as environmental protection or human rights. Cause groups and sectional groups are constrained by the same institutional environment demanding highly professionalized interest representation to guarantee lobbying success. Cause groups and sectional groups therefore exhibit similar professionalization patterns” (Klüver & Saurugger, 2013, pp. 17-18).

²⁴ These six standards are theoretically set. For instance, in an earlier paper, the author added deliberation and agenda-setting capacity to her list (see, Wiercx, 2009).

Whereas the results of Rodekamp (2013, already mentioned above) lead to the observation that, from a democratic theory perspective, European CSOs must be assessed negatively (e.g. regarding interests aggregation), her conclusions are more nuanced. She notes that, overall, there is no disconnection between EU-level CSOs' staff workers and their member organisations: "[EU-level o]fficers *feel accountable to their member organisations and consult with them regularly*" (p. 258). Moreover, in line with the conclusions of Wiercx (2011), the large majority of these member organisations "*are satisfied with their representation at the EU level*" (p. 258) even those which can only participate to a limited extent in the internal structure of the European groups because of the scarcity of their resources.

In a more recent monography (*Europeanised or European? Representation by Civil Society Organisations in EU Policy Making*, 2016), Kröger (2016) evaluates the democratic character of governance structures of British, German and European CSOs active in agriculture, environment and anti-poverty topics. The democratic character of CSOs is related to their capacity to act as 'transmission belts' of citizens in EU policy making that '*represent a social constituency, rather than being self-authorized claim-makers*' (Kröger, 2016, p. 188). The author argues that '*in order for their contribution to EU policy making to be legitimate, CSOs need a reliable link to their social constituency. Such a reliable link not only presupposes the existence of governance structures which allow members (and sometimes supporters) to be involved. It also implies the actual involvement, of the constituencies, in the development of policy positions as well as a good degree of acceptance of those positions and satisfaction with the representation of the higher levels of governance*' (Kröger, 2016, pp. 188-189). By the yardstick of these criteria, the contribution of agricultural CSOs is highly legitimate, while environmental and anti-poverty groups perform worse (see also: Kröger, 2013). Democratic structures are in place but are not (often) used to the fullest when it comes to EU issues.

In her conclusions, Kröger states that CSOs fail on some points in their potential contribution to EU democracy. They are unable to represent their social constituencies and thus cannot participate in the reducing of the EU's 'social deficit'. However, CSOs succeed in other points such as supporting political competition, contributing to greater publicity and publicly controlling elected representatives. These conclusions are not entirely positive (particularly when it comes to democratic standards) but acknowledge some positive input from CSOs. This is in line with the conclusions of another study of interest groups (at the national level, in the UK). While the authors note that the role of groups in a democracy is probably to increase the level of contestation over policy, rather than constitute venues for participation, their

conclusions are rather positive: *“In summary, the role of modern groups may well fall very short of the aspirations of the participatory optimists. [...] Groups provide limited participation but on a large-scale; activate support by individuals for collective ends [...]; provide a policy expertise that is a more realistic challenge to government than offered by Oppositions or the unorganized public, these are all merits. For all but the utopians and participatory evangelists”* (G. Jordan & Maloney, 2007, pp. 191-192).

1.3.2. What we do not know: academic gaps

Several observations can be deducted from the literature review about the legitimacy of European interest groups: (1) a subjective analysis of EIGs legitimacy is missing, as the main focus of previous research is the democratic legitimacy of European interest groups (and the majority of results evaluates negatively their internal democracy), (2) the perspective of national organisations (members of EIGs) is often neglected, (3) interest groups studied are mainly ‘civil society organisations’, with business interest groups largely neglected. This section describes how the current dissertation addresses these shortcomings.

Interest groups, and *a fortiori* European interest groups, perform badly against democratic standards: the aggregation of members’ interests is imperfect (Rodekamp, 2013), the participation arenas (when existing) are not used (Kröger, 2016), the accountability channels do not function (Johansson & Lee, 2014)... European groups are also depicted as elitist, in the sense that they are disconnected from their members (Warleigh, 2001). Moreover, the professionalisation of these organisations makes them less accountable towards their membership (Saurugger, 2006). At the same time, this situation does not seem to affect the ‘trust’ of member organisations towards their EU-level representative organisation (Wiercx, 2011). Therefore, there is no adequacy between normative expectations (related to democratic legitimacy) discussed by scholars and the actual confidence of member organisations. This observation means that the legitimacy of European interest groups is assessed differently by scholars than by the actors that are actually concerned by the internal structure of European groups, namely the national groups. To put it differently, national interest groups are not unconditionally concerned by the democratic standards investigated so far by scholars.

In the eyes of their member organisation, the legitimacy of European interest groups seems rooted in other (or at least partially different) systems of norms than the ‘democratic–legitimacy model’. Therefore, crucial questions come up: what are the actual considerations of member organisations? Do member organisations perceive the ‘undemocratic’ character of European

interest groups? Or how do they perceive this issue? How do the member organisations perceive the legitimacy of their European interest groups? These interrogations are addressed by the first empirical analysis of this dissertation (Chapter 4) which studies internal legitimacy of European interest groups in a subjective approach. This subjective approach aims to unravel the perceptions of national groups when it comes to the legitimacy of their representatives at the European level. The necessity of such a research is supported for instance by Beate Kohler-Koch who notes that studies on interest groups have to “*point out not just the mechanisms that translate the interests of a multitude of actors into the positions of interest groups and efficient lobbying strategies, but also the mechanisms of social validation*” (Lowery et al., 2015, p. 1221). She adds: “*We should know more about how relevant these issues are and whether or not they can help us to evaluate the legitimacy of claims of representation*”.

A second gap identified from the literature review is that previous research on the internal legitimacy of European interest groups are *norm-guided*. Moreover, these previous works only focus on *democratic* legitimacy. Existing results concern democratic legitimacy of European groups in terms of representation, participation of their members and accountability. Scholars generate norms (transparency, geographic distribution of membership, descriptive similarities ...) from theoretical discussions about democracy and assess the adequacy of European organisations through these democratic norms. If such ‘democratic’ studies are crucial to understand the involvement of interest groups in European governance, other norms could also be studied in order to carry out a more comprehensive analysis of European groups’ legitimacy (see box 1.4). The second empirical analysis of the dissertation (Chapter 5) addresses the internal legitimacy of European interest groups in a norm-guided approach, but focused this time on other standards than the democratic ones. The focus is on the perceived congruence of national groups about their policy positions and the ones of their European umbrella. Behind the quality of the process, addressed by studies of democratic legitimacy of European groups, this dissertation studies the perception of the outcomes, addressing thus the ‘efficiency’ legitimacy of European groups, in the perspective of their memberships.

Box 1.4 Interest groups and legitimacy: a topical academic issue

On the occasion of the ECPR General Conference 2018 (University of Hamburg), Beate Kohler-Koch (Universität Mannheim) proposed a panel entitled *Interest Groups and Legitimacy: Assessing the Contribution of Different Forms of Interest Aggregation to Democratic Governance*. The panel “invites papers that deepen our knowledge concerning the different ways and means which interest groups use to generate legitimacy”. The proposition is based on the observation that, usually, intra-organisational democracy is considered to be key for interest groups in order to generate legitimacy (to what extent are interest groups accountable and participatory organisations?): “*but it is not the only way [...], the appropriation of a hegemonial rhetoric or the empowerment by external actors can bolster the legitimacy of a group*”. Beate Kohler-Koch notes the innovative character of the topic: “*the call is partly based on a new and rather provocative assertion*”. This panel’s proposition is based on the assumption that the legitimacy of interest groups does not just concern the relationship with members in terms of intra-organisational democracy (accountability and representation). If the current dissertation still explores the point of view of the member organisations (of European interest groups), the results show that these member organisations also have other preoccupations than intra-organisational democracy when it comes to assessing the legitimacy of their umbrella groups.

More generally, this research aims to fill two other gaps of previous research. First, the objective of this research is to overcome the critical tone of previous studies on the involvement of interest groups in the EU governance structure by conducting an empirical and comparative research on the role and the legitimacy of these groups. Few scholars have analysed the involvement of interest groups in such an approach so far. Some years ago, Saurugger already called for a research that *“should attempt to elaborate comparative research questions as scholars do in the field of political sociology. This might allow for opening up the black box of interest groups much more than has been done thus far in contemporary research.”* (p. 1286).

Thirdly, previous research on ‘European civil society organisations’ are based on narrow definitions of civil society, which often only include NGOs and cause groups. This dissertation includes all types of interest groups in its analysis, from cause groups to business and professional associations. This choice is the result of the observation that the Commission developed an ‘all-including narrative’ where civil society includes business interest groups as well as ‘NGOs’.

Based on the identification of academic gaps from the literature review, this dissertation participates in the building of a cumulative knowledge of interest groups politics in the EU in several ways:

- (1) The first empirical analysis of the research uses a subjective approach of the internal legitimacy of EIGs aimed at analysing the perceptions of national groups.
- (2) The second empirical analysis studies the ‘efficiency’ legitimacy of European groups with a focus on the perception of congruence between national and European groups’ policy positions.
- (3) The case selection is based on a broad definition of ‘civil society organisations’, in order to fit with the discourses and practices of EU institutions.
- (4) The overall ambition of the research is to overcome the critical tone of previous studies by conducting an empirical and comparative research.

1.4. Conclusion: what this research is and is not about

This chapter demonstrates the pertinence of a research on the internal legitimacy of European interest groups in terms of societal issues (point 1.1) and academic purpose (point 1.3). Considering all the elements developed above, this intermediary conclusion sets the broad lines of the research by explicitly stating what the dissertation does and does not study.

This dissertation does NOT study the *democratic* legitimacy of European interest groups nor the legitimacy of European interest groups *in the perspective of EU institutions*. In the final analysis, no overall and comprehensive definition of what is, ultimately, a legitimate European interest group will be provided. Such a definition would be *de facto* a normative definition. The purpose of this dissertation is not to *define what interest groups should be*. However, by analysing the perceptions of national groups (and what these groups think European interest groups are or should be), this dissertation has the ambition to feed the debate about the quality and performance of the EU's interest representation system. Finally, this research does not explain how *individual* supporters or members (of NIGs) perceive the legitimacy of the EIGs which represent them indirectly in Brussels. Instead, this dissertation studies interest groups politics as a matter of relations between organisations (and not as a matter of relations between individuals).

In contrast, this dissertation DOES explain how national interest groups perceive the legitimacy of the European interest groups which represent them in Brussels (first empirical analysis). Additionally, this research aims to identify under which conditions national interest groups perceive their policy positions as congruent with the positions of their European interest groups (second empirical analysis). The research design includes all types of interest groups (CSOs and business groups). Altogether, the ambition of this research is to illuminate the question of what European interest groups' positions represent and what it means for national groups. The theoretical framework is outlined in the following chapter (Chapter 2).

Ultimately, the overall issue addressed by this dissertation is the role of European and national interest groups in the EU policy making process. For this purpose, the research focuses on the legitimacy of EIGs, which remain the central actors of the EU representation system, vis-à-vis their members. Insights from these analyses will feed the normative debate about the relation between the EU and civil society and highlight elements that hinder or participate to the emergence of an effective European civil society, beyond Brussels.

2

Theoretical framework: a sociological institutionalist approach of the internal legitimacy of European interest groups

While Chapter 1 framed the dissertation the puzzle about relationships between NIGs and EIGs, Chapter 2 sets up the theoretical framework for both empirical analyses of the dissertation: the analysis based on a subjective approach of legitimacy which aims to identify how NIGs perceive the legitimacy of their EIGs and, the norm-guided analysis aims to explain perceived congruence between NIGs' and EIGs' policy positions (see the general introduction, point 0.1, for both research questions). Beforehand, several clarifications are necessary. Therefore, the first section (2.1) of this chapter provides a definition of interest groups, explanations about the structure of European interest groups and a clarification of the notion of *internal* legitimacy. The second section (2.2) outlines the sociological institutionalist theory in which this research is embedded. This section also exposes why another theoretical approach, the principal-agent model, is not mobilised in this dissertation. The third section (2.3) is dedicated to theoretical considerations related to the first empirical analysis and introduces the concept of *polity norm*. The fourth section (2.4) explains and justifies the choice of analysing *perceived congruence* as a criteria to assess the internal legitimacy of EIGs (second empirical analysis).

2.1. Setting the scene: national and European interest groups

2.1.1. Definition of interest groups

Defining 'interest groups' and 'interest groups politics' is a prerequisite to analyse the internal structure of European interest groups. Beyers, Eising, and Maloney (2008) define *interest group politics* as "*the organisation, aggregation, articulation, and intermediation of societal interests that seek to shape public policies*". Interest group studies are characterised by a plethora of terms describing or trying to frame a population of actors with blurred boundaries (Wonka,

Baumgartner, Mahoney, & Berkhout, 2010). This dissertation sticks to the definition of Beyers et al. (2008) which specifies that interest groups share three main features:

- a) Organisation: interest groups are organised actors and are not informal movements or conjectural public opinion movements.
- b) Political interests: the aim of interest groups is to influence policy outcome within one or more political system·s. Some organisations have other missions (e.g. provide services to their members, regulate activities...) but the advocacy of political interest must be part of their main activities in order to be considered as interest groups.
- c) Informality: interest groups do not seek public office and do not compete in elections. Even if their actions are informal, it does not mean that political representation could not be institutionalised.

Each organisation, national or European, analysed in this research shares these features and is thus considered as an interest group²⁵. This definition of interest groups is a behavioural one, defining interest groups “*based on their observable, policy-related activities*” (Baroni, Carroll, William Chalmers, Marquez, & Rasmussen, 2014, p. 142). This type of definition opposes scholars who “*define interest groups more narrowly based on their organizational characteristics and reserve the interest group term for membership associations*” (Baroni et al., 2014, p. 142). The latter kind of definition is not relevant for the purpose of this dissertation since the research design is based on a great variation of cases. An ‘organisational definition’ would reduce considerably the scope of organisations that could be included in the sample.

Eising (2014) identifies several interest groups’ functions: providing information to their members (and beyond, for instance, to the general public), constituting a platform for political participation, aggregating members’ interests, defining common positions, advocating these positions towards public institutions and coordinating members’ strategies. Following G. Jordan and Maloney (2007, p. 29), some other characteristics can be added in order to describe interest groups (and particularly EIGs). EIGs analysed in this research shares these additional features (but not necessarily all NIGs). Interest groups are organised only for a specific — but maybe broad — collective political end and their goal is attainable (for instance, banning or supporting hunting, develop a particular industrial sector or protect biodiversity). EIGs are non-

²⁵ NB David Truman, in his seminal book *The Governmental Process: Public Interests and Public Opinion* (1951, p. 33), defines interest group as “*any group that, on the basis of one or more shared attitudes, makes certain claims upon other groups in society for the establishment, maintenance, or enhancement of forms of behavior that are implied by the shared attitudes*”. The organisations analysed in this research also correspond to this definition, but the definition of Beyers et al. (2008) provides a more accurate description of contemporary interest groups.

governmental body and their membership has some control over the leadership of the organisation in connection with its goals and means. Interest groups are organised to give expression to shared attitudes or pursue the shared interests (promotional or sectional) of a given constituency (the total pool of potential members).

2.1.2. Membership types and nature of interests

Interest groups can be categorised as regards to the type of their membership as well as the nature of the interests they advocate. Both of these variables are linked.

First, the nature of the interest that groups advocate can be dichotomised between diffuse and concentrated interests. Several scholars use this classification to study interest groups politics (Dür & De Bièvre, 2007b; Pollack, 1997). This distinction takes its roots in the field of collective action analysis (Olson, 1965). Olson argues that large groups — representing diffuse interest — face difficulty to organise themselves because of the free-rider problem: “*large or latent groups have no tendency voluntarily to act to further their common interests*” (1965, p. 165). Large groups aiming at advocating widely shared interests will face high costs to organise themselves for relatively low benefits per member. The idea of diffuse interests is linked to the concept of public good, as the pools of beneficiaries (potential membership) of such interests have blurred boundaries. Pollack provides a definition of diffuse interest. They are “*collective interests held by large numbers of individuals such as environmental protection, consumer protection, equal opportunities between men and women, and civil liberties*” (Pollack, 1997, p. 573). At the opposite, small groups — representing concentrated interests — could organise themselves for low costs and get higher benefits per member. Concentrated interests are thus interests held by a small (or determined) number of actors (such as companies of a given industrial sector, for instance).

Klüver and Saurugger (2013) propose a typology opposing sectional groups to cause groups²⁶. According to these authors, this typology is the most general to distinguish different types of interest groups (in comparison to other classifications such as “NGOs vs business interests”, “private vs public interest groups”, “profit vs non-profit groups”, “special interest groups vs CSOs”). This “sectional vs cause groups” typology classifies different groups according to both their membership structure and the nature of the interest they represent. On the one hand,

²⁶ This typology is used by the author in an article about the professionalization of interest groups. The authors note that this typology was originally drawn in the 50s by Stewart (1958). The typology has been used by one of the author in several other publications (Klüver, 2012; Klüver, Mahoney, & Opper, 2015).

sectional groups represent special interests that create concentrated costs and benefits for their supporters (e.g. farmers, small and medium enterprises, industrial corporations ...): “*Their task is to look after the specific interest of this particular section of society and their membership is usually limited to that section*” (Klüver & Saurugger, 2013, p. 4). On the other hand, cause groups represent some ideas, belief or principle (diffuse interests, see the definition of Pollack above). The membership of cause groups is not restricted: “*Anyone in favour of the principle can become a member of this group. Cause groups represent diffuse interests that only imply diffuse costs and benefits for their supporters*” (Klüver & Saurugger, 2013, p. 5). In this dissertation, cause NIGs can also have no ‘formal’ members (and only be ‘followed’ by supporters, for instance). The distinction between sectional groups and cause groups is used to classify and analyse the different groups under scrutiny in this dissertation (more details in Chapter 3, section 3.5).

2.1.3. Peculiarities of *European* interest groups

All the characteristics described above also correspond to European interest groups. The intrinsic purpose of European interest groups is to represent the interests of their membership at the European level. Their actions may go beyond the EU level (actions at the international or national level) if their ‘European purpose’ requires such ‘extra-EU’ activities (and if their resources allow them to do so). EIGs active at the EU-level often have an office or their headquarter in Brussels. Usually, EIGs are established as AISBL under Belgian law (*association internationale sans but lucratif* or *internationale vereniging zonder winstoogmerk*).²⁷

European interest groups are *representing* their members towards EU institutions, the general public, the media or towards other interest groups present in Brussels or in the Member-States. The memberships of EIGs vary highly from one group to another. Some EIGs are gathering together only other EIGs (European umbrella of European umbrellas), others gather only national interest groups from EU member states²⁸. Some include national public institutions or

²⁷ Which means ‘international association without lucrative purpose’, the Belgian legal term for ‘not for profit organisation’. This type of associations is organised by the Belgian law of the 2nd of May 2002, modifying the original text of the 27th of June 1921 (“Loi sur les associations sans but lucratif, les associations internationales sans but lucratif et les fondations”, published in the “Moniteur Belge”, the Belgian Official Journal, the 11th of December 2002).

²⁸ Some EIGs are gathering NIG from countries outside of the European Union. Indeed, many EIGs count amongst their members, organisations from candidate countries (Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYRoM), Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey) or neighbourhood countries and European Free Trade Association members (Iceland, Norway, Switzerland...).

companies in their membership. Some EIGs are also gathering together different types of members. For instance, a sectional European interest groups can have a membership composed of national interest groups representing an industrial sector from different member states as well as companies active in this sector (directly adhering to the EIG). More rarely, some EIGs have also individuals amongst their membership.

For the purpose of this research, are excluded from the analysis: companies, public institutions, local or regional interest groups and individuals (more details are provided in Chapter 3, in the section 3.3). The research focuses only on the relation between national groups and European ones²⁹. As explained, some of the cases have a mixed membership (for instance, NIGs and companies). EIGs are defined as organisations organised at the EU-level, which count NIGs amongst their membership. Following the definition presented above, NIGs are defined as national organisations (organised actors and not informal movement or conjectural public opinion movement) aim at influence policy outcome (within one or more political systems) without seeking public office or compete in elections.

2.1.4. Audiences of European interest groups

As defined in Chapter 1 (section 1.2), the *audiences* of an organisation are entities (group of individuals, organisations, institutions) which receive or are aware of the message or action produced by this organisation. European interest groups have more than one relevant audience. These audiences are multiple (Lits & Koutroubas, 2011): European institutions, member-state institutions, other European interest groups, the media, the general public, their memberships and their functional constituencies. The memberships of EIGs overlap (or not) with their functional constituencies. The membership is composed of all the official members of an EIG. The functional constituency is composed of all potential members or by all entities that a group claim to represent (see box 2.1 for an illustration).

The membership is a particular audience because it takes part (or has the right to take part) to the EIGs' internal decision-making process. As national interest groups are part of the internal structure of EIGs, they are — at least officially — at the origin of the EIGs' messages. At the same time, they are an audience of these messages. This dissertation analyses only the relation between EIGs and (a part of) their direct memberships, the NIGs.

²⁹ This dissertation studies interest groups politics as a matter of relations between organisations. For an overview of the potential micro-level analysis of EU interest groups politics, as a matter of relations between individuals, see: Lits and Koutroubas (2011), Defacqz and Koutroubas (2016).

Box 2.1. Protecting birds: the distinction between membership and functional constituency

Consider for instance a European organisation for the protection of birds. The membership of this EIG — established as a not for profit organisation under Belgian law — is composed of all NIGs for the protection of birds officially members of this network. Indirectly, local associations member of NIGs and individual members (official subscribers at the grassroots-level) can also be considered as being part of the (indirect) membership. But the functional constituency of this EIG is broader than this (indirect) formal membership, and includes for instance: NIGs' financial supporters or all birdwatchers even if they are not a member or supporter of any structure. Following a more abstract consideration, birds and the biodiversity can also be included in the functional constituency of this EIG.

While it is relatively easy to identify the memberships of interest groups (even if this operation also constitutes a challenge in many cases), the boundaries of functional constituencies are much more complex to identify.

2.1.5. *Internal* legitimacy of European interest groups

For the purpose of this research, *internal* legitimacy of EIGs refers to the legitimacy of EIGs in their relations with NIGs (as direct members of EIGs). The term *internal* aims to differentiate the assessment of EIGs' legitimacy by their members – NIGs being 'internal components' of EIGs – from the assessment of EIGs' legitimacy that might be done by other actors as EU institutions or the general public, for instance. Both approaches used in this dissertation (subjective and norm-guided) can be used to address the issue of *internal* legitimacy of EIGs. In a bottom-up perspective, this research focuses on NIGs' perceptions but concerns more generally the interactions between national and European actors.

Legitimacy is a matter of relations: "*legitimacy can only be granted and revoked within the relation of different actors: it is produced and transformed in a specific situation and context*" (Schrader & Denskus, 2010, pp. 46-47). *Internal* legitimacy is thus a matter of relationship. Legitimacy is therefore analysed with regard to dyadic relations between each member organisation (NIG) and its EIG. The legitimacy of EIG in the perspective of European institutions or the general public for instance, *does not* concern the *internal* legitimacy of EIG.

2.2. A sociological institutionalist analysis of EIGs legitimacy *EIGs legitimacy in NIGs' eyes*

This section first presents the foundations of sociological institutionalism and the application of a sociological approach to the study of NIGs and EIGs (point 2.2.1). This point also presents briefly an alternative theoretical approach that could have been used for this research (the principal-agent model) and why it was not. Then, point 2.2.2 explains how to demonstrate the influence of cognitive frames on actors, an issue at the heart of sociological analysis. The third point (2.2.3) is dedicated to the question of legitimacy (of interest groups) in this overall sociological institutionalist framework.

2.2.1. Sociological approaches of EU politics and sociological institutionalism

2.2.1.1. *Sociological institutionalism*

This dissertation uses sociological approaches in EU studies which are rooted in sociological institutionalist theory explaining how institutional structures, rules, norms, and cultures constrain the preferences of individuals and organisations. Originally, sociological approaches

of EU politics refers both to the focus on typically ‘sociological objects’ of study such as social networks, social movements and political fields, and to original research designs that allow scholars to grasp the social effects of the EU on different national and international actors (Favell & Guiraudon, 2009). Even if sociological approaches of EU politics have emerged in the last decade as an important school in EU studies, the works using them are rather heterogeneous and could be considered to some extent as contradictory (Sanchez Salgado & Demidov, 2018; Saurugger, 2009). Before addressing the application of sociological approach to the study of NIGs and EIGs (point 2.2.1.2), some preliminary clarifications on sociological institutionalism are needed to steer this section.

Sociological institutionalism is rooted in sociology, cultural studies and organisational theory. This theory does not take for granted general laws with predictive power as would do a rationalist approach (Marsh & Stoker, 2002, p. 6). Preferences and identities of actors are considered as a given by the rationalist approach (see point 2.2.1.3), while the sociological institutionalist approach is assessing which and how institutions can affect the underlying preferences or identities of actors (Hall & Taylor, 1996). The ideational factors as ideas, norms and cognitive schemes influence the actions of actors which are not only strategic and goal-oriented. Sociological institutionalism aims at elucidating “*dimensions to the relationship between institutions and action that may not be highly instrumental or well modelled by rational choice theories*” (Hall & Taylor, 1996). This relationship between institutions (cognitive schemes) and strategies of actors is precisely the core of a subjective approach of legitimacy, which explores how institutional environment determines the perception of member organisations regarding the legitimacy of their EIGs.

The institutional environments in which actors take decisions are crucial to understand what explains these decisions and their perceptions. Institutions are defined as formal rules, procedures and norms, but also as symbol systems, cognitive scripts, and moral templates that provide the ‘frames of meaning’ guiding human action (Hall & Taylor, 1996). These institutions are integrated by actors through cognition. For instance, strategies and perception of NIGs are not driven by exogenous preferences and expectations in neutral arenas. NIGs evolves within an environment which is characterised by institutional constraints. According to sociological institutionalism, environments are “*socially constructed normative worlds*” (Lister, 2003). The process of institutions determining preferences of actors is endogenous (March & Olsen, 1984). Institutions evolve because of cognitive processes of actors in reactions to different events.

Actors interpret these ‘pressures’ through collective and individual cognitive frames. These cognitive frames are norms and ideas.

Sociological institutionalism does not postulate that individuals are not purposive, goal-oriented or rational; but ‘rational actions’ are themselves socially constituted: *“Thus, while actors behave rationally to increase their power, the structure in which these preferences and interests are formed is of substantial influence”* (Saurugger, 2013b). The actions of actors are explained by their meaning to the actor: *“it supposes hence that it is meaningful to the actor, or, in other words, that it is grounded in the actor’s eyes on a system of reasons that he or she perceives to be strong”* (Boudon, 2003, p. 18).

As noted by Jenson and Mérand (2010, p. 85), *“the question most properly asked, then, is not whether actors have objective interests or subjective ideas; it is, rather, what do they perceive to be the right and the wrong way of pursuing their goals (strategy) in a given social interaction. In other words, which ideas do they hold about what their interests are?”* This dissertation strives to answer this (sociological institutionalist) interrogation by analysing perceptions of NIGs (about the legitimacy of EIGs) but also their social embeddedness and institutional constraints (Jacquot & Woll, 2008).

2.2.1.2. *Application of a sociological approach to study (national) interest groups in the EU*

Considering more precisely the usage of sociological approach to study NIGs in the EU, this dissertation follows Sanchez Salgado and Demidov (2018) who point out that the adoption of this analytical perspective allows to challenge several sets of assumptions about the role of European civil society (understood broadly in this dissertation) in the EU polity. Amongst these sets of assumptions, we can identify ideas about how the EU transforms and shapes interest groups politics and, how interest groups contribute to the democratisation of the EU.

When applied to the study of (national) interest groups, the sociological approach implies a new perspective on national actors within the EU polity. The relations between NIGs and EIGs may be addressed not only in top-down or bottom-up perspectives but as the study of *interactions* between organisations and an analysis of their motives; influenced by organisational dimensions and institutional dimensions (Sanchez Salgado & Demidov, 2018). Indeed, *“sociological work illustrates the difficulties which are linked to clear-cut differentiations between top-down and bottom-up logics of Europeanization”* (Saurugger, 2009, p. 940). These approaches contribute also to the “normalisation” of the study of national actors within the

European context, where the EU is conceived as a ‘normal’ political system (Sanchez Salgado & Demidov, 2018). Consequently, interest groups in the EU can be studied with theories and analytical tools that are used to study other political systems (Kreppel, 2012).

A sociological approach of (national) interest groups in the EU necessitates not only a look at European political opportunities but also at how these opportunities unfold following EU and national actor’s intentions and perceptions while promoting and using such measures (Sanchez Salgado & Demidov, 2018). For instance, by using the concept of ‘usages of Europe’, Sanchez Salgado (2014a) or Woll and Jacquot (2010) have highlighted how domestic actors are using creatively European opportunities. Moreover, the addition of actors’ perceptions in the analysis also reveals the need to move from a normative understanding of the role of interest groups in the EU to a contextual, pragmatic and realistic understanding of actors wills and intentions within the EU polity. For instance, *“scholars arrive at radically different conclusions when they do not assume in advance what constitutes the democratisation effect of CSOs’ involvement but actually take stock of existing practices of participation or, alternatively, inquire into how actors themselves conceptualize democracy and participation”* (Sanchez Salgado & Demidov, 2018, p. 61)³⁰. This is precisely the purpose of this research and the main point motivating the usage of a subjective approach of legitimacy.

Finally, a sociological approach of interest groups in the EU implies to take into account the national environments of NIGs. This entails a pragmatic and pluralistic approach of causality (Sanchez Salgado & Demidov, 2018, p. 62): *“The establishment of causal paths seems to be a more pragmatic research goal than the establishment of general patterns. Instead of trying to find a single relevant explanatory factor determining why national organisations decide to engage in EU issues, a context-sensitive analysis envisages different types of engagement with EU issues at the national level as well as distinct causal pathways”*. This approach echoes directly the usage of context sensitive thematic analysis (first analysis related to legitimization discourse) and QCA (second analysis related to perceived congruence) which allows for “multiple conjectural causation” across cases.

2.2.1.3. Theoretical alternative to a sociological approach of NIGs-EIGs’ relations

Sociological institutionalism is indubitably not the only theoretical approach that can be used in order to study relations between NIGs and EIGs. Many others theoretical approaches can be

³⁰ For examples of “non-normative” analyses of interest groups, see for instance: Demidov (2016) or Batory and Cartwright (2011).

mobilised to study political phenomenon and *a fortiori*, European issues (Saurugger, 2013b). When thinking about the (representation) relations between national groups and European groups, one may think primarily to study these organisational arrangements through the lenses of the principal-agent (PA) model. Indeed, a *delegation* of representation tasks takes place between NIGs (the principals) and EIGs (the agents). As summarised by Delreux and Adriaensen, “*a principal–agent relationship is established through an act of delegation by the principal, which can be considered as a contractual relation between a principal and an agent. Such a contract can be more or less formal*” (2017, p. 3). The core of this model is that “*the principal, primarily motivated by efficiency reasons, chooses to delegate power to an agent. In return, the principal can control the powers of the agent*” (Brandsma & Adriaensen, 2017, p. 37). At first glance, the PA model perfectly fits to describe the relations between NIGs and EIGs. And it does fit, but it is not suitable for one of the aims of this dissertation which is to identify which ideas do actors hold about what their interests are (Jenson & Mérand, 2010, see also point 2.2.1.1).

The first thing to remember is that the development of the PA model as a framework to study EU politics has been “*part of the new-institutionalist — and particularly rational choice institutionalist — turn in the EU studies*” (Delreux & Adriaensen, 2017, p. 7). In particular, the PA model is originally built on the rational-choice theory’s idea that the preferences and identities of strategic and goal-oriented actors are given (Hall & Taylor, 1996). Indeed, “*the model essentially treats politics as being unidirectional: the principal has preferences and is able to delegate powers to an agent. The principal holds moral superiority and hence is able to apply sanctions to the agent’s behaviour. The agent is rational and hence is responsive to control incentives*” (Brandsma & Adriaensen, 2017, p. 49). Turning to applications and usages of the PA model, it has “*a strong track record in political science, including studies into EU politics and administration*” as “*it presents an analytical toolkit which has proven to be very useful for systematically describing situations of delegated decision-making, as well as for explaining the behaviour of principals and agents, be it of individual or institutional kind.*” (Brandsma & Adriaensen, 2017, p. 49)³¹. But these are not the objectives of this dissertation (particularly when it comes to the first research question). While the PA model might have been useful to systematically describe the relations between NIGs and EIGs, the original grounding of the model in the rationalist approach makes this theoretical framework not the better equipped to tackle questions of perceptions and legitimacy. Although the PA model turns to be

³¹ Emphases added by the author of the dissertation.

useful for studying interest groups (Lowery & Marchetti, 2012), its usage for this particular dissertation would have led to a misfit between the research questions, the purpose of the research and its theoretical framework.

2.2.2. How to demonstrate the influence of cognitive frames?

While the sociological approach can lead to new insights about interest group politics in the EU (see above, point 2.2.1.2), its major challenge is to empirically demonstrate the influence of cognitive frames. How to conceptualise and operationalise cognitive frames (norms and ideas or worldviews) and their influence on interactions? This issue is shared by any sociological or constructivist approaches of EU politics (Saurugger, 2013a). The major problem is to determine if the actions of actors are guided by their own beliefs or whether these beliefs are only pleaded to justify a strategy that was chosen for another reason (Saurugger, 2013b). Qualitative analysis of data collected via interviews, participant observation or ethnographic fieldwork could overcome this problem, as proposed for instance by Jenson and Mérand (2010).

The objective is to allow the researcher to observe actors' behaviour in the empirical world (Favell & Guiraudon, 2009), thus helping to understand better assumptions about norms and ideas and their influence in interactions as well as how they are used by actors. It refers to the 'comprehensive approach' which postulates the heterogeneity between human or social facts and natural and physical facts. Human or social facts are vectors of meanings conveyed by actors (individuals, groups, institutions), which are players of an inter-human situation (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016)³². This approach is based on the principle of human inter-understanding which assumes the possibility of individuals to penetrate the experience and the feelings of other individuals (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016).

The analysis of previous research, introduced in Chapter 1 (section 1.3), suggests that goal-orientation and fixed preferences, as rational-choice assumes, are not the only concepts explaining national interest groups' perceptions and actions within European structures as EIGs, or more generally regarding their engagement at the EU level. There is, for instance, no adequacy between the actual functioning of EIGs (assessed negatively by the literature as regards democratic norms) and the actual 'trust' of their members. A sociological approach with a focus on norms and ideas as well as on preferences is a more realistic and innovative theoretical framework to further analyse the internal structure of EIGs. Clear definition and

³² As noted by Paillé and Mucchielli (2016, p. 43), this comprehensive approach was notably developed by Max Weber.

reasoned operationalisation of concepts are expected to facilitate other scholars to appropriate and revise the current dissertation and its results.

2.2.3. Legitimacy and sociological institutionalism

The concept of legitimacy holds a particular position within institutional theories, designed originally to study organisations and their evolutions. Sociological institutionalist studies focus on questions of the social and cultural legitimacy of the organisations: *“The concept of legitimacy is most prominent within institutional theory. This is an interpretive school of organizational theory which stresses the importance of acceptance by the environment of an organization and the role played by institutional environments in determining organizational structure and behaviour. These environments are seen as the socially constructed normative worlds in which organizations exist”* (Lister, 2003, p. 178). As noted by Lister, there are different types of legitimacy and different *“legitimizing audiences”* (Lister, 2003, p. 179), as presented above (and in Chapter 1, section 1.3). Such analysis focuses on the social constructs within organisations’ environments and considers what type of legitimacy is being questioned by which audiences (or different actors within each audience) to reveal a more nuanced understanding of the legitimacy of organisations.

To summarise, this dissertation uses an innovative approach of interest groups legitimacy, which is embedded in sociological approaches of EU studies (Favell & Guiraudon, 2009, 2011; Jacquot & Woll, 2008). This analysis of the legitimacy of EIGs goes by the analysis of the perceptions of their members, namely NIGs. These member organisations are considered as political actors behaving depending on institutional constraints. The objective is neither to analyse what interest groups are nor what they should be but to understand what makes them exist within relationships and institutions (Offerlé, 1994, p. 19). Ultimately, the research strives to understand how institutional environment determines the perceptions of member organisations about the legitimacy of European interest groups, which are their representatives in Brussels. In order to understand how institutional environment influences NIGs’ discourses, the concept of polity norm is introduced in the next section.

2.3. First empirical analysis' framework

Looking for NIGs' perceptions of "EIGs legitimacy" ...and the internalisation of a polity norm

The objective of the first empirical analysis of the dissertation (Chapter 4) is to understand how NIGs do legitimise their European organisation representing them towards the EU institutions. Behind this interrogation, this research aims at identifying which norms are integrated by NIGs when they consider the legitimate role of their EU-level representative organisations. More precisely, the NIGs' discourses will be analysed in the light of the model of EU-society relations promoted by EU institutions (and particularly, the Commission) which were described in Chapter 1 (point 1.1.2). These EU-society relations models constitutes polity norms.

Following the conception of Saurugger (2010, p. 2), making reference to the sociological institutionalist literature in international relations (Finnemore, 1996; Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998; Legro, 1997), polity norms are defined as "*the collective understandings of the proper behaviour of actors. They regulate actors and their environment.*" The EU-society relations models (the partnership model or the participatory model) are polity norms understood as a '*normative idea about a legitimate political order*' (Saurugger (2010) referring to Fligstein and Stone Sweet (2002)). The fact that these models, as polity norm, are integrated and promoted by the European Commission does not mean that the behaviour it should entail are automatically internalised by the different actors as a legitimate and socially accepted behaviour. The following paragraphs point different observations about the EU-society relations models and their conceptualisation as polity norms.

First, the development of a polity norm is not a clear linear construction starting with first, norm emergence, second, norm acceptance and finally, resulting in norm internalisation by all the actors in a given polity (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). For instance, as observed in Chapter 1 (section 1.1), it is difficult to identify the precise moment of the shift of the European Commission from the partnership model (based on input legitimacy via the encouragement of establishment of strong EIGs) to the participatory model (based on participatory democracy via the promotion of a multilevel civil society and citizens inclusion). Norms can also be challenged by different actors. A shift initiated by official institutions does not mean that all the actors will automatically integrate norms without any conflicts or disruptive transformations. The signature of the Treaty of Lisbon (in particular, the Article 11), the implementation of the ECI and the different official documents from the Commission (e.g. the 2006 European Transparency Initiative, the 2006 White Paper on a European Communication Policy) are

“incremental but important symbolic step[s] in a messy political process leading to the existence of an encompassing norm on participatory democracy” (Saurugger, 2010)³³.

Second, understanding the emergence of a polity norm in the EU is not a question of socialisation of actors only: “[T]he study of the construction of meaning must focus upon the interpretations of the subjects more than upon the observation of objects” (Edelman, 1985, p. 195, cited in Saurugger, 2010). This observation echoes the approach of legitimacy mobilised by this research. As noted above, actors must not be conceived as not purposive or goal-oriented but their rationales of actions are themselves socially constituted. Their preferences and interests are formed within social structures. A polity norm is thus a socially constructed norm which is an *“intersubjective structure”* that establishes a *“framework of appearances that must be maintained, whether or not there is a feeling behind the appearances”* (Goffman, 1959, p. 242, cited in Saurugger, 2010).

This dissertation uses qualitative analysis of interviews (see Chapter 3, section 3.1) with actors from NIGs to analyse the actual implementation and the internalisation of the participatory model (as a polity norm) by these national actors. The objective of this analysis is to identify political narratives (legitimation discourses) to observe through which political norms *“an actor publicises and affirms his or her own interest”* (Saurugger, 2010, p. 3). The creation and the internalisation of a norm by these actors is *“not a simple discursive process, but a dynamic development linked to power relations that emerge slowly in a specific area”* (Saurugger, 2010, p. 3).

For the purpose of this research, the aim of the analysis of NIGs’ discourses on EIGs’ legitimacy is also to identify through which discursive elements these national groups publicise their role in the EU polity vis-à-vis their EIGs. These elements could correspond to the norms of the *participatory* model promoted by the Commission from the 2000s or unveil the persistence of an affirmation of ideas corresponding to the *partnership* model. Such an analysis also allows to understand why the NIGs transmit discourse reflecting elements from one model or the other (as two different polity norms).

Elements of discourse that correspond to the *partnership* model (corresponding to a neo-corporatist setting) could count for instance the valorisation of EIGs that enjoy a

³³ This quotation refers to a sentence used by the author to describe the ‘constitutional moment’. While the sentence does not refer here to the same event, it is still pertinent to use it, as the quotation match perfectly to the situation described.

“*representational monopoly*” (Kohler-Koch, 1999, p. 22; Schmitter, 1974). EIGs are thus legitimised as encompassing associations that control membership behaviour (Schmitter, 1979, cited in Kohler-Koch, 1999). Prevalence is given to expertise-based exchanges (De Bruycker, 2015) and EIGs are expected to provide technocratic and apolitical information to feed rational deliberation at the EU level.

Elements corresponding to the *participatory* model concern participatory democracy and pluralist-related norms. EIGs are not considered anymore as the only actor that may access European decision makers (EU gatekeepers). This setting encourages competition between interest groups. This competition does not concern only different interest groups acting at the same political level but happens between organisations from the different levels (in the EU multilevel polity). Under the *participatory* model, prevalence will be given to “*pressure politics [...] that is receptive to public pressure and popular demands*” (De Bruycker, 2015, p. 2). These examples are only few elements that could constitute NIGs’ discourse legitimising their EIGs under one or the other model. More details and especially the empirical analysis are provided in Chapter 4.

2.4. Second empirical analysis’ framework

Analysing perceived congruence between NIGs’ and EIGs’ policy positions

The second analytical part of the dissertation (Chapter 5) uses a norm-guided approach of the internal legitimacy of EIGs. This refers to the analysis of the legitimacy of EIGs, in their relations with their members, regarding a predefined criterion. This criterion is the perceived congruence between NIGs’ and EIGs’ policy positions. To put it another way, in order to consider an EIG as legitimate, its members have to perceive European positions as congruent with their own national positions. Therefore, the second part of the dissertation first assesses which EIGs can be considered as legitimate regarding this congruence criterion. Secondly, the analysis identifies under which conditions this legitimate character is observed and under which conditions it is not, for each dyadic relation NIG–EIG. Both parts of the dissertation rest on the same general theoretical framework that is sociological institutionalism. Since this theoretical framework was explained above, this section explains and justifies the choice of the internal legitimacy criterion which is under scrutiny (perceived congruence).

It must be highlighted here that this choice does not directly stem from the first empirical analysis' results (presented in Chapter 4), but is based on a normative consideration about the function EIGs must fulfil in the EU decision-making process (norm-guided approach of organisational legitimacy). This second empirical analysis is based on the assumption that the legitimacy of EIGs is anchored in their function to represent NIGs. In order to be considered as legitimate organisations, EIGs should act in accordance with the will of their members. The function of EIG is to *transmit* the positions of NIGs to EU institutions, participating thus to the legitimacy building of the European order. Indeed, civil society participation in European governance, through the establishment of 'supportive networks' allowing interest groups to take part in the EU policy making process, is a response to the EU legitimacy crisis (Héritier, 1999; Rhodes & Héritier, 2011; Smismans, 2006, p. 307). In other words, EIGs are meant to feed EU institutions with information about NIGs' needs and opinions (Wolff, 2013). This transfer of information to EU institutions – and the NIGs' perception that it meets their own positions – participates to the EU legitimacy enhancement. The aim of this arrangement is that NIGs acknowledge that their positions are at least considered at the EU-level.

One thing to remember is that previous norm-guided research about the internal legitimacy of EIGs were focused on democratic criteria (see Chapter 1, point 1.3.1. for details). These previous works were mainly focused on the democratic quality of the internal structures of EIGs. The results of these assessments of democratic quality of EIGs' functioning were rather negative: absence of methods for the internal decision-making (Warleigh, 2003), a lack of formal accountability channels (Rodekamp, 2013; Wiercx, 2011), lack of time for consultation and language barriers (Johansson & Lee, 2014) or democratic structures not (often) used to the full (Kröger, 2016). All these findings concern internal procedures that lead to the adoption of positions by EIGs that have to represent their membership in Brussels. In these previous research, the focus was thus put on the quality of designs and applications of internal structures and procedures leading to the definition of policy positions, but not precisely on the positions themselves.

Amongst other elements, an EIG could acquire legitimacy as regards the positions it advocates and the function it fulfils, or through its internal procedures which are put in place to define these positions. Both elements can express NIGs assessment of the worth of EIGs. 'Procedural' elements are a matter of organisational design while the 'effectiveness' elements concerns EIGs' performances and functions. Procedural legitimacy refers to the machinery of EIGs. It concerns for instance, how members are selected or the procedures by which decisions are

made. Effectiveness legitimacy relates to the assessment of the relevance and quality of the organisation's outcomes. Both forms of legitimacy can be related to internal legitimacy of EIGs, concerning thus relations between NIGs and EIGs. While previous research addressed democratic legitimacy of EIGs (procedural elements), the second part of this dissertation proposes to address the effectiveness legitimacy of EIGs. To do so, the perception of NIGs about the congruence between their policy positions and the ones of their EIGs is analysed to understand better the membership assessment of the worth of EIGs (effectiveness legitimacy). As noted by (Wolff, 2013, p. 63), "*intraorganisational input through formal structures is often low [in EIGs], because members are often inclined towards more deliberative and flexible styles of representation*". Consequently, by analysing perceived congruence of NIGs as regards to EIGs' positions, this research focuses on the 'output' of the intraorganisational structures rather than on the quality of the structures themselves.

This choice to study perceived congruence is based on the assumption that EIGs must act in accordance with their members and that EIGs' positions have to satisfy their membership. This assumption differs slightly from scholars who consider that EIGs have to act as '*super-conducting transmitters*' (Lowery & Marchetti, 2012) or '*transmission belts*' (Kotzian & Steffek, 2012) between their members and centres of political decision-making. As a matter of fact, one could ask why studying the *perceived* congruence and not the *actual* congruence between NIGs' and EIGs' positions. A part of the answer resides in the distinction between the potential positions of transmitter's role of EIGs and their positions of producer's role. EIGs do not only act as transmitters of (aggregated) members' positions but also as producers of policy positions. In some cases, the producer's role takes the ascendancy to the transmitter's role.

This situation is acknowledged, if supported, by member organisations. This is one of the outcome of the preliminary interviews conducted with Belgian interest groups for the purpose of this research³⁴. For instance, the representative of a Belgian cause group says³⁵:

Yes, the more 'political' things in the classic sense of the word, well, we do not work on that much. Because we do not have an advocacy mission. As our international and European network precisely has. [...] I have not yet identify all the mechanisms of their level of action. No, I think it's an added value for

³⁴ 23 exploratory interviews were conducted with Belgian NIGs. On of the purposes of these exploratory interviews was to get a first overview of how NIGs staff members speak about their relations with their EIGs. It was also the occasion to collect data on the consultation on EU Nature Legislation from the perspective of Belgian NIGs.

³⁵ Quotes from interviews in French were translated into English by the author. These translations are made for indicative purposes only. Readers are invited to refer to the original quotes in French (in footnotes) to get the actual words used by interviewees.

our association. And beyond that, that's what I'd like to highlight here: our link to this network. Because we can really benefit from their help, their communication skills, the campaigns that they conduct. (Interview 5, Belgian cause group)^{36, 37}

Here, the NIG does not use its EIG to get its message heard in Brussels, but 'download' campaigns and communication tools developed by the EIG. Another illustration is provided by representatives from a Belgian business group member of several EIGs. They describe contrasted situations regarding their memberships to different EIGs. While they are active in the internal structure of some of their 'European committees' (understood as EIGs), they're not in some others:

And for other European committees, we are there to follow the news, to have the information, and to follow what is happening at the European level and possibly to inform our members. [...] And so, our role in terms of defining the agenda, or influence the position of the European committee, is more limited. (Interview 12, Belgian sectional group)³⁸

Some of the SMEs that are member of this Belgian group *"do not have the time and somewhat rely on [our organisation] to monitor, and trust their European committee to monitor"* (Interview 12). This observation will be repeated and confirmed in other interviews later during the data collection in other member states. For instance, the European Affairs Manager of a French NIG representing an economic sector notes: *"But we would not have the time to work on everything by ourselves. Moreover, there are issues on which they work on, while we do not,*

³⁶ Original quote in French : *Ce qu'il y a c'est que, ouais l'aspect plus politique au sens classique du terme, ben on l'investit peu. Parce qu'on n'a pas de mission de plaidoyer. Comme le fait plus justement notre réseau international et européen. [...] Je n'ai pas encore perçu tous les rouages de, de leur niveau d'action. Non, moi je trouve que c'est une plus-value pour notre association. Et d'ailleurs, c'est ce que je voudrais mettre davantage en avant, notre lien à ce réseau, parce qu'on peut vraiment bénéficier de leur aide, de leur communication, des campagnes qu'il y a.*

³⁷ The aim of this organisation is to "raise public awareness about a new way of life" which respects the Earth (as displayed on the website of the organisation). Even if the interviewed representative states that the organisation does not 'political' work in the classic sense of the word, he explains that they have conducted actions against the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership or during the 21st Conference of the parties (COP21). Many actions are also carried out at the local level by their members. While the representative states that the organisation does not have an 'advocacy mission', an analysis of their actions leads to the conclusion that it aims to influence policy outcome (corresponding thus to the definition of interest group).

³⁸ Original quote in French: *Et pour d'autres comités européens, on est là pour suivre l'info, pour avoir l'information, et pour suivre ce qui se passe au niveau européen et éventuellement pour en informer nos membres. [...] Et donc là, notre rôle en termes de définition de l'agenda, ou pouvoir peser sur la position du comité européen, elle est plus limitée.*

because the lack of time or because it is not our priority. So, at least, their action allows some issues to be dealt with” (interview 63, French sectional group)³⁹.

Due to this situation, an analysis of the actual congruence between positions defined by NIGs on time t_0 and position of EIGs on time t_1 is not considered to be relevant for the purpose of this research (moreover this comparison is not possible for all organisations, since positions at times t_0 do not exist for many national organisations). Under those circumstances, the internal legitimacy of EIGs as regards the congruence criteria is analysed through the perceived congruence of member organisations. Such an analysis also provides insights about NIGs’ role in the policy making process of the EU. The identification of conditions under which member organisations perceive their EIGs’ positions as (not) congruent with their own positions provides information and context-sensitive results about the similarities and disparities of national groups’ attitudes towards European issues and EU policy making. Finally, this analysis provides interesting information to potentially identify which groups consider themselves as ‘losers’ or ‘winners’ amongst the membership of EIGs.

2.5. Summary

This chapter provided first basic clarifications regarding the object of research. All organisations under scrutiny, national or European, correspond to the definition of interest groups. An interest groups is an organisation that pursues the objective of influencing public policies informally (but within the framework established by the legislation). Organisations analysed are either sectional groups or cause groups. The research focuses on the internal legitimacy of EIGs and analyse thus the relations between EIGs and their direct members, composed by NIGs. EIGs’ members are particular EIGs’ audiences because they take part in the European umbrellas’ internal decision-making process. NIGs are (officially) at the origin of the messages of EIGs and at the same time, an audience of these messages.

The research rests on the theoretical framework of sociological institutionalism. Sociological institutionalism is a particular type of new-institutionalism that explores how institutional structures (rules, norms, and cultures) constrain the choices and actions of actors (by providing ‘frames of meaning’): *“Thus, while actors behave rationally to increase their power, the*

³⁹ Original quote in French: *Mais là, déjà on n’aurait pas le temps de tout traiter nous. Et ensuite y’a des questions sur lesquelles ils s’engagent, alors que nous on n’a pas le temps ou ce n’est pas la priorité. Donc, au moins ça permet que la question soit traitée.*

structure in which these preferences and interests are formed is of substantial influence” (Saurugger, 2013b).

Two empirical analyses compose this dissertation: (1) the first analysis uses a subjective approach of EIGs’ internal legitimacy which aims to identify the perceptions of national groups (results in Chapter 4) and (2) the second analysis concerns the internal legitimacy of European groups with a focus on the perception of congruence between national and European groups’ policy positions (results in Chapter 5). As noted above, the second empirical analysis does not stem from the results of the first. Both analyses are actually studying the same object of research but with the two different approaches described in the previous and current chapters. The following chapter (Chapter 3) is dedicated to the research design. Following the theoretical foundations presented in this chapter, methods used for both empirical analyses are outlined, along with case selection and strategy of data collection.

The first analysis outlines how institutional environment determines the perceptions of member organisations regarding the legitimacy of European interest groups, as their representatives in Brussels. The aim of this analysis is to identify through which elements of discourse NIGs publicise their role in the EU polity vis-à-vis their EIGs. These discursive elements could correspond to the norms conveyed by the EU-Society relations model currently promoted and implemented by the Commission (*participatory* model) or unveil the persistence of affirmation of elements from the previous one (*partnership* model). Such an analysis also allows to understand why NIGs use elements of discourse reflecting ideas corresponding to one model or the other (both conceptualised as different polity norms). The objective here is thus neither to analyse what interest groups are nor what they should be but to understand what makes them exist within relationships and institutions (Offerlé, 1994, p. 19). The qualitative analysis of NIGs’ discourses allows first to identify what are the perceptions of NIGs and second, what these perceptions tell us about the EU polity.

The second analysis scrutinises the internal legitimacy of EIGs as regards a congruence criterion, which is analysed through the perceived congruence of member organisations. Following the assumption that NIGs behave according to institutional constraints, the analysis identifies under which conditions this perceived congruence is observed and under which conditions it is not. Such an analysis provides insights about the role of NIGs in the policy making process of the EU. The identification of conditions under which member organisations perceive their EIGs’ positions as (not) congruent with their own positions also provides information about the similarities and disparities between NIGs in the EU polity.

As a conclusion of this Chapter 2 and as a preamble of Chapter 3 dedicated to methodology, this last paragraph exposes the epistemological posture (or philosophical worldview) adopted in this dissertation⁴⁰. Even if philosophical ideas remain largely hidden in social sciences research (Slife & Williams, 1995), this dissertation follows the suggestion of Creswell according to which each research should explicitly present the worldview proposed in the study and the definition of basic considerations of that worldview (Creswell, 2009, pp. 5-6)⁴¹. Even if this research relies on many social constructivist considerations, the approach adopted in this dissertation is better defined as a *pragmatic* worldview, which is not committed to any one system of philosophy and reality (Creswell, 2009; Morgan, 2007). Pragmatic researchers “*draw liberally from both quantitative and qualitative assumptions when they engage in their research*” in order to choose “*freely*” the best methods and procedures that meet their purpose, and their needs to answer their research questions (Creswell, 2009, pp. 10-11). According to Morgan (2007), the pragmatic approach relies on three elements: abduction, intersubjectivity and transferability. First, the connection between theory and data is based on *abduction*: “*reasoning moves back and forth between induction and deduction — first converting observations into theories and then assessing those theories through action*” (Morgan, 2007, p. 71). Second the relationship to research process is characterized by *intersubjectivity*. If this dissertation sticks to the idea of individuals developing subjective meaning of their experiences, it also adopts the idea of intersubjectivity following which “*there is no problem with asserting both that there is a single “real world” and that all individuals have their own unique interpretations of that world*” (Morgan, 2007, p. 72)⁴². Finally the inference from data is based on the concept of *transferability*. Morgan (2007, p. 72) summarises this postures as follows: “*we cannot simply assume that our methods and our approach to research makes our results either context-bound or generalizable; instead, we need to investigate the factors that affect whether the knowledge we gain can be transferred to other settings*”.

⁴⁰ The term “worldviews” may be replaced by “epistemological postures”, “epistemologies”, “ontologies” ... (see other synonyms and related references in: Creswell, 2009, p. 6).

⁴¹ Creswell (2009, pp. 5-11) identifies four philosophical worldviews that are used by social science researchers: the postpositivism, the social constructivism, the advocacy and participatory worldview, and the pragmatism.

⁴² As noted by Morgan (2007, p. 72), “*rather than treating incommensurability as an all-or-nothing barrier between mutual understanding, pragmatists treat issues of intersubjectivity as a key element of social life*”.

3

Research Design: Methodology, case selection & data collection

Following the theoretical framework set up in Chapter 2, this chapter presents the research design of the dissertation: methods, case selection strategy and data collection. The first two sections (3.1 & 3.2) are dedicated to the methodology. Both sections correspond to the two research questions structuring this research (see details in the next paragraph). The third section (3.3) of the chapter is dedicated to the case selection: what are the cases? How have EIGs and NIGs been selected? The fourth section (3.4) provides information on data collection and the corpus under scrutiny in both empirical analyses. The last section (3.5) provides an overview of the cases under scrutiny.

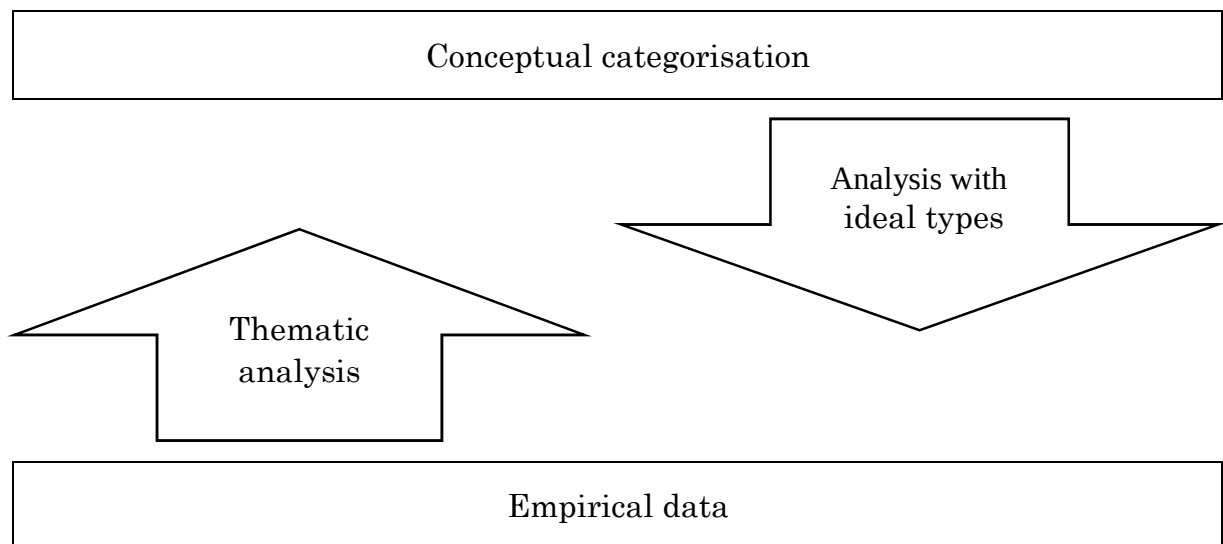
As presented in previous chapters, the objective of the first empirical analysis of the dissertation (presented in Chapter 4) is to understand how NIGs legitimise their European organisation representing them at the EU level. This part of the research aims to identify the norms which are integrated by NIGs when they consider the legitimate role of their EU-level representative organisations. To reach this goal, a thematic analysis will be processed on transcripts of interviews with NIGs' representatives (thematic analysis of NIGs' discourses). This thematic analysis is presented in point 3.1.1. A second analysis (based on ideal types) constitutes an additional step using the results of the thematic analysis in order to study NIGs' discourses in the light of the models of EU-society relations promoted successively by EU institutions (which were described in Chapter 1, point 1.1.2). This second level analysis is presented in point 3.1.2. Then, section 3.2 is dedicated to QCA. This method is used in order to explain the (absence of) perceived congruence between the policy positions of EIGs and NIGs. One should note that the analysis is also focused on NIGs' perspectives.

3.1. Analysing national interest groups' discourses about the legitimacy of European interest groups: thematic analysis and analysis based on ideal types

The analysis of NIGs' discourses about EIGs' legitimacy is organised in two parts: a thematic analysis and an analysis with ideal types. The latter is processed on the basis of the outcome of the thematic analysis. On the one hand, the objective of the thematic analysis is to provide an overview of the themes present in the discourse of NIGs and categorise these themes to introduce a meaningful synthesis of the content of the interviews. This synthesis is intended to present how national groups understand the legitimacy of their EIGs within the European polity. It also provides information about the perceptions of NIGs on their own role in this polity and vis-à-vis their EIGs.

On the other hand, the analysis with ideal types aims to identify if some legitimisation elements of discourse used by NIGs correspond to the elements of the *participatory* model promoted by the Commission from the 2000s or unveil the persistence of affirmation of elements from the *partnership* model (see Chapter 1, point 1.1.2 and Chapter 2, section 2.3). Such an analysis also allows to understand if NIGs have internalised elements from one model or the other (conceptualised as two different polity norms).

Figure 3.1. Analysis of NIGs' discourses on the legitimacy of EIGs: two analytical perspectives



Source: author's own elaboration.

In essence, the thematic analysis refers to a descriptive intention (even if it is not limited to it) while the analysis with ideal types refers to an interpretative intention. As figure 3.1 shows, the direction of the analysis (arrows) is different for each analytical perspective. The thematic analysis starts with the analysis of empirical data. The sorting and categorisation of data provide

a synthesis of the content which tends to theoretical considerations (without a theory building purpose, strictly speaking). The analysis with ideal types starts from the theory to build ideal types, and then to confront the empirical data to these ideal types. In this sense, this two-folded methodology mobilised to investigate NIGs' discourses about the legitimacy of EIGs follows the logic of the political sociology of Weber: *“According to Weber, unique to sociology is always a back-and-forth movement between conceptualization — the formulation of models as theoretical frameworks — and the detailed investigation of empirical social groupings, whether cases or developments”* (Kalberg, 2005, p. 17). The following sections explain the two methods of analysis and their different steps in detail.

3.1.1. The thematic analysis

Thematic analysis is a data reduction process used to synthesise a data corpus with labels called ‘themes’. The basic idea is to answer a generic question: what is fundamental about the issue *x* in the data corpus *y*? (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, p. 235). Thematic analysis is a particular type of content analysis (Crespy, 2015) and shares the central idea behind this type of methodology, namely the recognition of the importance of language in human cognition (see Box. 3.1)⁴³. It has two main functions: a function of identification and a function of documentation. Paillé and Mucchielli (2016, p. 236) propose a definition of thematic analysis: *“Thematic analysis is to systematically proceed to the identification, the clustering and, alternatively, the discursive examination of themes addressed in a corpus, be it interviews transcripts, organisational documents or observation notes”*⁴⁴. The objective of such an analysis is to draw parallels, oppositions or divergences between different themes within a corpus. Such an overview is displayed by means of a *thematic tree* which presents the results of the thematisation and the clustering (or “grouping”) of themes around different axes.

Concretely, the analysis consists of several readings of a selected corpus and the attribution of a theme (a ‘label’) to different units of coding within each unit of analysis of the corpus (this process is called *thematisation*). A *thematisation list* is built with all the themes identified. The list includes a short description for each theme. These themes are then sorted, organised or categorised around thematic axes in order to build a thematic tree. Different levels of inference

⁴³ Shapiro and Markoff (1997, p. 14) propose an encompassing definition of content analysis: *“any methodological measurement applied to text (or other symbolic materials) for social science purposes”* (cited in, Duriau, Reger, & Pfarrer, 2007, p. 6).

⁴⁴ Translated from French by the author: *“L’analyse thématique consiste, dans ce sens, à procéder systématiquement au repérage, au regroupement et, subsidiairement, à l’examen discursif des thèmes abordés dans un corpus, qu’il s’agisse d’une retranscription d’entretiens, d’un document organisationnel ou de notes d’observation”* (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, p. 236).

are possible during the thematisation process (see below, “determinants of relevant themes”). Thematic analysis is mainly used in inductive research designs in order to bring out information or highlight salient points in the content of a corpus, but could also be used as an analytical step within a deductive research design.

Box 3.1. Content analysis: social sciences and the importance of language in human cognition

“Central to the value of content analysis as a research methodology is the recognition of the importance of language in human cognition” (Duriau et al., 2007, p. 6). The assumption of content analysis, and thus of thematic analysis, is that the study of texts allows social scientists to understand other people’s cognitive schemes: “texts have the interpretations of their creators embedded in them” (Gephart, 1993, p. 1468). Duriau et al. (2007) note that “content analysis provides a replicable methodology to access deep individual or collective structures such as values, intentions, attitudes, and cognitions.” (Duriau et al., 2007, p. 6). Similar groups of words or sentences, the co-occurrences of some words, reveal underlying themes and can be interpreted as reflecting the associations between shared underlying concepts. Social sciences could be considered as reflections on significant facts which are already ‘constructed’ by a human community. Social sciences are thus a second degree construction, as they are a construction of constructions made by individuals within a community (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, p. 45).

Thematic analysis is not suitable for a big corpus or a high number of topics or cases (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, p. 237). With this in mind, it has to be noted that there is no clear definition of thresholds as regards to the size of the corpus, the number of cases or the scope of topics possible to analyse. The limits to draw are left to the discretion of each researcher (for instance, as regards to resource availability for the analysis). In this dissertation, the number of cases is intermediate ($N = 84$), but the entire corpus represents a big amount of data (compared to the corpus usually analysed by a single researcher). However, the thematic analysis is processed on a particular part of the interviews. The focus on a particular topic (EIGs legitimacy) and the analysis of selected parts of the interviews (answers to a particular question) make the corpus manageable for a thematic analysis.

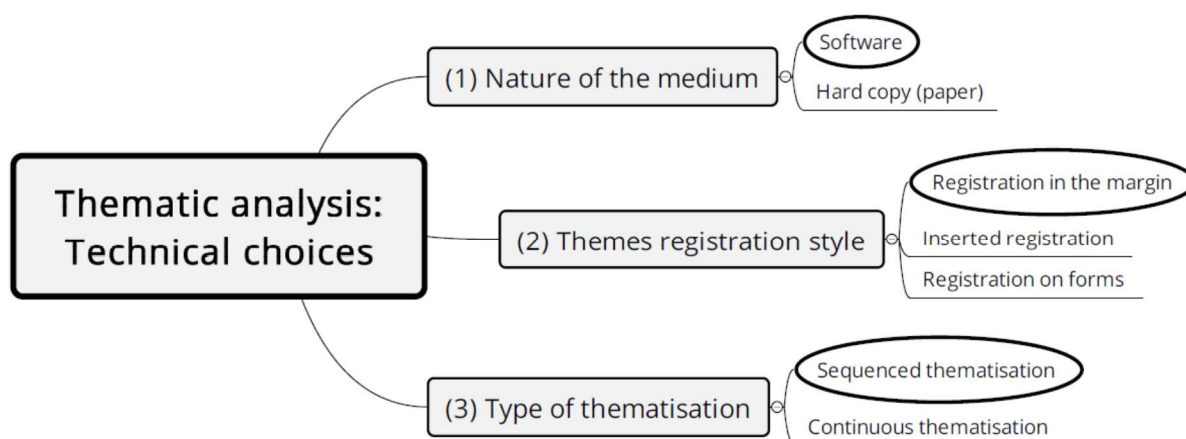
The outcome of the analysis (presented in Chapter 4) are aggregated results. The added value of the thematic analysis is not only to track themes (gathered in a thematic list) but also to group them around meaningful axes. The purpose of the analysis is to offer “*a synthetic generalization of a broad and diverse subject matter*” (Gerring, 2012, p. 727). The analysis of themes and their meaning is based on the recurrence of these themes and the inter-textual character of the study (Gephart, 1993, p. 1468). Therefore, the thematic analysis of this dissertation does not provide results on a case-by-case basis but at an aggregated level. Themes are meaningful because they are identified in different NIGs’ discourses, not because they are present in one particular interview, for instance.

The thematic analysis can be an ‘isolated’ method for research’s objective or can serve as the basis for further analysis combined with other methods. In this dissertation, the thematic analysis does both: (1) it provides an overview of the data collected and the perception of NIGs about the legitimacy of EIGs, and (2) it is used as the basis for a second analysis with ideal types (see point 3.1.1.2.) to understand the internalisation of polity norms’ elements by NIGs. The following points present the thematic analysis process step by step.

3.1.1.1. *Technical considerations to address before the thematic analysis*

Several technical choices have to be made prior to beginning a thematic analysis. These choices concern the nature of the medium mobilised for the analysis, the registration style of the themes and the type of thematisation. The figure 3.2 shows these different elements and the corresponding options. The highlighted options on the right (circle) are the selected choices for the thematic analysis of this dissertation.

Figure 3.2 Technical choices to address before a thematic analysis



Source: Paillé and Mucchielli (2016). The figure is the author's own elaboration with XMind 8⁴⁵.

First, the nature of the medium that will be used to thematise the corpus must be chosen. Two options are possible: the paper medium (thematism on hard copy) or software packages. The two options offer different advantages. The paper is perfect for researchers who need to have a 'physical' contact with their data and prefer to have a 'spatial' overview of their work. Software packages (preferred for this dissertation) provide many options which make the analysis easier to manage for the researcher: circulation between documents facilitated, easy labelling and easy correction of labels and more generally an easy management of the corpus and the items created (themes, cases, documents ...). Some software packages also allow 'coding' or thematising other files than written documents (recordings, movies, pictures). The thematic analysis of this dissertation concerns only written documents (transcripts of interviews). The only drawbacks of qualitative analysis with software solutions are the necessity to learn their functioning prior to the analysis and the rigidity of their working environment (Paillé, 2011). The software package selected for the current analysis is NVivo 10, a package released in 2012 by QSR International (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). More information about this software package are provided in the box 3.2.

⁴⁵ NB XMind 8 is a software package designed to draw 'mind maps'. Mind maps are diagrams used to visually organise information. XMind 8 is used to draw some figures in this chapter as well as the thematic trees and other figures in Chapter 4.

Box 3.2 NVivo, a CAQDAS package

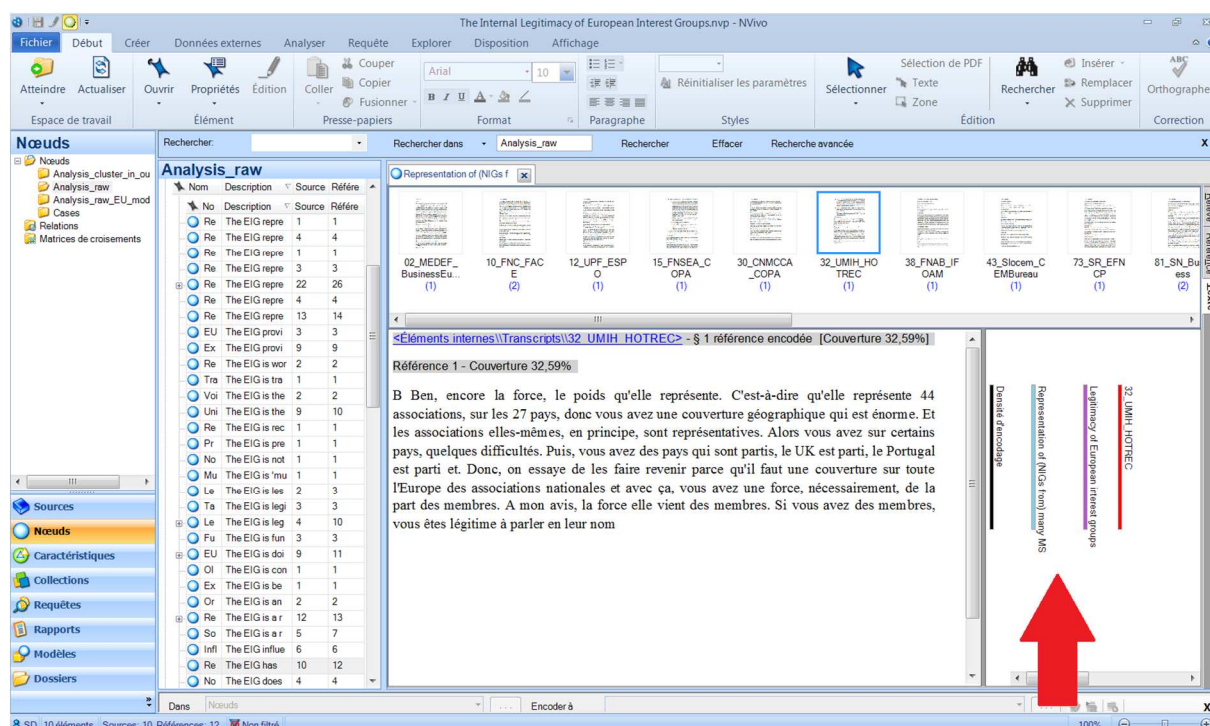
NVivo is a Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) package which helps researchers to collect, sort, organise, analyse and classify data (Castleberry, 2014). The software offers many different functions (automatic or not) as coding tools, automatic search or basic quantitative text analysis solutions. NVivo is ‘user-friendly’ as its workspace is designed after the Microsoft Office interface with a task ribbon above, a panel to the left containing folders and a larger panel to the right containing a project outline and its detailed documents. NVivo allows managing a great variety of sources including interviews, field notes, video recordings, pictures, documents, press clippings, or social media data. Documents can be imported from Microsoft Word (.doc and .docx), Portable Document Format (.pdf), rich text (.rtf), and plain text (.txt) formats. Almost any form of audio, photo, and video files can be imported along with Excel spreadsheets and Access databases. The version 10 supports the use of Web pages, social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter), YouTube, and SurveyMonkey to directly import data. Bibliographic references can be imported from EndNote, Mendeley, and Zotero to help manage literature reviews, for instance. One of the drawbacks of the software is that all the data imported are merged in one single NVivo file (these “.nvp files” can quickly become heavy and difficult to process for an average computer). CAQDAS packages as NVivo offer also facilitation for secondary analysis of qualitative data (Duchesne, 2008; Duchesne & Garcia, 2014). However, data exchange and comparability between different CAQDAS packages (as ATLAS.ti or QDA Miner) still raise technical issues (Corti & Gregory, 2011).

In this dissertation, NVivo is used to code data (interview transcripts) around themes. NVivo labels these storage containers as “nodes”. Nodes can represent anything that the analyst wants them to be (‘themes’ but also ‘rubrics’ or ‘categories’ as well as ‘cases’) and grant easy organisation (and reorganisation) of themes in the project. Particular nodes are used to represent cases (the name of these nodes in NVivo workspace are simply ‘node-case’). ‘Characteristics’ can be attributed to these nodes which makes easy to have an overview of all the

cases under scrutiny or compare them. Coding is easy, as the user simply has to highlight a section of text and attribute it to the node of its choosing. Highlighting of previously coded pieces reminds the researcher of work he has already completed and supports his reflection to monitor emerging themes (Castleberry, 2014). Nodes can be grouped under 'father nodes' (hierarchical classifications of nodes). This operation facilitates the clustering of themes necessary of thematic analysis. Finally, NVivo provides a 'request' function which allows to find the nodes attributed to cases with similar (or opposing) characteristics.

The second choice to make it is to determine how the themes will be registered (or ‘coded’) during the analysis. Several options exist (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, p. 240), as for instance: (1) registration in the margin, (2) inserted registration (the label of the theme is inserted in the text), (3) registration on analysis forms (for instance, the thematisation is written down on a form for each case, or form for each theme). In the case of using software, the choice is imposed to the researcher by the tools provided by this software. NVivo 10 provides the registration mode ‘in the margin’ as shown in the figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3 The themes registration mode (‘in the margin’, see the arrow) of NVivo 10.



Source: NVivo 10, developed by QSR International. Print screen of author's work

The last choice to make prior to start the analysis is to opt for the type of thematisation. Two types of thematisation process are possible: (1) the continuous thematisation or (2) the sequenced thematisation (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, p. 241). The first option consists of a continuous analysis of all documents under scrutiny and the simultaneous building of the thematisation list and the thematic tree. The second option consists in a series of successive analytical steps. For instance, some of the corpus' items are selected and analysed during a first step. A thematic tree (sorting and clustering themes) and a thematisation list are drawn as a first attempt. Then, all the items are analysed on that basis (the previous thematic tree and thematisation list could be redesigned or kept in their original configuration). For this dissertation, the sequenced option is chosen. This choice is made on the basis of the availability of data. Since all the interviews are not fully transcribed, a first sequence concerns only the

‘fully transcribed interviews’. The second and third readings concern all cases, those for which full transcriptions are available and those for which ‘focused’ transcription are available (see the point hereafter: the sequenced thematic analysis).

3.1.1.2. *Determinants of relevant themes*

One of the main challenges for researchers conducting thematic analysis is to determine what a ‘relevant’ themes is. What kind of units of coding (units of text) to use inside each document, how to label themes given to these units and overall what level of inference to use when creating a theme?

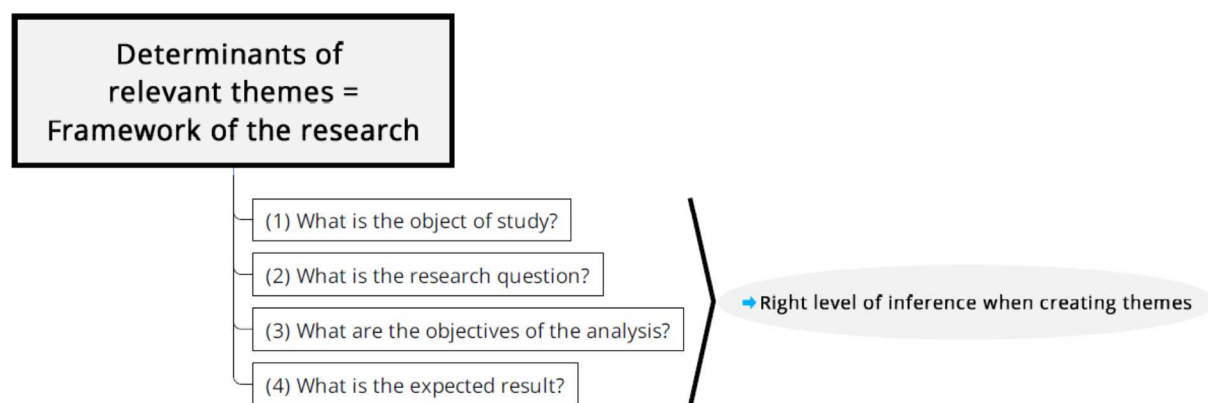
First of all, a distinction between units of analysis and units of coding as to be made. On the one hand, “*the unit of analysis is the entity on which the interpretation of the study will focus*” (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 62). To put it another way, the units of analysis are cases under scrutiny, which are dyadic relationships between a NIG and an EIG. On the other hand, “*the units of coding is the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon*” (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 63). For the thematic analysis of this dissertation, units of coding are linguistic segments, which are a sentence, or a group of sentences in the answers of interviewees to a particular question of the interview guide. These sentences or groups of sentences indicate a cohesive element of discourse about elements constituting the legitimacy of the EIGs.

Second, it is necessary to clearly define what a theme is (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, p. 246): “*A theme is a set of words used to identify what is addressed in the corresponding extract from the corpus. It provides information about the content of the extract*”⁴⁶. It is distinct from a *rubric* or a *category* which are labels given to clusters of themes. During the thematisation, rubrics or categories could also be used to identify some extracts from the corpus. For instance, rubrics or categories could identify extracts from interviews about socio-demographic information of the interviewee, the features of an organisation or other general topics (this identification makes easier for the researcher to retrieve information about these topics without reading again all the corpus). The rubrics or categories identify some extracts of the corpus but does not provide information about their content, as themes do.

⁴⁶ Translated from French by the author: “*Un thème est un ensemble de mots permettant de cerner ce qui est abordé dans l'extrait du corpus correspondant, tout en fournissant des indications sur la teneur du propos.*” (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, p. 246).

The relevance of a theme is determined by the framework of the research (see, figure 3.4). Four elements have to be taken into account: (1) what is the object of study?, (2) what is the research question?, (3) what are the objectives of the analysis?, (4) what is the expected result?. The answers to these four questions should motivate the choice of the themes and their respective definition. Justifications and explanations related to the thematisation process are rooted in these elements which also drive the choice of the level of inference to use when creating themes. Moreover, other elements, which are indirectly linked to the research, enter also into play. The knowledge of the researcher about the cases, its cultural knowledge, and its academic or professional background have an impact on the choice of the themes and their labelling.

Figure 3.4 Determinants of relevant themes during a thematic analysis



Source: inspired by Paillé and Mucchielli (2016). The figure is the author's own elaboration with XMind 8.

Given the elements from the framework of the research, what a given excerpt from the corpus is about? This question concerns inference. Inference is “a logical operation by which the analyst moves from examining a part of the corpus to assigning a theme for that extract. It is based on clues identified from the reading of the extract that the researcher wants to thematise.”⁴⁷ The validity of inference concerns its level of correspondence with reality and depends on the relations between the clues and the theme. A low level of inference presents a close and direct relation between the proposed theme and the clues present in the extract. During the thematisation of interviews transcripts, the words used by interviewees are for instance a good basis to create a theme (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, p. 254). The usage of low-level of inference during the thematisation work participates in the fulfilling of the *internal acceptance* criterion, one of the validation criteria of qualitative methods (see the box 3.3, hereafter). The

⁴⁷ Translated from French by the author: “ L'inférence est une opération logique par laquelle l'analyste passe de l'examen d'une portion de matériau à l'attribution d'un thème pour cet extrait. Elle est basée sur des indices issus de la lecture de l'extrait que l'on désire thématiser” (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, p. 254).

internal acceptance criterion refers to the level of concordance and acceptance of the sense and interpretation given to the collected data by the researcher and the plausibility as perceived by the respondents participating in the survey (Savoie-Zajc, 2009c, p. 1).

Thematic analysis preferably generates themes of low to medium level of inference (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, p. 254). A high level of inference would not create themes directly related to the content of the extract, but interpretative categories, usually related to theoretical considerations. This low level of inference is necessary to 'keep the contact' with the content of the corpus and facilitates the building of the thematic tree. However, the building of the thematic tree can be grounded on theoretical considerations, as it is done *a posteriori*. The thematisation as such would thus be close to data, but as the analysis goes along, theoretical elements could enter into play (as shown in figure 3.1, above). The four elements of the framework of the research exposed above determine 'what the researcher is looking for' and thus help him to thematise the corpus with the right level of inference.

Box 3.3 Validation criteria of qualitative methods

Validation of qualitative research refers to the objective of researchers to produce valuable results, in the sense of these results should contribute significantly to the understanding of reality, and more precisely of the phenomenon under scrutiny (Savoie-Zajc in Mucchielli, 2009a, p. 293). The aim of these confirmation criteria is to check if the results correspond to reality and provide reasonable and stable explanations of the object of research (without introducing personal bias in these explanations). Validation criteria are the object of discussion and should be listed and discussed by each researcher mobilising qualitative methods. Savoie-Zajc (2009c) proposes a list of these criteria: internal acceptance, internal coherence, external confirmation, completeness\cohesiveness and saturation⁴⁸. These criteria are discussed at different stages of the dissertation (particularly in Chapter 4).

⁴⁸ The criteria are translated from French by the author. The original list follows: “*acceptation interne, cohérence interne, confirmation externe, complétude et saturation*” (Savoie-Zajc, 2009c, p. 293).

3.1.1.3. *The sequenced thematic analysis*

As noted above, the thematic analysis of this dissertation is a sequenced one. Since there is no unique scheme of thematic analysis process, the following paragraphs present the sequences of the analysis processed for this research. It is divided in four steps: three readings and a discursive analysis. Some elements of the reading steps are collected in a ‘thematization logbook’ which constitute a record of the thematic analysis. This logbook gathers for instance, short notes about technical choices or determinants of relevant themes. It provides the list of cases under scrutiny at each step of the analysis, the thematisation list, and the drafts of thematic trees as well as brief notes about the process of thematisation.

The first reading concerns only the transcripts of the ‘fully’ transcribed interviews. The choice not to transcribe all interviews was made on the basis of resource availability. Given the resource available, it was too costly (in terms of time and money) to transcribe all the interviews. Consequently, only few interviews were selected to be transcribed fully (for details, see Chapter 4, point 4.2.1). It is prescribed to not directly thematise the transcripts during the first reading in order to acquire first an overview of the corpus (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016). In fact, without an overall look and knowledge of a corpus, it is difficult to find the right level of inference when coding at a first reading. However, the situation of this analysis (and the researcher) is particular. First, the interviews were conducted by the researcher who consequently acquired an overall knowledge of the cases and the content of the interviews. Second, the majority of the transcripts were written down by the analyst. Third, the corpus was already analysed by the researcher⁴⁹. Given these three elements, the thematisation was already conducted on the selected document at the first reading. The outcomes of this first reading are a thematisation list (list of the themes and their definition) and a first draft of the thematic tree (first attempt to sort the themes).

From the second reading, all cases are included in the analysis. Additionally to the cases analysed during the first reading (‘full transcription’), this step includes ‘focused transcriptions’ of all the interviews, concerning thus all the cases. These focused transcriptions concern the answers of the interviewees to one question of the interview grid (for details, see Chapter 4, section 4.2.1). Moreover, the recordings of all interviews (not fully transcribed) are listened to

⁴⁹ A thematic analysis was processed a first time for the purpose of conference papers (2017 ECPR General Conference, Oslo and 2017 UACES Conference, Krakow) during summer 2017. This first thematic analysis was the occasion for the analyst to experience the challenges inherent to this kind of exercise (e.g. find the right level of inference). For instance, the first coding made by the researcher was actually already interpreting the content (level of inference too high).

in order to have an overview of the cases. The outcomes of this second reading are a completed thematisation list and an updated version of the thematic tree.

The third reading aims to check and refine the thematisation. Some themes are merged, others are grouped. The description of each theme is also refined during this third reading. At this step, the transcriptions are not read case-by-case (as during the first two readings) but theme by theme. The overall objective of this third reading is to make the thematisation list more cohesive. While the level of inference was very low during the first two readings, a higher level of inference is adopted during this step (in order, for instance to merge some very similar themes). On the basis of this cohesive thematisation list, a final thematic tree is built (with in mind the completeness\cohesiveness criterion: see the box 3.3 above; details are provided in Chapter 4, section 4.3).

The last step of the thematic analysis consists in discursive analysis of the themes in order to present the results. The objective is to ‘draw out’ the themes and put them in relation to quotes from the interviews. It is also during this final step that the divergences, oppositions, convergences or complementarity between the themes are highlighted. The recurrence of themes or the ‘weight’ of categories of themes are analysed. This discursive analysis constitutes the majority of the content of Chapter 4 presenting the results of the thematic analysis.

3.1.2. Analysis based on ideal types

Analysis based on ideal types is a second-level type of content analysis where “*the researcher is interested in the latent content and deeper meaning embodied in the text, which may require more interpretation*” (Duriau et al., 2007). The objective is to denominate perceptible phenomena through a conceptual reading of a research material, or in other words, to identify experiences, interactions or logic of the actors under scrutiny in a theoretical perspective (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, pp. 319-320). Ideal types never summarise or classify social actions *per se*, “*they are formulated, first, through a conscious exaggeration of the essential features of empirical patterns of social actions of interest to the [researcher] and, second, through a synthesis of these characteristic action-orientation into an internally unifies and logically rigorous concept*” (Kalberg, 2005, p. 15).

Mucchielli (2009b) defines the “ideal type method” as a procedure of reflection carried out starting from cases (empirics) or starting from description of situations (conceptual description), consisting in the extract of the most fundamental characteristics of situations in

order to define an extreme type. This model serves as a benchmark to classify or hierarchize different actual cases encountered in the research⁵⁰.

3.1.2.1. *Ideal types: lessons from Max Weber*

The founding father of the concept of an ideal type is Weber. Its conception of the ideal type and the research context for which he developed this research strategy is helpful to understand the concept. The objective of Weber was to identify regularities of social action, which is the investigation of the subjective meaning of people in delimited groups (Kalberg, 2005, p. 14). Weber's ideal type is thus a research tool that documents the regularities of meaningful actions and charts the patterned action-orientation of groupings social relationships of people oriented to each other (Kalberg, 2005, p. 15):

An ideal type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasised viewpoints into a unified analytical construct. In its conceptual purity, this construct cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality. (Weber, 1949, p. 90, emphasis in original; cited in Kalberg, 2005, p. 15)

Ideal types are thus clear constructs that captures regular social relationships that enable precise definition of the empirical social action under investigation: *“As a logical concept, the ideal type establishes clear points of reference — or standards — against which empirical regularities of meaningful action of interest to the researcher can be compared”* (Kalberg, 2005, p. 16). Empirical data will be analysed through an assessment of their approximation to or deviation from ideal types. Ideal types are thus ‘constructed yardstick’ or conceptual instrument to assist empirical inquiry (Kalberg, 2005, p. 16).

Ideal types can be used for different purposes. Based on the work of Weber, Psathas (2005, pp. 165-167) provides a list of practical usages and features of the ideal type construct and model⁵¹.

⁵⁰ The original definition of Mucchielli (2009b, p. 113) is the following (in French: méthode de l'idéal type): “Procédure de réflexion menée à partir de cas ou de description de situations consistant à faire un « passage à la limite », c'est à dire à extraire des et situations caractéristiques les plus « typiques » (les plus fondamentales) pour définir un type extrême (« idéal type ») par rapport auquel on peut hiérarchiser les différents cas concrets rencontrés dans la recherche (Weber, 1965)”.

⁵¹ The list and explanation of the 12 items can be found at pages 165-167 of Psathas' chapter. The objective the author is to explain *“what the ideal type construct's features are and to separate its methodological features from its uses in applications to substantive analytic problems”*. The 12 features of and practical usages of the ideal type construct and model: to provide order, to select the significant, to provide understanding, as a guide, for heuristic

Some of these points are developed hereafter because of their relevance as regards the usage of ideal types in this dissertation. These described functions of ideal type constructs are useful for both the researcher and the reader. The usage of ideal types for this dissertation is motivated by all the functions described in the two following paragraphs.

Ideal type constructs are used in this dissertation to **provide understanding**: “*such selection and shaping provides for an understanding of the social phenomena being referenced by the ideal type*” (Psathas, 2005, p. 165). Weber explains that an ideal “*is not a description of reality but it aims to give unambiguous means of expression to such a description*” (Weber, 1949). Ideal type construct is used to **select the significant**. As noted by Psathas (2005, p. 165) “*it separates and selects what is proposed by the analyst as significant, essential and-or relevant from all the less significant, inessential, and-or less relevant*”. It serves **as a guide**. In this sense, ideal type analyses are a tool aims to highlight the aspects of occurrences referenced by the ideal type and dissociating the not included features.

The reference to an ideal-type “*can be indispensable for heuristic as well as expository purposes*” (Weber, 1949). When it is used for **heuristic purposes**, it allows researchers working on the basis of previous research to examine instances, situations or phenomena other than those originally studied. Ideal type is thus used to discover similar phenomena and lead to comparisons and contrasts with prior studies. In the same vein, Psathas (2005, p. 166) explains also the function of the ideal type model as **a guide for comparisons**. Ideal types, understood as theoretical models, propose relationships that may be regarded as construction of hypotheses to be explored or compared with concrete empirical cases. Weber explains ideal type: “*it is no "hypothesis" but it offers guidance to the construction of hypotheses*” (Weber, 1949).

3.1.2.2. *Analysing NIGs’ discourses with ideal types*

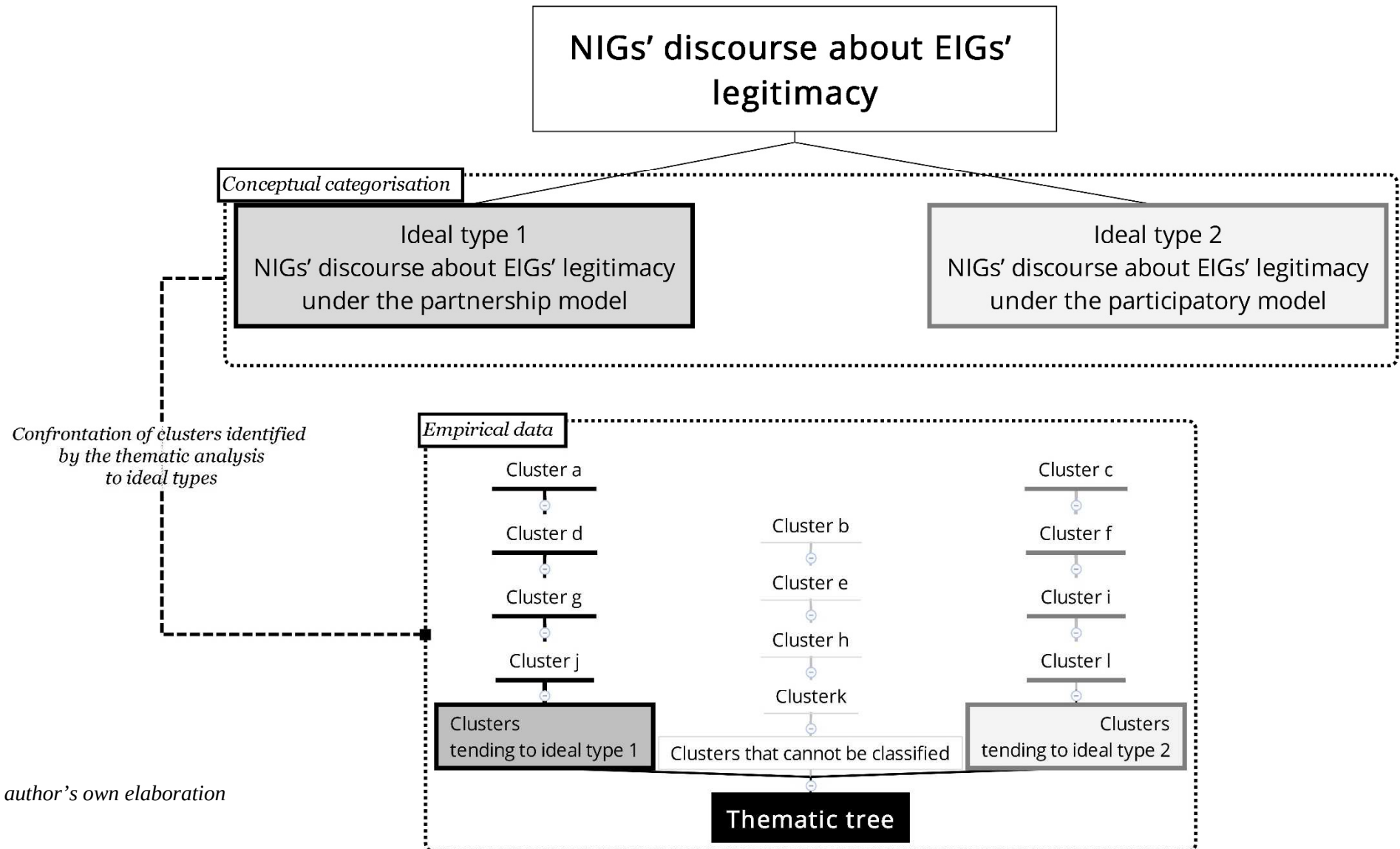
The analysis with ideal types of NIGs’ discourses about the legitimacy of their EIGs mobilises the outcomes of the thematic analysis. Two steps constitute the analysis with ideal types: (1) the building of ideal types and, (2) the comparison of empirical data with these ideal types (see the figure 3.5, hereafter).

The first step consists in the building of ideal types. The empirics under scrutiny which will be confronted to ideal types are the elements of legitimization discourses identify by the thematic

purposes, as orienting definition, as open and modifiable, in theoretical models, as guide for comparisons, as incorporating the analyst’s purposes, as different from essential or necessary features and as relevant for abstract, formal and general theorizing.

analysis (clusters of the thematic tree). Ideal types should thus concern elements of NIGs' discourse about EIGs' legitimacy. The objective of the analysis with ideal types is to identify if the elements through which NIGs legitimise their EIGs indicate the internalisation of the participatory model currently enforced at the EU-level (see Chapters 1 and 2) by these national actors. The discourses of NIGs provide information about how they publicise the role of their EIGs in the EU polity (and their own status vis-à-vis their EIGs).

Figure 3.5 Analysing NIGs' discourse about EIGs' legitimacy with ideal types



Source: author's own elaboration

This analysis with ideal types aims at identifying if elements of NIGs' discourses correspond to the elements of the participatory model promoted by the Commission from the 2000s or unveil the persistence of affirmation of elements from the partnership model. For this purpose, a model of two ideal types is drawn on the basis of elements that correspond, on the one hand, to the partnership model corresponding to a corporatist scheme, and on the other to the participatory model corresponding to pluralist norms. In other words, an ideal type concerns the legitimization discourse of NIGs vis-à-vis their EIGs within the context of an ideal 'EU partnership model' and the other ideal type concerns the legitimization discourse of NIGs vis-à-vis their EIGs within the context of an ideal 'EU participatory model'. These two ideal types are built on the basis of literature about EU-society relations (see Chapter 1, section 1.1).

The second step of the analysis is to confront the clusters of the thematic tree — which provide information about the content of NIGs legitimization discourse — to the ideal type previously drawn. Each cluster is classified in one of the following category: (1) elements tending to the ideal type 1 (ideal EU partnership model), (2) elements tending to the ideal type 2 (ideal EU participatory model) or, (3) elements not relevant for the current issue under scrutiny. As empirical data do not stick perfectly to the ideal types (by definition) the elements are classified in one category if they *tend* to correspond to that category.

In conclusion of this point, one should note that the analysis based on ideal type will be much less developed than the thematic analysis. Indeed, as noted earlier, this analysis goes beyond the issue raised by the first research question. The analysis based on ideal types is a means to put the outcome of the thematic analysis into perspective in a more systematic way than a usual discussion. This analysis based on ideal types is an instrument to structure the discussion about NIGs-EIGs relations as regards to the EU-society relations models. Further, after having outlined methodological issues related to the first empirical analysis, the next section is focuses on the second empirical analysis.

3.2. Analysing perceived congruence between national interest groups and European interest groups: QCA

This point is dedicated to the explanations of QCA which is used in this dissertation to identify the conditions under which NIGs perceive (or do not perceive) their positions as congruent with their EIGs' positions. This analysis focuses again on NIGs' perceptions, as the previous empirical analysis. This point is organised in three parts. First, set theoretic-methods are briefly

exposed. Secondly, the relevance of QCA to study NIGs' perceived congruence is detailed. Finally, several technical considerations are presented (notably the software packages used to process the QCA).

Prior to QCA presentation, it is important to note the exploratory purpose of this part of the dissertation. Indeed, no coherent theoretical set or propositions exist in order to explain the policy positions' congruence between European interest groups and their member organisations. Therefore, this part of the dissertation strives to provide explanatory paths to better understand (the absence of) NIGs' perceived congruence (as regards EIGs' positions).

3.2.1. QCA: a 'set-theoretic' or 'configurational comparative' method

QCA is based on the set-theoretic approach of social sciences. Schneider and Wagemann (2012, p. 3) provide an explanation of this type of set-theoretic methods: *"What are set-theoretic methods? Implicitly or explicitly, they all share three features: first, they work with membership scores of cases in sets; second, they perceive relations between social phenomena as set relations; third, these set relations are interpreted in terms of sufficiency and necessity, as well as forms of causes that can be derived from them"*. QCA is a particular type of set-theoretic methods and probably the method the most directly associated with set-theory (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, p. 8). This method is also labelled as a 'configurational comparative method' (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009). QCA was originally initiated by C. Ragin (1987), *"who first presented it as a research approach seeking to reconcile case-oriented ('qualitative') and variable-oriented ('quantitative') perspectives"* (Rihoux, 2017, p. 383).

QCA aims at a causal interpretation. The method allows for "multiple conjectural causation" across cases. This conception of causality could be described in three points (Berg-Schlusser, De Meur, Rihoux, & Ragin, 2009, p. 8):

1. Most often, it is a combination of causally relevant conditions that generates the outcome ($AB \rightarrow Y$).
2. Several different combinations of condition may produce the same outcome ($AB+CD \rightarrow Y$, + indicates a Boolean *or*).
3. Depending on the context, a given outcome may result from a condition when it is present and also when it is absent ($AB \rightarrow Y$ but also $aC \rightarrow Y$)⁵². In the example, [A] combined with [B] produces the occurrence of the outcome, but its absence [a] combined with [C] also produces the outcome.

⁵² The lowercase "a" means the condition a is absent. A capital "A" means the condition a is present.

QCA uses the so-called ‘truth tables’ in order for the analysts and readers to visualise and analyse central features of causal complexity. Moreover, “QCA approaches make use of the principles of logical minimization, a process by which the empirical information is expressed in a more parsimonious yet logically equivalent manner by looking for commonalities and differences among cases that share the same outcome” (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, p. 9). There are two main variants of QCA which are the crisp-set one (csQCA) and the fuzzy-set one (fsQCA). These two type of QCA differ in the type of sets on which they operate. On the one hand, csQCA operates only on sets where cases can either be members (1) or non-members (0) in the set. On the other hand, cases in fsQCA are allowed to have gradations of their membership to a given set. Crisp-set QCA is used in this research (see justification in the next point).

3.2.2. Relevance of QCA for an analysis of NIGs’ perceived congruence

The following paragraphs aim at explain the relevance of QCA (and of csQCA in particular) for an analysis of perceived congruence between NIGs and EIGs. The method of Qualitative Comparative Analysis has been chosen for different reasons, but first because it allows to handle qualitative and quantitative data and offers advantages in small- and inter-mediate-N social research designs (Rihoux, 2006; Rihoux & Lobe, 2009).

The research design of this dissertation fits perfectly with QCA. The sample of cases included in the analysis (see next point) covers a very large diversity of potentially observable cases. QCA is non-inferential and is used to systematise the analysis of the diversity of situation observed qualitatively through research in the field (here, via interviews). Moreover, QCA, as a multiple cross-case analysis, allows to handle small and intermediate N (Rihoux, 2006; Rihoux & Lobe, 2009), which is the number of cases included in this research (N=82). QCA is also particularly adapted to non-interval-level data which is the type of data under scrutiny here (data denoting qualitative distinctions between cases). Moreover, and more importantly, QCA is “complexity-oriented” in the sense that it is based on the assumption that some combinations of conditions (and not only a single condition) might produce an outcome of interest. Indeed, after field research it appears that explaining NIGs’ perception of congruence cannot be explain by some clear or ‘isolated’ variables. The cases for which (absence of) perceived congruence is observed show very diverse situations.

QCA can be used for several purposes (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, pp. 15-16). Here it first used for a data exploration purpose. QCA is used to check the coherence and summarise data in order to bring to light similarities or differences between cases and identify contradiction in the data

set. More importantly, QCA is used to test conjectures formulated on the basis of information collected through field work and to potentially develop some theoretical arguments that may explain NIGs' perceived congruence between their positions and their EIGs' ones. QCA is here used not in a typical 'theory-testing design' but rather as an abductive mode of reasoning (Morgan, 2007) which may be defined as "*reasoning from immersion in a scene to a verbal summary*" (Olsen, 2007). This part of the dissertation is based on a back-and-forth movement between case-based knowledge (induction) and some elements of theory (deduction), which fits perfectly with QCA (Rihoux & Lobe, 2009). Indeed, QCA is well-designed to handle a mix of 'field-based' propositions or conjectures and 'theory-based' hypotheses (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, pp. 15-16). Finally, for many conditions under scrutiny (see details in Chapter 5, point 5.2.3), there is no clear directional expectations (disputable directions). This situation is fully consistent with QCA which does not conceive "permanent causal direction" between a given condition and the outcome. Since the method is based on "multiple conjectural causation" (see, above), it does not require a test of separate directional hypotheses.

In this dissertation, crisp-set QCA (csQCA) has been chosen. First, the dichotomization allows the simplification necessary to progress in the understanding of complexity, which is particularly relevant for an exploratory analysis as the one presented in this second empirical analysis (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, pp. 148-152). QCA "*preserves the complexity of the situations underlying phenomena of interest while simplifying them as much as possible*" (Becker, 1998, p. 186; cited in Rihoux & Ragin, 2009). In this sense, QCA "*seeks to achieve some parsimony while also maintaining the complexity of each individual case*" (Rihoux, 2017). The dichotomisation allows a better synthesis of phenomena under scrutiny, which is crucial to study complex issues without strong explanatory propositions available *a priori*. For instance, fsQCA would have required a strong theory and a substantive literature to get benchmarks in order to set the different thresholds (which does not exist for the topic of this dissertation). Moreover, dichotomisation forces the researcher to make clear choices and introduces transparency into the research (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, p. 151). It also allows to easily replicate the analysis by other scholars, which is particularly interesting for an exploratory research. Dichotomisation forces also the analyst to get to the essentials, as the thresholds (being precise points) are strong indicators of the validity of each condition (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, p. 151). Finally, as remembered by Rihoux and Ragin (2009, p. 151), "*csQCA is best used in an iterative way*" and thus constitutes the best fundamental step of an exploratory analysis.

3.2.3. Software solutions for QCA

In order to process the Qualitative Comparative Analysis, the software solution TOSMANA has been chosen (see the figure 3.6). TOSMANA has been designed by Lasse Cronqvist from the University of Trier (Cronqvist, 2017).⁵³ The version used in this dissertation is the latest available (v. 1.54). This version was released on the 30th of June 2017. It can be used for conducting crisp-set, fuzzy-set and multivalued-QCA.

Figure 3.6 TOSMANA's interface

without_C_DICH6 - Tosmana

FileData(mv)QCAfsQCAAbout

DataData for QCA

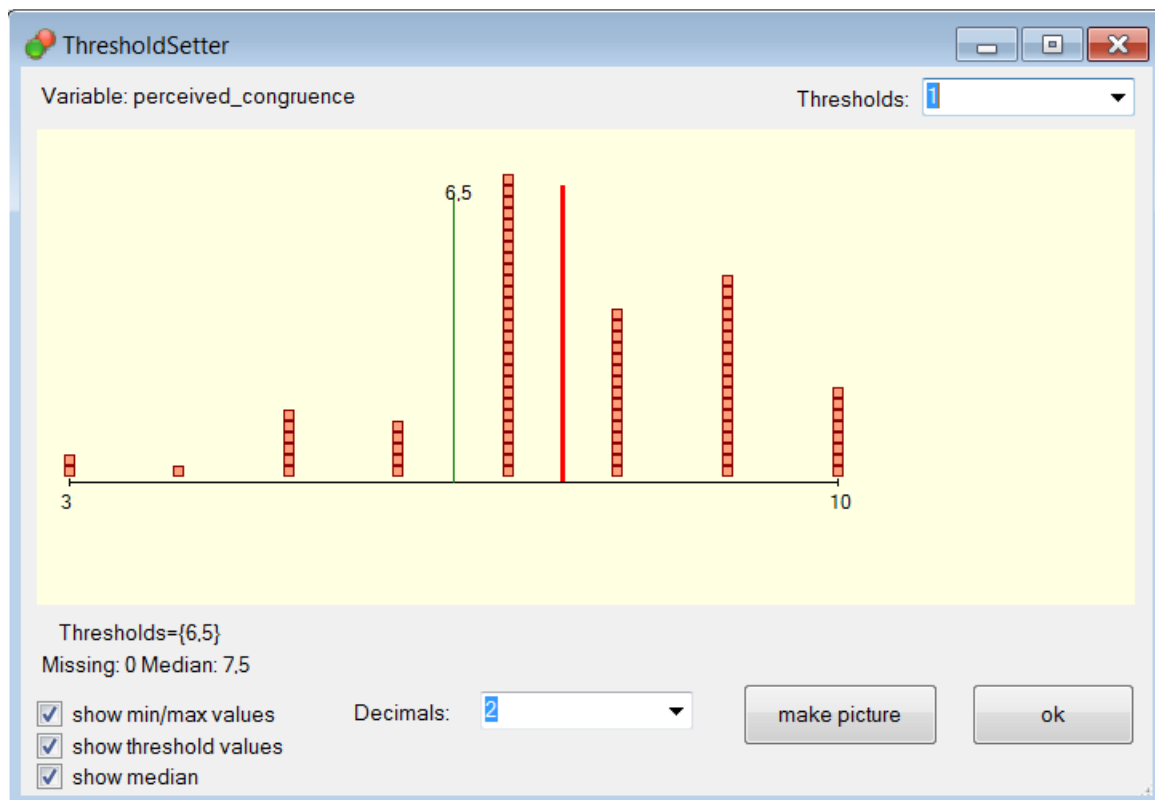
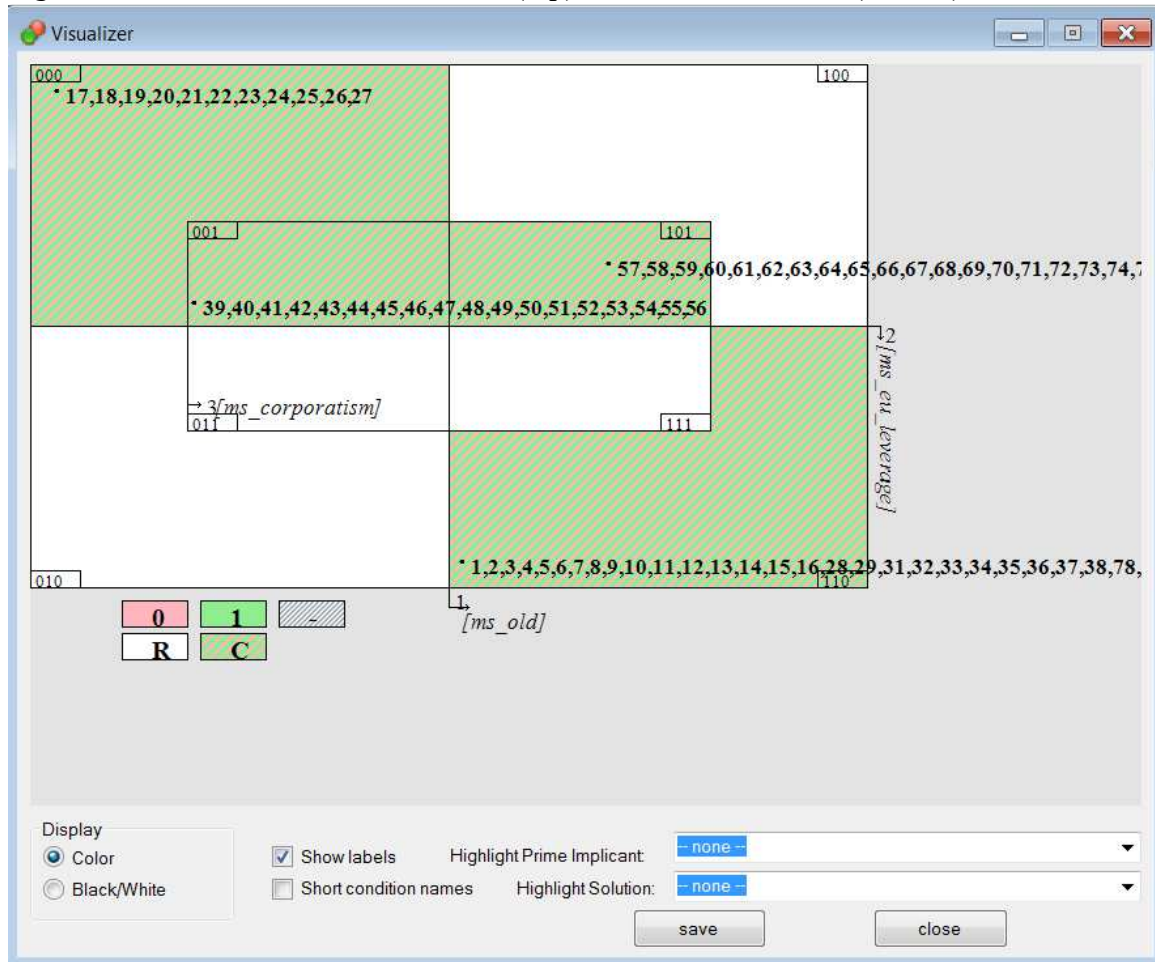
	eu_sal 2.5	non_eu_sal_raw 2.5	non_eu_lobb 0.5	oth_eig_memb	no_oth_eig_dic	staff 1	non_large_staff	non_direct_mem 1.5	freq_contact 1.5	mem_eig	few_mem_eig_d	perceived_congr 6.5
6	4	2	0	0	1	16	0	2	0	39	1	3
2	0	0	0	0	1	7.5	1	0	2	87	0	8
8	2	2	0	0	1	2	1	1	0	66	0	10
9	1	1	0	1	1	7	1	2	2	19	1	9
8	2	0	4	0	0	44	0	2	3	140	0	6
9	1	2	0	1	2	2	1	0	1	66	0	7
6	4	2	1	0	11	1	1	1	1	66	0	7
7	3	2	1	0	10	1	1	1	2	140	0	9
10	0	0	0	0	1	5	1	0	3	24	1	7
10	0	0	0	0	1	4	1	0	2	14	1	7
10	0	0	2	0	0	70	0	2	2	68	0	7
10	0	0	2	0	0	70	0	2	3	67	0	7
10	0	0	3	0	0	3	1	0	0	14	1	6
10	0	0	3	0	0	3	1	0	2	67	0	8
10	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3	190	0	10
10	0	0	1	0	8	1	0	0	2	39	1	7
10	0	2	0	0	1	32	0	0	1	48	0	9
8	2	1	0	0	1	2.5	1	0	2	35	1	8
10	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	25	1	7
10	0	0	2	0	0	7	1	2	2	39	1	8
10	0	0	2	0	0	7	1	2	1	33	1	10
10	0	2	0	1	1	1	1	0	2	140	0	8
9	1	1	1	1	0	1.5	1	0	2	36	1	8
6	4	1	0	1	0	8	1	2	2	35	1	5
1	9	2	0	1	1	20	0	2	0	35	1	3
9	1	2	0	0	1	24	0	0	3	27	1	9
10	0	0	1	0	0	10	1	0	3	50	0	7
10	0	0	1	0	0	10	1	0	1	67	0	7
10	0	2	0	1	0	2.5	1	1	2	18	1	9
10	0	2	2	0	0	4	1	0	3	140	0	10

Source: screenshot of TOSMANA (version 1.54)

TOSMANA provides a visualizer tool which creates Venn diagrams (see Chapter 5, section 5.7, for explanations about Venn diagrams) as well as a 'ThresholdSetter' (see the figure 3.7). This last tool provides visual representations of cases and conditions on which the user may easily set the thresholds to dichotomise the conditions. These figures are used in Chapter 5 to provide a visual overview of the distribution of cases for each condition (as well as the outcome). The ThresholdSetter has been also very useful to dichotomise conditions that are more complex to deal with (see Chapter 5, section 5.4).

⁵³ More information about TOSMANA is available on the following website: <https://www.tosmana.net/>. The latest version of TOSMANA (version 1.54) may be downloaded for free on this website.

Figure 3.7 TOSMANA's visualizer tool (top) and ThresholdSetter (bottom)



Source: screenshots of TOSMANA (version 1.54)

According to Cronqvist, TOSMANA may support operations of models with up to 15 conditions. However, for the minimisation operation of the data set of this research (with the full model, see Chapter 5, sections 5.8 and 5.9), TOSMANA got ‘submerged’. After exchanging e-mails with Cronqvist, it appears that the complexity of the data set was the source of the impossibility for TOSMANA to process the minimisation. This issue is discussed in Chapter 5 but is already mentioned here because it induces the usage of another software package.

In order to deal with the computation problem of TOSMANA, the solution chosen was to process the minimisation with the R package *QCA*, as R software environment has a greater ‘computation capacity’ than TOSMANA. The R package *QCA* has been designed by Duşa (from University of Bucharest)⁵⁴. The discussion of the results of the minimisation process (Chapter 5, point 5.9) is thus based on the R package *QCA*’s outcome. In summary, TOSMANA was used to build the truth tables corresponding to the different models as well as to provide Venn diagrams and figures related to conditions. R package *QCA* was used for the minimisation of the last (and full) model (see details in Chapter 5, sections 5.8 and 5.9).

The objective of this Chapter’s section about *QCA* was to provide an overview of the method and some technical details about this dissertation’s second empirical analysis. In summary, it should be stressed that *QCA* “*provides an original toolbox enabling one to handle multiple cross-case comparisons, to test models laying more emphasis on causal complexity, and to conduct formal\computer-run analyses while also keeping an eye on the ‘qualitative’ specificities of given cases*” (Rihoux, 2017, p. 383). After the presentation of methods in the first two sections, the next one is dedicated to case selection.

3.3. Case selection

The cases are dyadic relations between NIG and an EIG. 84 dyadic relations between 79 NIGs and 29 EIGs in four EU member states (France, Malta, Slovenia and Sweden) constitute the cases under scrutiny (some NIGs being members of more than one EIG). As explained in Chapter 2 (point 2.1.1), NIGs are defined as national organisations which aims to influence policy outcomes without seeking public office or compete in elections. For the purpose of this research are excluded: companies, public institutions or entities, local or regional interest

⁵⁴ More information about this R package may be found in the book “*QCA with R: A Comprehensive Resource*” (Duşa, 2018, forthcoming). The package can be installed from within R or be downloaded from the Comprehensive R Archive Network (the manual and all details about the package are also available on this website).

groups⁵⁵. EIGs are defined as organisations organised at the EU-level, gathering together at least two NIGs as defined above. One should note that the mention “NIGs” refer to “cases’ NIGs”. In this sense, “NIGs” refers to the situation of 84 NIGs in relation to their EIGs (even if in reality there are 79 NIGs, since some NIGs are members of two EIGs under scrutiny).

The initial rationale of case selection was to select first a population of EIGs on the basis of a consultation of the Commission and then contact their members in four countries. The choice to select first EIGs — on the basis of an EU consultation — and then NIGs member of these European umbrellas is based on the idea of ‘study Brussels from outside Brussels’. EIGs that are ‘partners’ of the EU are selected, and then, their members are scrutinised to look at what and who are behind these EU’s partner organisations (EIGs). As relationships between EIGs and NIGs are the core of the research, case selection is based on such relationships. The objective of case selection is to acquire a comprehensive picture of all types of national interest groups that are members of a given sample of EIGs.

This strategy of case selection allows also to take into account national groups that are maybe less engage in EU activities while still being a member of an EIG. Since it is easier to conduct research on interest groups that are *“highly visible and engage frequently in interest representation across a broad variety of topics [...] it is cumbersome to identify the less-visible actors, and almost impossible to retrieve all relevant actors out there trying to — maybe unsuccessfully — take part in the political process”* (Eising, 2017, p. 296). The choice to contact all organisations member of EIGs, and more importantly to conduct interviews in the member states, allows to reach NIGs that are usually slipping under the radar. Some interviews conducted in ‘remote areas’ — from a small ski resort in northern Sweden to a Slovenian limestone quarry close to Bled — indicate that some of NIGs under scrutiny might not often constitute cases of research about interest groups in Europe.

The strategy of selecting one consultation (the stakeholder consultation of the ‘fitness check’ of the EU Nature Legislation) allows analysing different actors by keeping policy-specific and overall European context idiosyncrasies under control. Moreover, this consultation is ‘very broad’ in the sense of it does not address very specific technical policies or a particular industrial sector. The potential number and types of interest groups that might have an interest in this issue are very broad. Of course, this choice is also a limit of the case selection strategy since

⁵⁵ This means that even if some EIGs under scrutiny is this research have actually amongst their members some companies, public institutions or local interest groups, the focus of the dissertation is only on the relationship between *national interest groups* and EIGs.

interest groups (potentially) active only in other policy issues are not scrutinised. The selection is based on the idea of following the logic of the Commission when it chooses the European partners to include in its stakeholders consultation (see details hereafter, in point 3.2.1). According to the Commission, “*effort has been made to ensure that evidence is gathered from a geographically balanced and representative sample of all relevant sectors and interest groups*”. This consultation is also selected because it concerns environment, a policy-issue highly Europeanised (Delreux & Happaerts, 2016; A. J. Jordan & Liefferink, 2004). Consequently, the EU-level constitutes the most pertinent level to target in terms of lobbying for this legislation (Hallstrom, 2004). NIGs members of selected EIGs should thus have actual connections with their European umbrella since they should be potentially interested in this issue, at least according to the Commission (the point 3.2.1 comes back on this assumption).

Moreover, the choice to select national members of EIGs in four member states is based on different motives. First, the four countries allow the inclusion, in the research design, of different domestic environments within which NIGs are active. The four countries are selected because they differ on several characteristics while also have some common features (they show ‘features crossover’, see details in point 3.2.1). The idea to select these four member states is to analyse the potential effect of different features of domestic environments on the EU-related perceptions and activities of NIGs. Selecting four countries allows to analyse different situations while keeping ‘finer knowledge’ of different contexts and cases possible (as well as data collection feasible by a single researcher). Finally, but to a lesser extent, the language issue has also driven the choice of the four country⁵⁶.

The overall rationale behind the case selection is that the scrutiny of the selected cases allows to acquire a comprehensive understanding of how different national interest groups perceive EIGs within different national contexts. Domestic contexts are different, but NIGs also differ from each other; for instance, in terms of resources, types of interest they advocate or membership composition. The following points provide detailed information on the different elements that drove the case selection mentioned in the previous paragraphs. The next point presents the stakeholder consultation of the ‘fitness check’ of the EU Nature Legislation. The point 3.2.2 offers an overview of the domestic contexts of NIGs under scrutiny. In other words, France, Malta, Slovenia and Sweden are described with regard to characteristics analysed in

⁵⁶ French and English are the two languages mastered by the researcher (at least to conduct an interview).

this dissertation. Finally, the last point provides an overview of investigated cases with a particular focus on characteristics of NIGs under scrutiny.

3.3.1. The ‘fitness check’ of the EU Nature Legislation

The case selection is made on the basis of a part of a consultation launched by the European Commission during spring 2015: the stakeholder consultation on the Fitness Check of EU Nature Legislation. *“The purpose of the consultation was to gather opinions on current EU nature conservation legislation (the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive) and its implementation to date, as part of the 'fitness check' that the European Commission is carrying out under its Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT)”* (European Commission, 2015). These Habitats and Birds Directives are the main legislative framework aiming at protecting biodiversity across Europe by creating a network of protected areas: the Natura 2000 networking programme (Blondet et al., 2017). The fitness check evaluated how the EU Nature Legislation performs according to five criteria (European Commission, 2016b): effectiveness (have the objectives of the legislation been met?), relevance (does EU legislation address the main problems that species and habitats are facing today?), EU added value (could similar changes have been achieved at national or regional level, or did EU action provide clear added value?), efficiency (were the costs involved reasonable?), and coherence (is the EU nature legislation complementing or contradicting other policy and legislation?). At the end of the entire fitness check process, the directives were declared ‘fit for purpose’ (see box 3.4).

Box 3.4 Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive. Fit for purpose? Fit for purpose!

On the 12th of December 2016, the European Commission declared the Birds and Habitats directives ‘fit for purpose’ (European Commission, 2016a). Both directives are part of European Union’s nature protection laws which support the implementation of the Natura 2000 network of conservation sites. The network covers 18% of the EU’s land area and 4% of its seas. Designed to “*maintain the population of all species of wild birds in the EU at a level which corresponds to ecological, scientific and cultural requirements*”, the Birds directive (European Union, 2009; firstly issued on the 2nd of April 1979, as 79\409\EEC) bans activities like collecting eggs and destroying nests. Hunting is also limited to specific seasons, methods and species. The Habitats directive (European Communities, 1992) aims to “*maintain or restore natural habitats and species of EU interest*” by providing special conservation status for over 1000 species of plants and animals in some 230 different habitat types.

In November 2014, the European Commission of Jean-Claude Juncker started a programme (REFIT) aiming at scrutinizing different EU legislation pieces and identifying where red tape could be cut and how a ‘better regulation’ could be delivered. Part of this Program, Environment Commissioner Karmenu Vella was ordered to examine the potential for ‘merging’ the directives on Habitats and Birds “*into a more modern piece of legislation*”. But some critics of environmental interest groups feared the strategy is a mask for a pro-business agenda that would drive down nature protection standards. That decision sparked an unprecedented public outcry, with more than half a million European citizens responding in record numbers to a Commission consultation on the review. The fitness check study conducted by the European Commission included four stages: a stakeholder consultation (January – June 2015), a public consultation (April – July 2015), a high-level stakeholder conference (on November the 20th, 2015) and a final report by independent experts on the outcome of their fitness check study (expected for December 2015)⁵⁷.

⁵⁷ See, Milieu Ltd, Institute for European Environmental Policy, and ICF International and Ecosystems Ltd (2016): “Evaluation Study to support the Fitness Check of the Birds and Habitats Directives”.

As noted above, the strategy used by the European Commission to organise the stakeholder consultation provides an interesting method to select cases. Indeed, during ‘Phase 1’, the Commission contacted 45 EU level organisations (and four stakeholder organisations in each member state) to ask them to respond to a questionnaire. According to the Commission, the group of organisations included in the consultation is geographically balanced and representative of all relevant sectors and interest groups. During ‘phase 2’, the consultation was open to everyone (citizens, companies, local authorities ...) via an online consultation. This strategy is an illustration of the move of the Commission towards a pluralist and participatory approach of consultation (see Chapter 1, point 1.1.2) which couple public internet consultations (Quitkat, 2011) with a more traditional stakeholder consultation.

12 weeks public internet consultation part of the fitness check attracted more than 552,000 responses. The latter were strongly influenced by different campaigns (European Commission, 2016a). This number of responses constitutes the highest response rates of all public consultations conducted by EU institutions so far. Amongst those responses, *“491,968 responses were collected as a result of the Nature Alert campaign. This was the largest campaign response by far, accounting for 90% of all responses to the Birds and Habitats Directives public consultation”* (European Commission, 2016b). The Nature Alert campaign was organised by four EIGs. The campaign was initiated and coordinated by Birdlife Europe, the European Environmental Bureau, Friends of the Earth Europe and WWF Europe. While few other campaigns were initiated at the national level, this ‘European leadership’ took by EIGs to organise the mobilisation of grassroots members (usually through their national member organisations)⁵⁸ is an illustration of the persistence of the predominance of European umbrellas as ‘gatekeepers’ of engagement on EU issues. Despite the implementation of Commission’s ‘participatory agenda’ through the conducting of large, open and multilevel consultation (Bouza García, 2015b) that may challenge the central position of EIGs (Oleart & Bouza, 2017), the example of the Nature Alert campaign suggests that EIGs the central players of the EU interest representation system (see, Chapter 1, point 1.1.3).

⁵⁸ The leadership of EIGs and the fact that the impulse ‘came from the EU level’, were clearly identified in the interviews with environmental NIGs. As explained by a Belgian NIG representative during the exploratory interviews: *“[c’est] les quatre coupes européennes qui ont coordonné ça [the Nature Alert Campaign]. Et qui ont demandé à chaque bureau national d’implémenter ça. Donc, en gros, ils nous ont fourni tout, tout le matériel et nous on devait juste implémenter cette page internet sur notre site. Et comme ça, tout le monde en Europe avait le même message et le même système et la même adresse”* (interview 16).

Coming back to case selection, NIGs are selected amongst member organisations (NIGs) of the EIGs consulted by the Commission during phase 1. As noted above, the stakeholders consultation concerned 45 European organisations. 13 of these European organisations are not umbrella associations gathering together (non-public) national members organisations: three of them are European foundations or charities (ClientEarth, Oceana and FERN), four of them are European networks of public institutions and state-owned organisations (Europarc Federation, EUSTAFOR, FECOF and USSE), one is a network of EU organisations (EHF – IUCN), two have no ‘non-public’ members in the four member states selected (Eurosite and INE), two have no national members (only local or regional associations in very few EU Member-States: COBATY International and Reindeer Herding), one has only companies as members (IOGP). Moreover two out of these 45 EIGs have no members in any of the four member states selected (EUDA and ETOA). Finally, no NIG member of a selected EIG (UEPG) did reply to the interview request. Consequently, amongst the 45 organisations selected by the Commission, 29 EIGs are actually under scrutiny in this research (at least from the perspective of one NIG)⁵⁹. 105 NIGs from France, Malta, Slovenia or Sweden and being member of these 29 EIGs were contacted (see the table 3.1, hereafter for a summary of which EIGs are included in the sample). Finally, 78 interviews with representatives of 79 NIGs (one interviewee working for 2 NIGs) were conducted. More details about cases under scrutiny are provided in section 3.5 (information about interviews are detailed in section 3.4).

⁵⁹ The subtraction is the following: 45 (European organisation selected by the Commission) – 13 (European organisations which are not umbrella associations gathering together (non-public) NIGs) – 2 (EIGs which have no NIGs from the four member states selected as members) – 1 (no NIG member of a selected EIG ever replied) = 29

Table 3.1 EIGs under scrutiny in the dissertation (cell in bold) and the EIGs discarded

45 European organisations were selected by the European Commission to take part at the stakeholder consultation			
32 EIGs gathering together NIGs		[DISCARDED] 13 European organisations → not umbrella associations gathering together ('non-public') NIGs ↓	
30 have at least one member in one of the four MS		[DISCARDED] 2 EIGs → no members in FR, MT, SI & SE	– 3 European foundations or charities (no members) – 4 European networks of public institutions and state-owned organisations ('public NIGs') – 1 network of EU organisations – 2 organisations have no 'non-public' members in the 4 MS selected – 2 organisations have no national members (only local) – 1 has only companies as members
29 EIGs = at least one NIG from FR, MT, SI or SE was interviewed	[DISCARDED] 1 EIG → No NIG from FR, MT, SI & SE replied to interview requests		

Source: author's own elaboration

In brief, the strategy of selecting the cases on the basis of the stakeholders consultation of the 'fitness check' of the EU Nature Legislation allows to analyse different NIGs by keeping policy-specific and overall European context idiosyncrasies under control. Of course, this is also a limit since some interest groups active on other policy issues are not amongst the cases under scrutiny. This is particularly significant for cause groups and less significant for sectional groups. Indeed, this means that cause groups under scrutiny are mainly environmental CSOs, which is a particular type of cause groups. However, this limit has to be put into perspective. The interviews were about the overall relations of NIGs with their EIGs and were not focused on the fitness check consultation. The few questions related to the fitness check were 'ignored' by many interviewees because they were not aware at all about this consultation, or the issue in general. While the fitness check was a 'gateway' to select EIGs, this consultation is not the focus of this research which essentially addresses relations between NIGs and EIGs. However, this starting point is not ignored since, for instance, the fact that cause groups are environmental CSOs is discussed at later stages of the research.

Ultimately, one should note that the very first aim of selection this consultation was to analyse to actual congruence between NIGs' positions and EIGs' positions about the consultation of the fitness check. However, the exploratory interviews revealed that the majority of groups (and particularly, sectional groups) did not know anything about this consultation (and for some of

them did not know anything about Natura 2000). This led to a shift of focus of the dissertation: from a focus on the particular case of the fitness check on Nature Legislation and the congruence between NIGs' and EIGs' positions on the subject, to an analysis of the overall perceived congruence between NIGs' and EIGs' positions. *A posteriori*, the change of focus made the dissertation more relevant as regards to the understanding of the 'big picture' of national interest groups in the EU polity. Nevertheless, the 'ignorance' of many NIGs about fitness check consultation needs to be unpacked; particularly given the following points: 1) the Commission had selected their EIGs to be privileged stakeholder during the phase 1 of the consultation, 2) several EIGs have actually replied to the consultation (while their member did not know about), and 3) the consultation got the highest response rates of all public consultations conducted by EU institutions. This interesting puzzle will be unpacked in further publications using data collected for this dissertation.

3.3.2. The four member states: France, Malta, Slovenia and Sweden

The four member states are selected in order to cover different NIGs' domestic environment variables. The four countries differ but also have some common characteristics in terms of system of interest intermediation, year of adhesion to the EU and institutional leverage at the EU level. Additionally, these countries also have very different geographic situations. As noted above, the idea to select these four member states is to analyse the potential effect of different features of domestic environment on the EU-related perceptions and activities of NIGs. Variables related to domestic environment presented at this point will be mobilised in both empirical analyses of this dissertation. In the discursive analysis (Chapter 4), the member state of origin is used as a control variable to test if the domestic environment has an effect on the elements of discourse used by NIGs. For the second empirical analysis (Chapter 5), domestic environment characteristics are used as conditions for the qualitative comparative analysis in order to identify if they participate in the explanation of the (absence of) NIGs' perceived congruence. The table hereafter (table 3.2) provides a first overview of the four member states and the variables mentioned above. The last column shows the number of cases corresponding to each member state. After the table, each member state is briefly presented in order to provide contextual information about cases under scrutiny.

Table 3.2. Features of member states

Member states	Year of adhesion to the EU	Institutional leverage at the EU level*	System of interest intermediation**	Number of related cases
France	1957	29	Pluralist	32
Malta	2004	3	Pluralist	11
Slovenia	2004	4	Corporatist	18
Sweden	1995	10	Corporatist	23

* The figures provided in this column correspond to the number of votes each member state has in the Council of the European Union.

** The labels presented in this column are based on ‘pluralism scores’ as defined by Lijphart: “*The scores are pluralism scores: high scores reflect a high degree of pluralism, and low scores indicate strong corporatism*”⁶⁰. The scores are the following: France (2,9), Malta (3) and Sweden (0.35). Slovenia was not part of Lijphart’s analysis. Consequently, Slovenia’s label reflects the output of an interview with Prof. Danica Fink-Hafner (University of Ljubljana, expert on civil society and interest groups in Slovenia, interview 79) who describes Slovenia as a neo-corporatist country ‘close to Sweden’ (see also for instance: Fink-Hafner, Hafner-Fink, & Novak, 2014).

3.3.2.1. France

“French patterns of interest intermediation are characterized by state domination, a strong emphasis on the general interest, a long-lasting scepticism towards private interest associations and conflictual modes of interest representation” (Klüver, 2010, p. 182). While lobbying has been historically and culturally a controversial practice in France (Courty, 2008), it “*might become a more accepted element of the political and public life in the following decades*” (Sallé & Marchi, 2017, p. 155). Such evolution is already clearly perceptible, notably via the diffusion of interest representation practices through exchange with European groups and the europeanisation of national public policies (Sallé & Marchi, 2017) as well as the ‘stress’ resulting from the development multilevel governance (Grossman & Saurugger, 2006). If France shows a high pluralism score (2,9 according to the index designed by Lijphart, 2012, pp. 158-173), this score indicates mainly an “opposition” to corporatism. Indeed, France can be considered as a typical example of the ‘étatiste’ philosophy (Kohler-Koch, 1999) even if this feature might be eroding. Based on the notion of “État-Nation”, the centralised state is responsible for preserving the identity of the Nation and intermediary bodies are judged as an impediment to the accomplishment of the general interest. As an illustration regarding EU issues, France has established a central institution — the Secrétariat général des affaires Européenne — in order to coordinate and channel European affairs in France (Lequesne, 1993).

⁶⁰ NB minimum: Sweden = 0,35; maximum: Canada = 3,25. For more details, see Lijphart (2012, pp. 158-173).

France has certainly a great institutional leverage within the EU institutions. The second most populous country in Europe with 66 million inhabitants (around 13% of the total EU population), the influence of France in the EU is considerable. This situation rubs off within the internal structure of European interest groups. NIGs from France are usually more numerous within EIGs structures (when more than one NIGs per MS are allowed) and are also often amongst the most important financial contributors. Moreover, the long history of France within the EU make French NIGs the oldest organisations in many EIGs (with their German, Italian, Dutch, Belgian or Luxembourgish counterparts) and or the founding members of many EIGs. All these points are illustrated by the French NIGs under scrutiny. By contacting all NIGs member of a given set of EIGs, French NIGs in the sample are more numerous than NIGs from other countries.

3.3.2.2. *Malta*

Malta is the smallest EU member state (with around 420.000 inhabitants and 316 km² of land) and has a political system based on the Westminster model inherited from its status of former British colony (Harwood, 2017; Lijphart, 2012). Malta is characterised by a pluralist system of interest intermediation which combines a majoritarian principle of political relations and a logic of polity favouring the ‘individualistic’ pursuit of interests (Kohler-Koch, 1999). Concerning EU issues and interest groups, the Maltese government has established a state body which deals directly with sectional and cause groups about EU affairs (Harwood, 2017). This body – the Malta-EU Action and Steering Committee (MEUSAC) – was established in 1999 within the context of Malta’s EU application. This council provides EU-related briefings to Maltese NIGs and also serves as a consultation arena where groups can engage directly to lobby the government on EU issues. Besides these institutional features, because of the small size of the state, Maltese politics, and *a fortiori* interest representation, is a matter of personal relationships (Kanol, 2014; Vassallo, 2016).

Given the small size of the country, many economic activities does not take place on the three inhabited islands of the Maltese archipelago. Consequently, EIGs from sectors that are unexploited in Malta have, of course, no Maltese members (e.g. there is no forest on the islands; logically, no Maltese forestry-related groups exist). This is reflected in the sample of Maltese NIGs under scrutiny. Moreover, Maltese NIGs show an overall low level of europeanisation, in terms of engagement in EU affairs (Vassallo, 2016). Vassallo (2016) explains it by the domestic embeddedness of Maltese groups and coercive constraints such as the lack of sufficient

resources and the geographical remoteness. On the other hand, Vassallo (2016) notes also that some organised Maltese groups, that are excluded locally because of their autonomy from state patronage, strive to get from the EU what they cannot obtain at home. Finally, as regards the EU Nature legislation, one should note that there is an intense stakeholder's conflict between nature conservation and hunting in Malta (Briguglio, 2014; Veríssimo & Campbell, 2015).

3.3.2.3. Slovenia

Slovenia's interest intermediation arrangement is corporatist (Fink-Hafner et al., 2014). However, the European integration process triggered a slight shift towards fewer neo-corporatist patterns of decision-making in the domestic arena (Fink-Hafner, 2017, p. 307). *"Slovenia has a rich interest group tradition in terms of the number of organisational memberships per person"* (Fink-Hafner et al., 2014, p. 3). While Slovenian economic interest groups easily access national institutions through different channels (the Economic and Social Council, the National Council as well as the National Assembly and executive bodies), non-economic groups *"more or less depend on financial support and the openness of the (Slovenian and/or EU-level) state – and therefore face difficulties with actively and autonomously engaging in policymaking processes"* (Fink-Hafner, 2017, p. 303).

Slovenians compose 0,4% of the EU population. The member state has 4 votes in the Council of the European Union and counts 8 Slovenian MEPs in the European Parliament. That is to say that the leverage of the state is all but important. When considering the EU-related activities of Slovenian NIGs, it appears that their Europeanisation (understood here as establishing contact with EU-level decision makers or applying for EU funds) is relatively low (Fink-Hafner, 2017). *"Slovenian non-governmental organizations appear to use their access to European institutions primarily to enrich their resources and by doing so become dependent on the European Commission and Eurogroups"* (Fink-Hafner, 2017, p. 307). However, the EU accession and funding accentuate the professionalisation of interest groups in Slovenia (Maloney, Hafner-Fink, & Fink-Hafner, 2018). Overall, the accession of Slovenia to the EU induced the creation of more interest groups in the country as well as an increase of lobbying activity at the national level (Maloney et al., 2018), but did not trigger a significant extension of Slovenian lobbying activities at the EU-level (Fink-Hafner, 2017).

3.3.2.4. Sweden

Sweden is a typical, if not the archetypal, example of a social-democratic welfare state regime (Esping-Andersen, 1990), with a 'pure' corporatist system of interest intermediation (Lijphart,

2012). *“The relationship between civil society and the state has been described as one of “trust-based mutual dependency” promoting a shared and consensus oriented political culture”* (Lundberg & Sedelius, 2014, p. 326). The degree of membership to civil society organisations and citizen engagement is very high (Lundberg & Sedelius, 2014, p. 326). Indeed, *“comparatively, the citizens of Scandinavian countries are the most active in Europe regarding most modes of participation”* (Amnå, 2006, p. 5). Interest groups, including CSOs, act as intermediates between Swedish citizens and the state (Wijkström & Zimmer, 2011).

Concerning the effect of the EU multilevel polity on Swedish groups, it appears that NIGs are often engaged in a double movement of downloading advantages of EU opportunities and uploading their positions at the EU-level. This trend reflects at some point the attitude of Sweden in the EU. In the environmental policy field for instance, while Sweden ranks very high in relation to compliance with EU legislation, *“Swedish policy makers have managed to reduce adaptive pressures by uploading Swedish policy to the EU level”* (Kronsell, 2004, p. 189). However, the extending of lobbying activities towards EU institutions is relatively limited (Hedlund, 2017). It is also interesting to note that a lot of Swedish NIGs do cooperate with their Scandinavian counterparts in order to prepare upstream common positions that they will defend together within EIGs.

3.4. Data collection

3.4.1. Interviewing key actors in national interest groups

This dissertation follows the epistemological paradigm of qualitative methods which *‘attach primary importance to the perspective of conscious actors who attach subjective meaning to their actions and interpret their own situations and that of others’* (Devine, 2002, p. 201). For the first empirical analysis, qualitative methods are used to analyse interviews transcripts in order to identify how political experiences are constructed by actors (Hopkin, 2002). As described above, the analysis focuses on a given part of the interview. For the second empirical analysis (QCA) the interviews were used to collect information about conditions and more importantly the outcome under scrutiny.

Each case is analysed on the basis of an interview with the ‘NIG’s key actor’ when it comes to understanding NIGs activities related to EU issues. The table a.3.1 (in appendixes, list of interviews conducted) provides details about all the interviews that were conducted during the

research⁶¹. The majority of interviews were conducted in face-to-face, while some were conducted by phone or via Skype. No particular bias were identified as regards to differences between face-to-face interviews and the others⁶². The drawback of interviews via Skype or phone is that they do not allow the researcher to fully appreciate the work environment of interest groups in different countries, the cultural habits ... However, with 89 face-to-face interviews and 24 Skype\phone interviews, this does not constitute any issue.

Usually, the interviewees are NIGs' coordinator (CEO, director, Secretary General ...) or the person in charge of European Affairs or the relations with the EIGs. Some of the interviewees were elected (this is shown on the list of interviews with an asterisk following interviewee's positions). In those cases, it was usually because the NIG has actually no paid staff or because it is an elected who manage EU affairs. In one NIG (SSNC), the president (elected) is actually paid full time and her elected position becomes her job during the mandate. The overall idea when contacting the potential interviewees was to reach the actors who have the broadest perspective and a global knowledge on the relationship between the national organisation and the EIG. Consequently, the persons contacted (when the 'general address' or phone was not the only available contact detail) was the NIGs' coordinator or the EU Affairs manager in bigger NIGs. An example of the (first) e-mail sent to NIGs in order to request an interview can be found in appendixes (document a.3.1). All contact details were retrieved from NIGs' websites by the researcher. The (missing or personal) contact details were also requested to the interviewees at the end of the interviews (concerning their counterparts in other countries or in other NIGs). The staff members interviewed are in general responsible for coordination, communication and advocacy (including consultation with members, writing positions and communicating them). The overall objective of interviewing the persons is to obtain the big picture of NIGs' situations and identify their perceptions about their EIGs. For this last point,

⁶¹ The table a.3.1 (List of interviews conducted) present the list of interviews conducted during the research. The interviews are sorted by date. The column *Itw* shows the status of each interview (Explo = exploratory interview; case = interview used for analysing a case (or two, when the NIG is member of two EIGs); info = informational interview). In the column *Position of the interviewee*, if the position is followed by an asterisk, it means that the interviewee occupies an elected mandate within the organisation. The column *MS* and *City* and *Place* provide details about where the interviews were conducted (place of the interviewer). The column *Type* explains how the interview was conducted (F2F = face to face, Tel = by phone, Skype = via Skype conversations). The last column provides the length of the recordings. When cells are blank it does not mean that there is no recordings but it means that the length is not reported (N.A. means that no recording was made, but it concern only two meetings — which were not interviews — but which are reported in the table because they constitute an informational collection of data).

⁶² For instance, the durations of interview recordings — which might incidentally indicates how deep the discussions were — do not differ much between face-to-face interviews and Skype\phone interviews: mean durations of respectively 57:59 and 51:40 minutes.

the objective is to understand interviewees' perceptions in order to allow the reconstruction of the latent content of meaning of the interviews (Bogner, Littig, & Menz, 2009, p. 6).

The interview grid was stable during the interviews with the NIGs under scrutiny. The grid is divided in three parts (document a.3.2, in appendixes). The first part of the interview is dedicated to the national organisation and its characteristics. Given the fact that many data available on websites are outdated, this part of the interview aims at checking NIGs' organisational features. The second part of the interview is dedicated to the EU-related activities of NIGs and to their relation with their EIG. Three questions are scales (see the documents following the interview grid in appendixes). These scales were presented separately to the interviewee (corresponding to the interview proceeding). The concluding question of this part of the interview is focused on the consultation part of the fitness check on the EU Nature Legislation. The third part of the interview was dedicated to the profile of the interviewee. The interview grid was designed following the first experiences of interviews conducted in Belgium with Belgian NIGs. Questions were also inspired by the interview and survey questions of the research of Kröger (2016) about the europeanisation of CSOs.

The objective of the interviews is to collect two kinds of data, facts and perceptions (Donegani, Duchesne, & Haegel, 2002, p. 274): *"facts refer to behaviours or events, while the representations reveal some of the systems of meanings and values through which actors perceive what they are and what they do"*⁶³. Both types of data are used in both empirical analyses but for different purposes. Perceptions are at the core of the first empirical analysis. The thematic analysis aims to process a work of construction and interpretation necessary to study 'representation systems' (Donegani et al., 2002, p. 274)⁶⁴. However, facts (concerning organisational characteristics, for instance) are also used in the first empirical analysis in order to identify if different perceptions are only shared by particular types of groups or if some elements are widely shared amongst NIGs across Europe (and diverging as regards to their organisational features). For the second empirical analysis (QCA), the outcome under scrutiny concern perceptions (perceived congruence), while facts are used to establish the conditions.

A total of 111 interviews were conducted. Amongst them, 78 interviews concerned representatives of 79 national organisations (one interviewee working for 2 NIGs). Information

⁶³ Original quote in French: *"Les faits renvoient à des comportements ou à des événements, tandis que les représentations donnent à voir une partie des systèmes de significations et de valeurs à travers lesquels les acteurs perçoivent ce qu'ils sont et ce qu'ils font"* (Donegani et al., 2002, p. 274).

⁶⁴ *"L'étude des systèmes de représentations exige tout un travail de construction et d'interprétation"* (Donegani et al., 2002, p. 274).

about the other interviews are briefly provided in the next point. The list of interviews can be found in appendixes (table a.3.1, list of interviews conducted). The next section details the list of NIGs identified as potential cases but for which interviews cannot be conducted (more details in the next section and in the table 3.3).

As a conclusion to this point about interviews, it is important to note that all quotes provided in this dissertation are anonymised. It was guaranteed to the interviewees that their declarations will not be made public in direct relations to their organisations' name. Some interviewees clearly asked a confirmation about this when they were speaking about their relations with their EIGs or with their counterparts from other member states. Because of this, NIGs' names are never provided in direct relations with interviews' quotes. Each quote is linked to the nature of interest a NIG represent and its member state of origin (e.g. "Maltese cause group"). Of course, other information about the cases are put in relations with quotes when necessary, but it does not allow linking directly a quote to a NIG. Ultimately, it must be noted that quotes from interviews conducted in French are translated into English by the author. These translations are made for indicative purposes only. Readers are invited to refer to the original quotes in French (in footnotes) to get the actual words used by interviewees.

3.4.2. Additional corpus: documents and peripheral interviews

23 exploratory interviews with representatives from Belgian organisations and 10 informational interviews were conducted (national groups not being a member of a European interest groups, 1 expert interview and 1 with a representative of a European interest group). The researcher attended the annual conference of a French NIG (Union française de l'électricité) in Paris and a meeting of the Malta Council for Economical and Social Development in Valletta. Information about these interviews are also included in the list of interviews in appendixes (table a.3.1, list of interviews conducted).

The purpose of exploratory interviews was to test a first version of the interview grid and also to practice interviews conduction. The objective was also to understand how NIGs staff members speak about their relations with their EIGs. It was also the occasion to collect data on the consultation on EU Nature legislation from Belgian NIGs perspective. Belgium was chosen for practical reasons (the researcher has an overall good knowledge of the political context and the 'interest representation landscape'; and not much financial costs were involved in the operation). As noted in Chapter 2 (section 2.4), it is during these exploratory interviews that the

role of EIGs as producers of policy positions (and not only as transmitters of members' positions) was highlighted⁶⁵.

Additionally to interviews, information was also retrieved from documentation found on the website of the European Commission. EIGs and NIGs position papers were collected as well as documents about the fitness check on the EU Nature Legislation. A request was sent to the Commission to obtain the list of organisations which have replied to the public consultation in different member states. The 'google alert' tool was also used to monitor news about Birds and Habitats Directive (only in English). This was notably used to follow the dispute about hunting seasons in Malta and the breach of the directives observed in this member state.

3.5. Overview of cases: dyadic relations between a NIG and EIG

The cases are dyadic relations between a NIG and an EIG. 84 dyadic relations between 79 NIGs and 29 EIGs in four EU member states (France, Malta, Slovenia and Sweden) constitute the cases under scrutiny (some NIGs being members of more than one EIG). First, this section provides information about all dyadic relations identified as potential cases to include in the sample (on the basis of the EU Nature stakeholder consultation, as explained above). Secondly, the section includes figures that provide an overview of the distribution of cases under scrutiny in this dissertation.

Starting from EIGs part of the stakeholder consultation on EU Nature legislation (see point 3.3.1), the potential number of cases identified – dyadic relations between 105 national organisations and 30 European organisations⁶⁶ – is of 112. The number of cases actually under scrutiny (for which an interview with the NIG was actually conducted) is 84 (75%). All 105 national organisations were contacted. The reasons why some NIGs were not interviewed are the following: 7 NIGs responded negatively, 31 NIGs did not reply or discussed and planned an interview and then cancelled it or never replied again. Moreover, 5 NIGs are presumed 'shadow' organisations or no more active organisations.

The table hereafter (table 3.3) provides details about all the potential cases which could have been included in the research and specifies which ones are actually included and which ones

⁶⁵ Some of the exploratory interviews (with representatives from environmental groups) were used to write an article published in the Journal of Contemporary European Research: "The Legitimacy of European Networks: Perspectives from Belgian Civil Society Organisations" (Defacqz, 2018).

⁶⁶ 30 and not 29 because. No member (NIG) of one EIG did replied.

are not. The first column provides the EIGs' name and the second provides NIGs' name. The third column specifies the member state of origin of NIGs. Each row concerns a dyad. The fourth column indicates if the dyad is a potential case (as some EIGs were excluded, see the reasons why in point 3.3.1, above) and the fifth column if an interview was conducted or not for each potential case. The last column provides explanations about the reason explaining the absence of interview or reminds the reason why the EIGs cannot be taken into account in this dissertation.

Table 3.3 Cases under scrutiny and potential cases

EIG's name	NIG's name	NIG's MS	Potential Case?	Interview with NIG?	Notes
Birdlife Europe	LPO	FR	1	0	Replied but no follow-up
Birdlife Europe	BirdLife Malta	MT	1	1	
Birdlife Europe	SOF	SE	1	1	
Birdlife Europe	DOPPS	SI	1	1	
Business Europe	MEDEF	FR	1	1	
Business Europe	MBB\MCCEI	MT	1	1	
Business Europe	SN	SE	1	1	
Business Europe	ZDS	SI	1	1	
CEJA	Jeunes Agriculteurs	FR	1	1	
CEJA	MIAF	MT	1	0	Presumed not existing anymore
CEJA	LRF Ungdomen	SE	1	1	
CEJA	ZSPM	SI	1	1	
CEMBureau	SFIC	FR	1	1	
CEMBureau	Slocem	SI	1	1	
CEPF	Fransylva	FR	1	1	
CEPF	ZLGS	SI	1	1	
CEPF	LRF Skogsägarna		1	1	
ClientEarth			0	0	Foundation\Charity
COBATY Int			0	0	No national members
CPE	AIMCC	FR	1	1	
CPE	BYSAM	SE	1	0	Replied but no follow-up
COPA COGECA	FNSEA	FR	1	1	
COPA COGECA	AGPB	FR	1	1	
COPA COGECA	APCA	FR	1	0	Never replied
COPA COGECA	CNMCCA	FR	1	1	
COPA COGECA	Coop de France	FR	1	0	Replied but no follow-up
COPA COGECA	Koperattivi Malta	MT	1	1	
COPA COGECA	LRF	SE	1	1	
COPA COGECA	KGZS	SI	1	1	
COPA COGECA	ZZS	SI	1	1	
EAA	FNPPSF	FR	1	0	Never replied

EAA	Sportfiskarna	SE	1	1	
EAA	RZS	SI	1	1	
ECSA	Armateurs de France	FR	1	0	Refusal
ECSA	MISA	MT	1	0	Presumed not existing anymore
ECSA	Sweship	SE	1	1	
ECSA	SAS	SI	1	0	Presumed not existing anymore
EEB	FNE	FR	1	1	
EEB	ZWF	FR	1	1	
EEB	GF	FR	1	1	
EEB	Respire	FR	1	0	Presumed not existing anymore
EEB	RES	FR	1	0	Presumed not existing anymore
EEB	ASPAS	FR	1	0	Replied but no follow-up
EEB	NTM	MT	1	1	
EEB	AirClim	SE	1	1	
EEB	MKG	SE	1	1	
EEB	Naturskyddsföreningen	SE	1	1	
EEB	Fältbiologerna	SE	1	0	Refusal
EEB	Umanotera	SI	1	1	
EEB	TNS	SI	1	1	
EEB	ITR	SI	1	1	
EFNCP	SRF	SE	1	1	
EFNCP	FSF	SE	1	1	
EFNCP	Naturskyddsföreningen	SE	1	1	
EHF-IUCN			0	0	Members = EU organisations
ELO	AGPB	FR	1	1	
ELO	CPJF	FR	1	0	Replied but no follow-up
ELO	FNPPR	FR	1	0	Never replied
ELO	FFS	FR	1	1	
ELO	SJ	SE	1	0	Replied but no follow-up
ERF	USIRF	FR	1	1	
ERF	URF	FR	1	1	
ERF	SER	FR	1	1	
ERF	SVMF	SE	1	0	Refusal
ESPO	UPF	FR	1	1	
ESPO	SH	SE	1	1	
ETOA			0	0	No NIGs in FR, MT, SI, or SE
EUDA			0	0	No NIGs in FR, MT, SI, or SE
EURELECTRIC	UFE	FR	1	1	
EURELECTRIC	Swedenergy	SE	1	1	
EURELECTRIC	EZS	SI	1	1	
EuroGites	Les Gîtes de France	FR	1	1	
EuroGites	ZTKS	SI	1	1	
Euromines	SveMin	SE	1	1	

Euromontana	FNSEA	FR	1	1	
Euromontana	APCA	FR	1	0	Never replied
Europarc Federation			0	0	Members = only public institutions
Europêche	UAPF	FR	1	1	
Europêche	FMAP	MT	1	1	
Europêche	LRF	SE	1	1	
Eurosite			0	0	Members = mix\but no national members (non public) in FR and SE. No NIGs in SI & SE
EUSTAFOR			0	0	Members = only public institutions
FACE	FNC	FR	1	1	
FACE	FKNK	MT	1	1	
FACE	Svenska Jägareförbundet	SE	1	0	Replied but no follow-up
FACE	LZS	SI	1	1	
FEAP	FFA	FR	1	1	
FECOF			0	0	Members = only public institutions
FERN			0	0	Foundation\Charity
FoEE	AdT France	FR	1	1	
FoEE	FoE Malta	MT	1	1	
FoEE	JV	SE	1	1	
FoEE	Focus	SI	1	1	
Hotrec	GNIFAGIHT +SYNHORCAT	FR	1	1	
Hotrec	UMIH\GNC	FR	1	1	
Hotrec	MBB\MHRA	MT	1	1	
Hotrec	Visita	SE	1	1	
Hotrec	TGZ	SI	1	1	
IFOAM	FNAB	FR	1	1	
IFOAM	MOAM	MT	1	1	
IFOAM	EL	SE	1	1	
IFOAM	KRAV	SE	1	1	
IFOAM	ITR	SI	1	1	
IMA-Europe	UP'Chaux	FR	1	1	
IMA-Europe	MIF (Eurosil)	FR	1	0	Never replied
IMA-Europe	SK	SE	1	0	Replied but no follow-up
INE			0	0	Members = mix\but no national members (non public) in FR MT SI SE.
IOGP			0	0	Members = only companies
Oceana			0	0	Foundation\Charity
Reindeer Herding			0		No national members
UEAPME	UPA	FR	1	1	
UEAPME	CGPME	FR	1	1	
UEAPME	APCMA	FR	1	1	

UEAPME	GRTU	MT	1	1	
UEAPME	Företagarna	SE	1	1	
UEAPME	OZS	SI	1	1	
UEPG	UNPG	FR	1	0	Never replied
UEPG	SBMI	SE	1	0	Replied but no follow-up
UNIFE	FIF	FR	1	1	
UNIFE	Swedtrain	SE	1	1	
USSE			0	0	Members = only public institutions
Wind Europe	SER	FR	1	0	Never replied
Wind Europe	FEE	FR	1	0	Replied but no follow-up
Wind Europe	SVEF	SE	1	0	Refusal
WWF-EPO	WWF France	FR	1	0	Replied but no follow-up
WWF-EPO	WWF	SE	1	1	
WWF-EPO	Världsnaturfonden				
WWF-EPO	WWF Adria	SI	1	0	Replied but no follow-up
TOTAL			112	84	= 75%

Source: Report from author's investigations

Information about membership of EIGs was retrieved from EIGs' websites. NIGs' contact details were retrieved from EIGs' or NIGs' websites (and during interviews). The NIGs were contacted via e-mail or via phone when not replying to e-mails. As noted in the last column of the table 3.3, some NIGs never replied (or replied once and then never followed up). More importantly, some NIGs reported as 'member organisations' on EIGs' websites were identified as presumed not existing anymore⁶⁷. Overall, the rate of 75% of potential cases covered may be interpreted as satisfactory (even more when considering that some NIGs may not exist anymore).

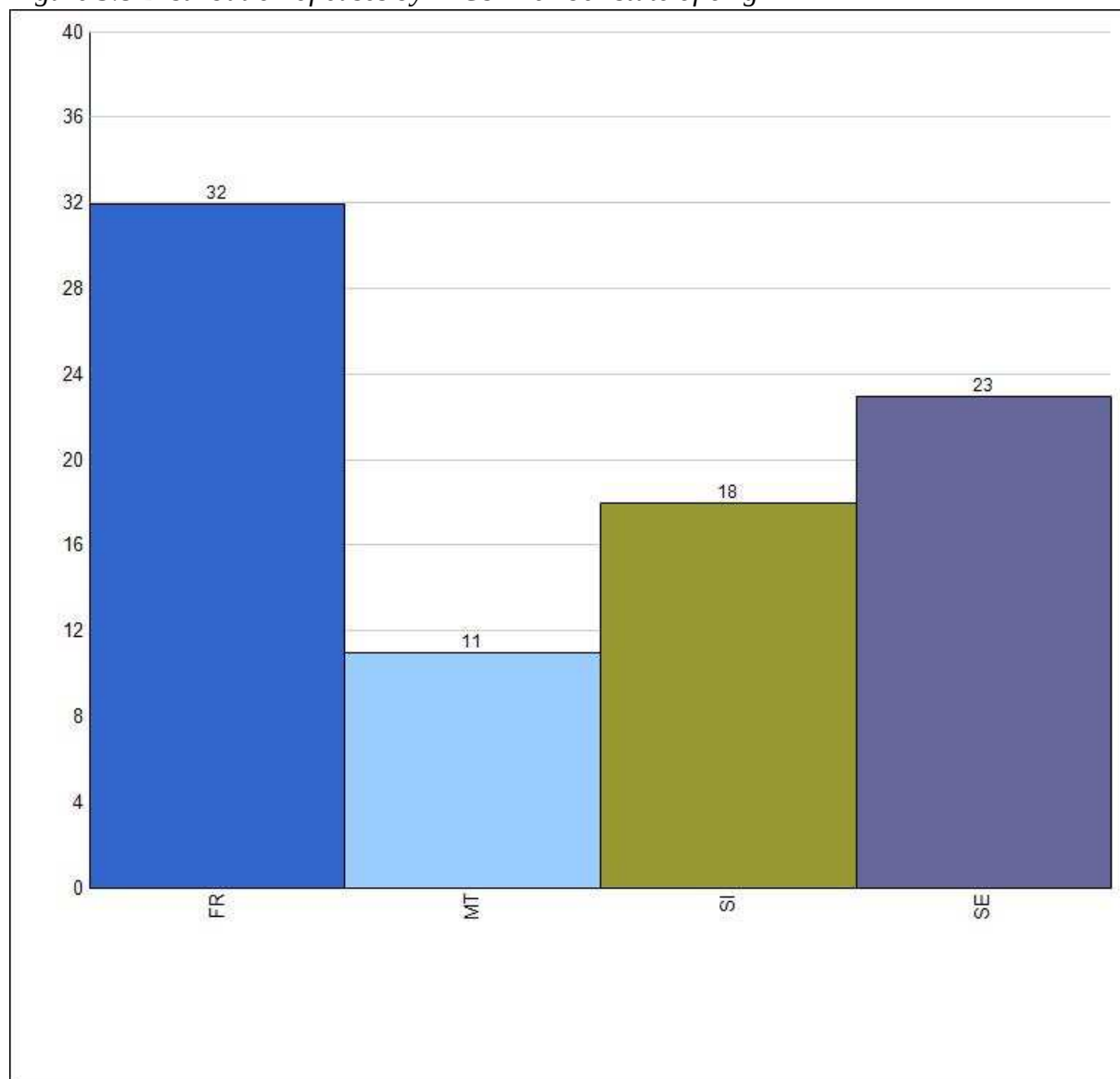
The following part of this section provides an overview of the cases actually under scrutiny. The figures hereafter provide distributions of cases as regards to different variables. These variables primarily concern NIGs. As a reminder, while cases are dyadic relations between NIGs and EIGs, the focus of the dissertation is on NIGs' perceptions. If a NIG is a member of two EIGs (EIGs being part of the stakeholders selected by the Commission for the stakeholder consultation on the EU Nature legislation), this NIGs is 'counted twice' in the figures (as it concerns two cases). The rationale behind this is that for each issue under scrutiny (NIGs' perceptions about its EIG legitimacy and NIGs' perceived congruence between their positions and EIGs' positions), if a NIG is a member of two EIGs, the outcomes are differentiated for the

⁶⁷ For these NIGs, usually contact details were very difficult to find (e.g. no website or very ancient). Some of these presumptions were confirmed by other interviewees. Once, the researcher went to the 'last know address' of an organisation to find nothing which might suggest that an active organisation is established at this address. Another time, an EIG's staff member confessed that he didn't know anything about the actual existence of one of its member organisation (and then never replied anymore to e-mails).

two EIGs. Of course, a NIG can incidentally provide different answers concerning each of its relations with different EIGs.

3.5.1. NIGs member state of origin

Figure 3.8 Distribution of cases by NIGs' member state of origin



Y axis provides the number of cases; X axis provides the label of member states (FR=France; MT=Malta; SI=Slovenia; SE=Sweden)

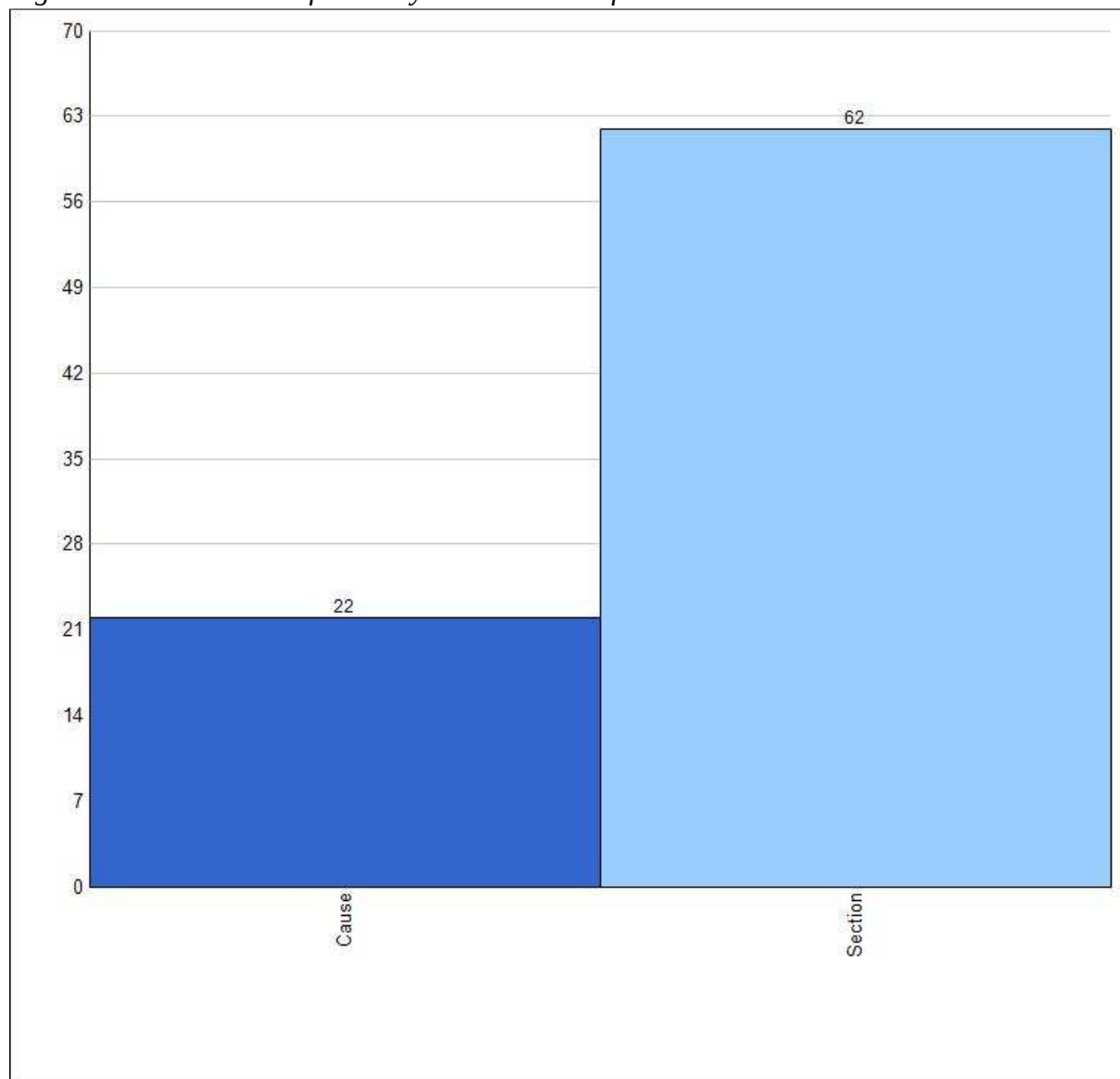
Source: Retrieved from NVivo

The figure 3.8 shows the distribution of cases' NIGs as regards to their member state of origin. This distribution reflects the different situations of member states when it comes to the number of national groups being members of EIGs. As noted above, when more than one NIG per MS is allowed, French groups are usually more numerous within EIGs structures. On the opposite, given the small size of Malta and its particular geographic situation, many economic activities

do not take place in the country. Consequently, EIGs from sectors that are unexploited in Malta have, of course, no Maltese members. It can also be noticed that the distribution reflects the trend of the differences between member states in terms of population.

3.5.2. NIGs' nature of interest

Figure 3.9 Distribution of cases by NIGs' nature of interest



Y axis provides the number of cases; X axis provides the label of NIG's nature of interest (Cause=corresponds to cause groups; Section=corresponds to sectional groups)

Source: Retrieved from NVivo, based on 78 interview transcripts concerning 84 cases

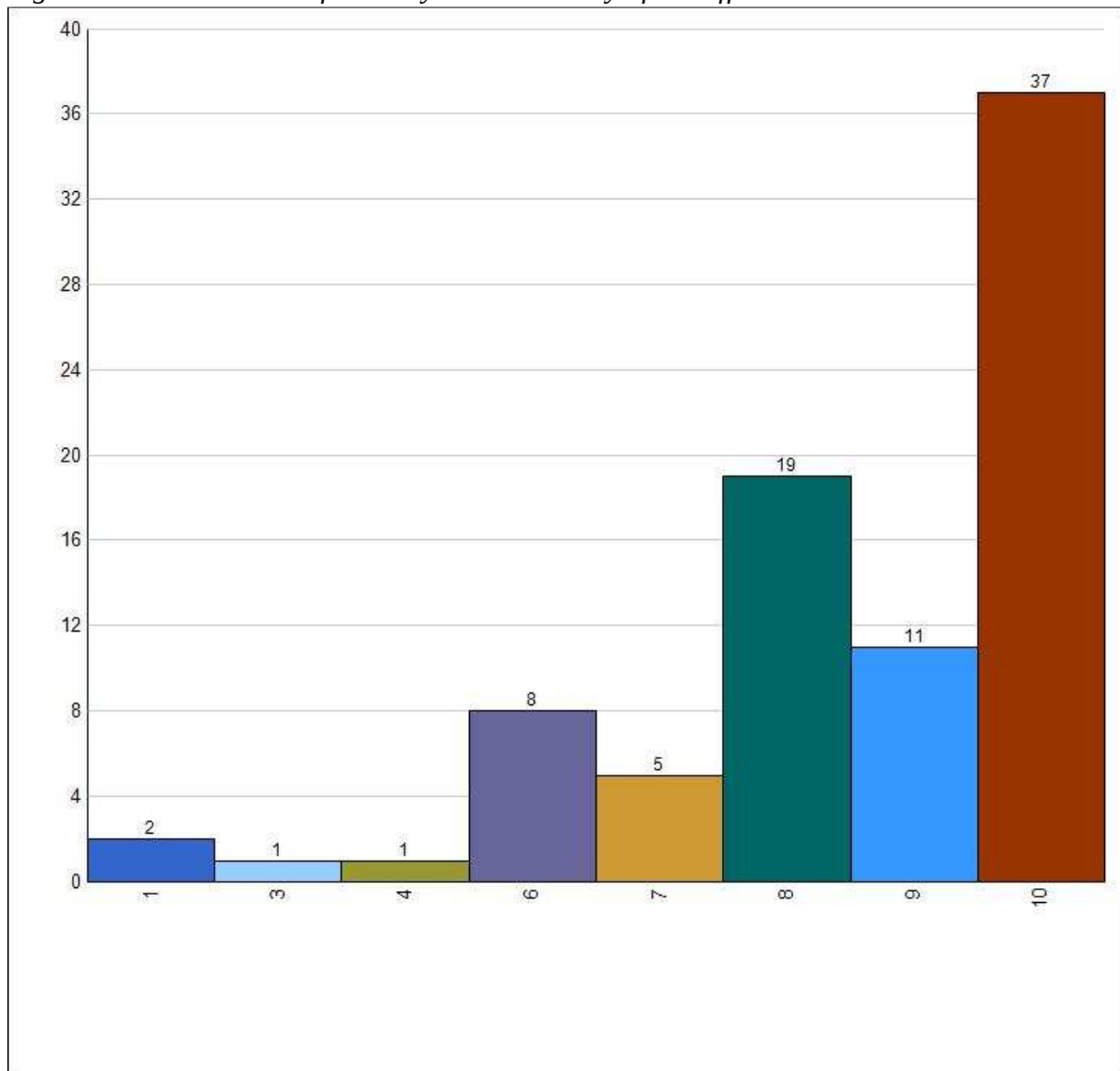
The figure 3.9 shows the distribution of cases' NIGs as regards to the nature of interest they represent. As a reminder, sectional groups represent special interests that create concentrated costs and benefits for their supporters (e.g. farmers, small and medium enterprises, industrial corporations ...) and cause groups represent ideas, beliefs or principle. The membership of

cause groups is not restricted as anyone in favour of the principle can become a member of the group⁶⁸. Sectional group membership is limited. As noted above, all cause groups under scrutiny in this dissertation are environmental CSOs (focusing or not on biodiversity protection) or groups that promote sustainable development. The imbalance in favour of sectional groups in the sample also reflects a trend observed in the population of interest groups at the EU level and in the member states.

⁶⁸ In this dissertation, cause NIGs can also have no ‘formal’ members (and only be ‘followed’ by supporters, for instance).

3.5.3. Saliency of EU affairs in the perspective of NIGs

Figure 3.10 Distribution of cases by NIGs' saliency of EU affairs



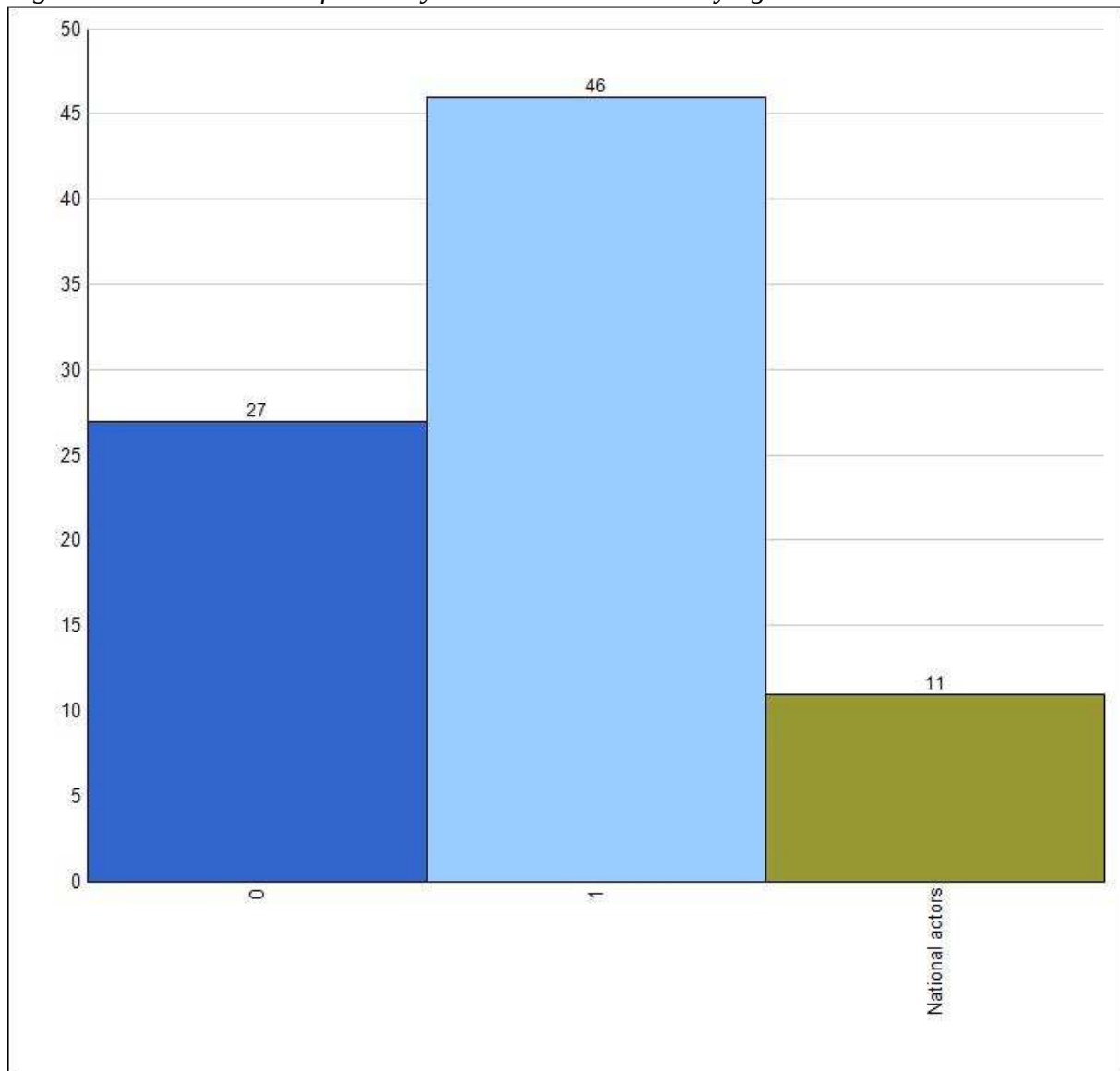
Y axis provides the number of cases; X axis provides the NIGs representatives' answer to the following question (scale): "How important is being present at the EU level to achieve your organisational goals?". Answers on a 1–10 scale (1 = Not important, 10 = Very important). Source: Retrieved from NVivo, based on 78 interview transcripts concerning 84 cases

The figure 3.10 shows the distribution of cases' NIGs as regards to the importance they attach to European affairs to reach their organisational goal. The numbers provided in the figure (on the horizontal axis) represent the answers of NIGs' representatives to a scale question (see the legend). The vast majority of NIGs under scrutiny perceive engagement in EU Affairs (understood broadly during the interviews) as (very) important. "Being present at the EU level" includes being represented by EIG, lobbying on EU issues and any activities related to EU issues. Of course, given the fact that NIGs under scrutiny are all members of EIGs, the clear

trend of high saliency of EU affairs in the perspective of these NIGs is not surprising. During the interviews, the majority of respondents justified their answers as regards to the important impact of EU legislation on their activities (economic or leisure activities) or the cause they advocate. The interviewees choosing a 7 or less do so because of a prioritising national issues or a 'unique' focus on national issues.

3.5.4. NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities

Figure 3.11 Distribution of cases by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities



Y axis provides the number of cases; X axis provides the label of NIG's EU-related lobbying activities (0=no EU-related lobbying activities; 1=direct lobbying activities towards EU institutions; National actors= EU-related lobbying activities towards national actors – national MEPs or national government)

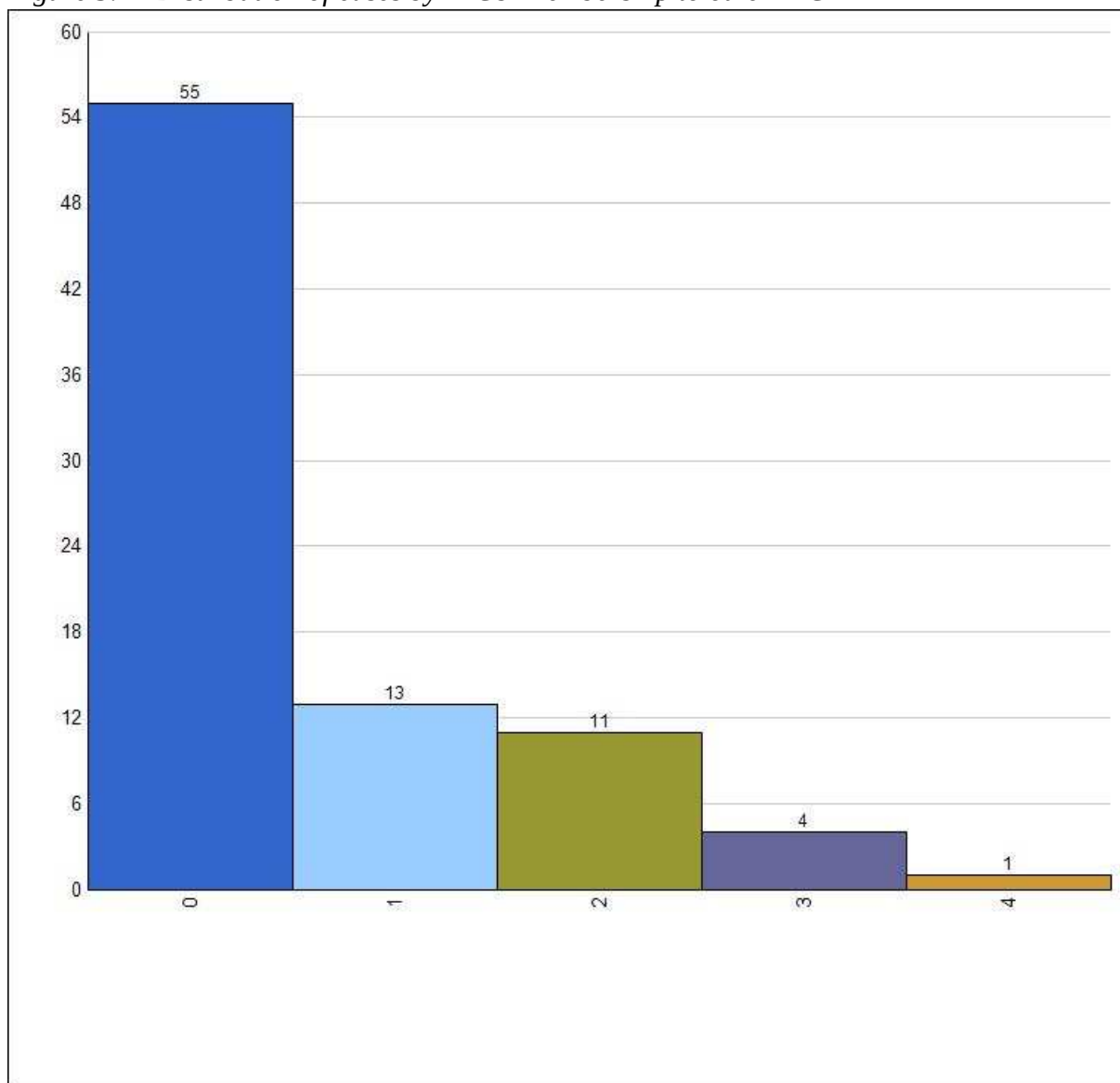
Source: Retrieved from NVivo, based on 78 interview transcripts concerning 84 cases

The figure 3.11 shows the distribution of cases' NIGs as regards to their EU-related lobbying activities. The majority of cases do lobby directly EU institutions. This includes direct contact with Commissioner or director general of the Commission or contact with different MEPs (because they work on the issue at stake, for instance). EU-related lobbying of "national actors" means that NIGs only have contact with their national government or MEPs from home country.

In other words, it reflects a situation of lobbying on EU issues without ‘going to Brussels’ (national route). One third of NIGs under scrutiny do no lobbying activities related to EU issues.

3.5.5. NIGs’ membership to other EIG

Figure 3.12 Distribution of cases by NIGs’ membership to other EIG



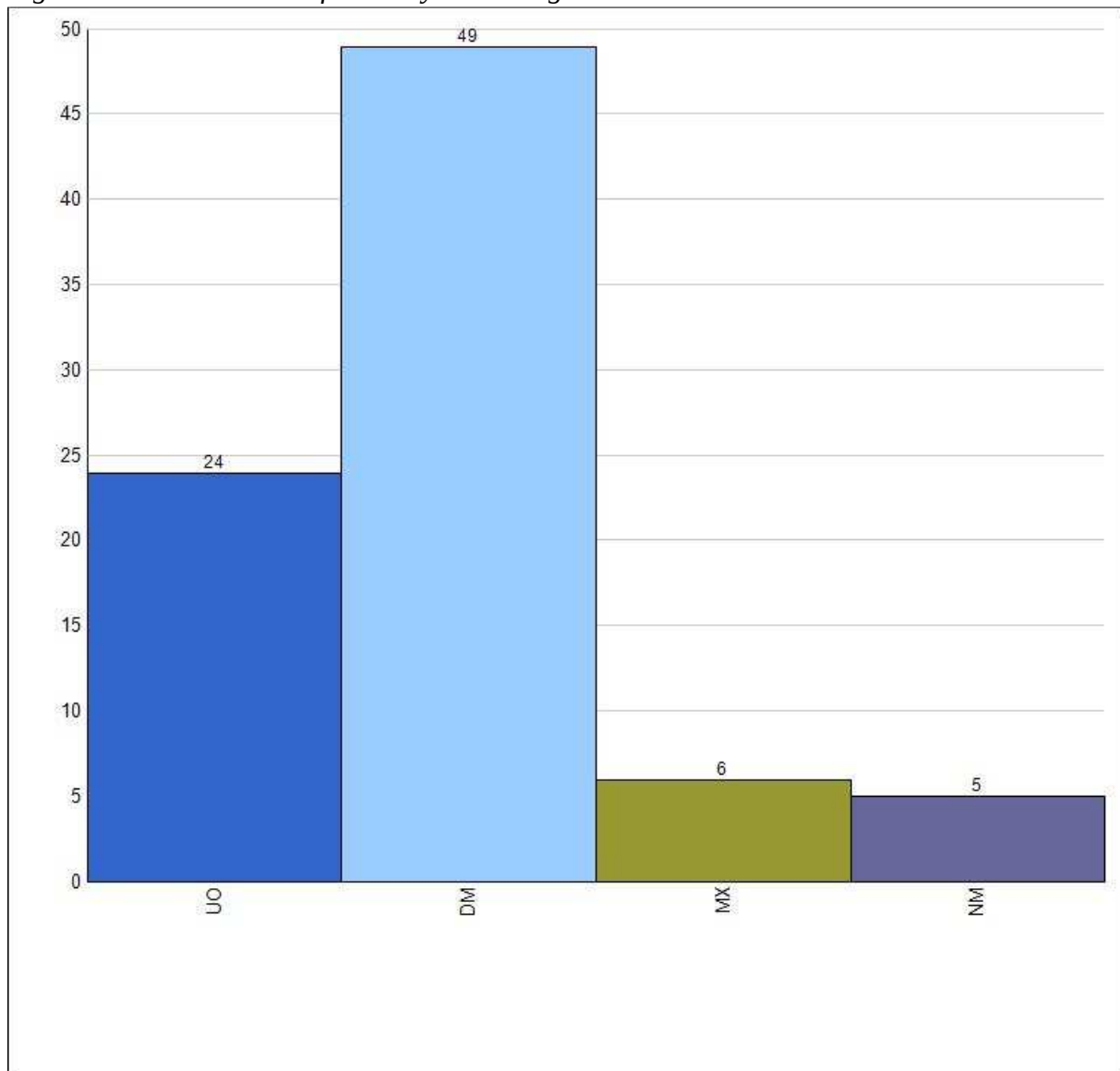
Y axis provides the number of cases; X axis provides NIGs’ number of additional memberships to EIGs (=membership other than the one concerned in the case).

Source: Retrieved from NVivo, based on 78 interview transcripts concerning 84 cases

The vast majority of NIGs under scrutiny are members of only one EIG. Environmental NIGs (with a broad scope) are usually members of the European Environmental Bureau and other ‘specialised’ EIGs (such as Transport & Energy or the Climate Action Network). Sectional groups, member of more than one EIG, have this ‘multiple membership’ because their own members are active in different economic sectors.

3.5.6. NIGs' organisational structure (membership composition)

Figure 3.13 Distribution of cases by NIGs' organisational structure



Y axis provides the number of cases; X axis provides label of NIGs' organisational structure (UO=umbrella organisation; DM=direct membership; MX=mixed membership; NM=no members)

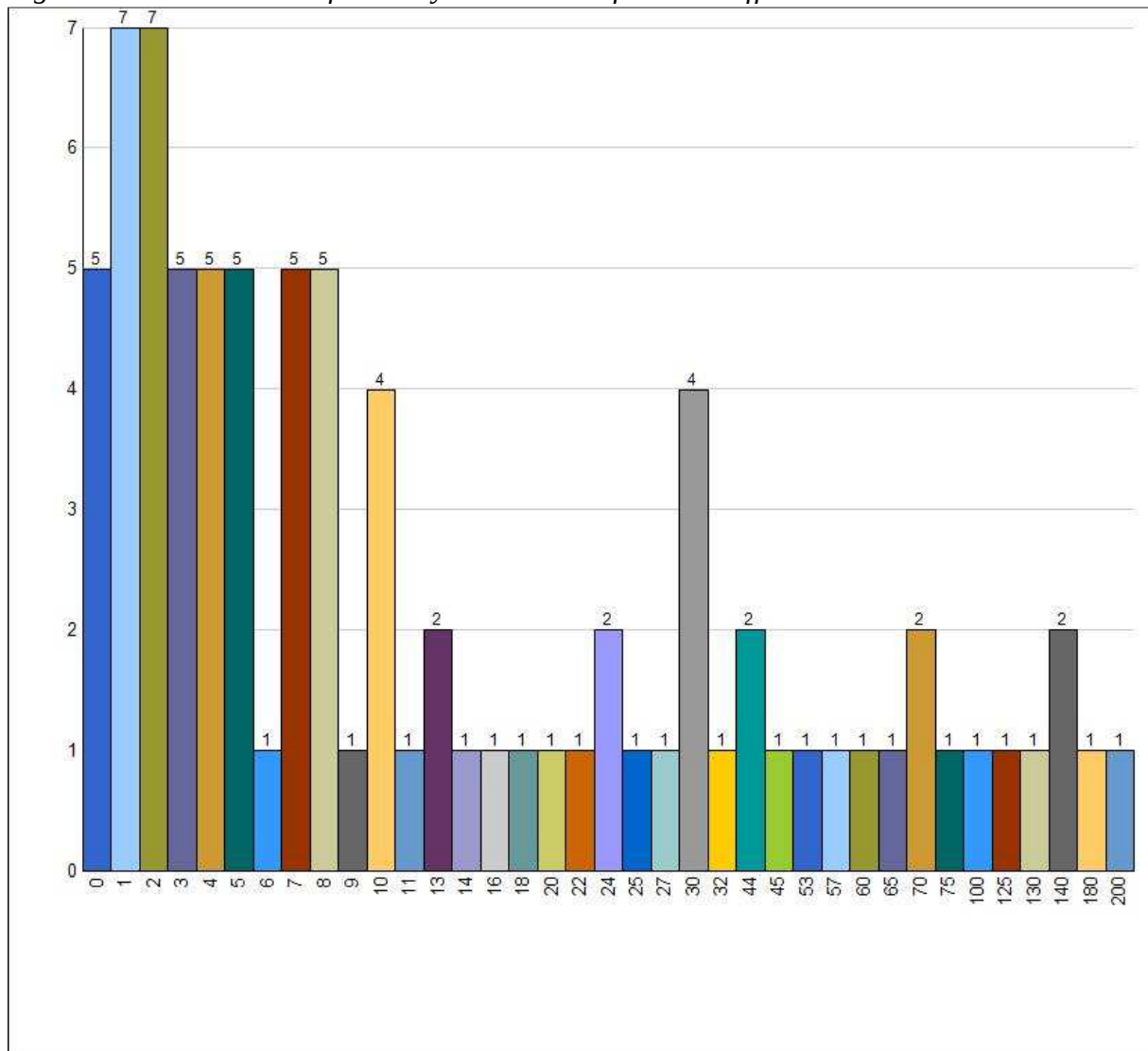
Source: Retrieved from NVivo, based on 78 interview transcripts concerning 84 cases

The figure 3.13 shows the distribution of cases' NIGs as regards to their organisational structure, or more precisely how their membership is composed. The majority of cases have direct members (DM=49). The members of these NIGs are individuals (private persons, as supporters) or companies. 24 cases' NIGs are umbrella organisation (UO). Their members are in fact 'sub-level groups': associations of individuals or companies (gathered together on a sectoral or territorial basis). For instance, these NIGs have as interlocutors regional or departmental groups (members having a say in the decisions arenas). Some NIGs have mixed

membership (MX). These NIGs have members who are individuals (private persons) or companies as well as (sectoral or territorial) associations of individuals or companies. Finally, few NIGs have no member. These NIGs are foundations or charities.

3.5.7. NIGs' staff members

Figure 3.14 Distribution of cases by the number of NIGs' staff members



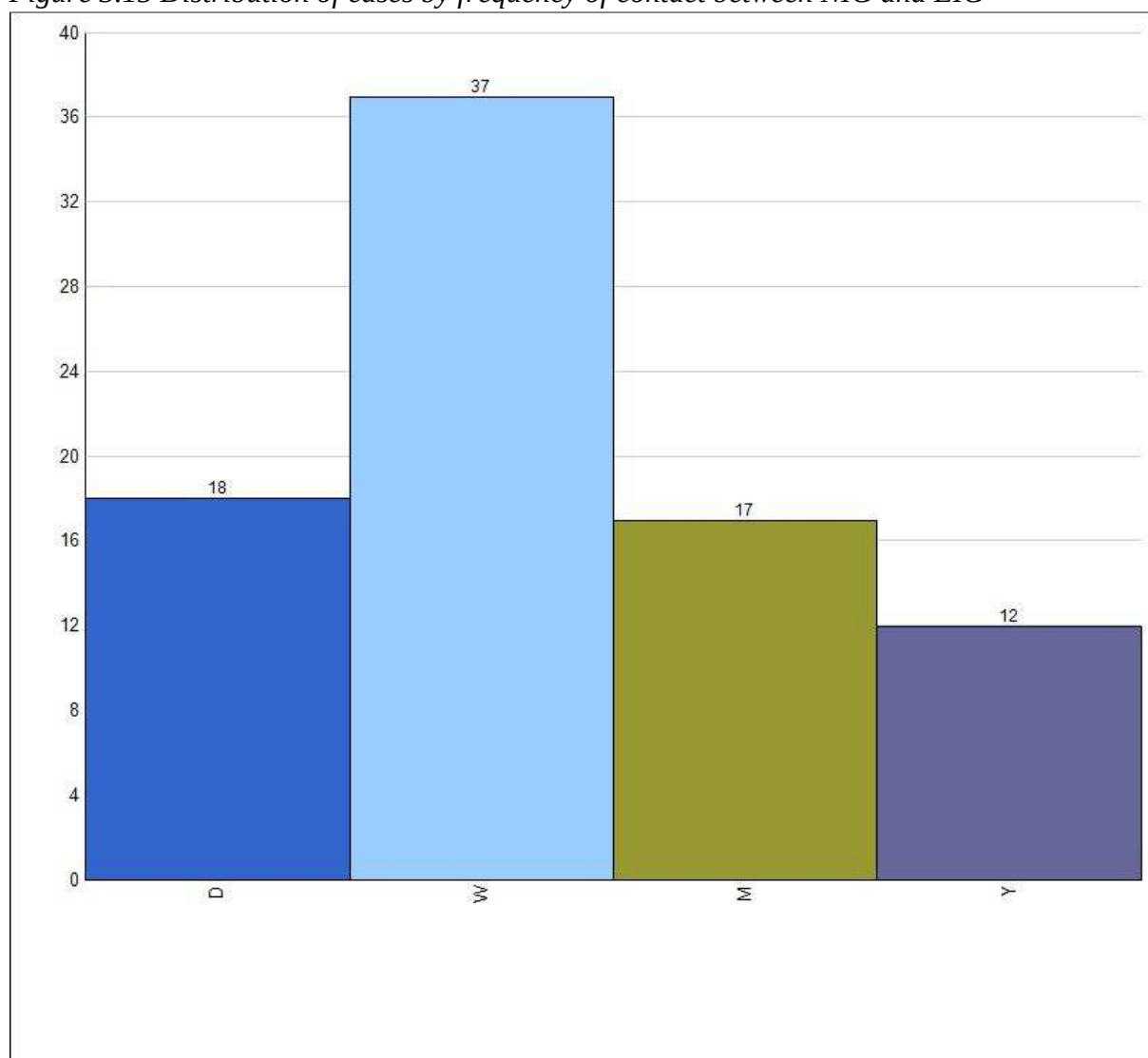
Y axis provides the number of cases; X axis provides number of NIGs' staff members. Note that some numbers have been rounded up to allow NVivo to draw the figure correctly (2 cases have NIGs with 0.5 employees, 3 cases have NIGs with 1.5 employees, 2 cases have NIGs with 2.5 employees, 3 cases have NIGs with 3.5 employees and 1 case has a NIG with 7.5 employees)
Source: Retrieved from NVivo, based on 78 interview transcripts concerning 84 cases

The figure 3.14 shows the distribution of cases' NIGs as regards to the number of their staff members. The majority of NIGs under scrutiny have 10 or fewer employees. The graph shows very great diversity between NIGs under scrutiny. While 5 organisations have no paid staff at all, 7 organisations have 100 and more employees (two Swedish sectional groups, two French sectional groups and three Swedish cause groups). This distribution reflect the great unbalance between national organisations across Europe. For instance, amongst organisations with 60 or more employees, there are only French and Swedish organisations. The most staffed Maltese group has 32 employees and the Slovenian, 57.

The number of staff members is a good indicator of resources or capacity of NIGs in terms of lobbying actions. The annual budget was also requested to the interviewees. With the exception of few organisations, the interviewees provided it. Nevertheless, annual budget of national groups are difficult to compare (even after conversion of SEK, Swedish crowns, in euro). First, an employee cost less in Slovenia than in Sweden. Moreover, because of particular activities not directly linked to lobbying (for instance, being in charge of education, delivering permits, the publication and selling of a newspaper, ...), the annual budget of some NIGs are 'skewed'. Of course, this bias is also reflected somehow in the numbers of staff members. But these 'biased' differences in terms of 'resources dedicated to advocacy' is subdued by looking at staff members.

3.5.8. Frequency of contact between NIG and EIG

Figure 3.15 Distribution of cases by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG



Y axis provides the number of cases; X axis provides frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (D=daily; W=weekly; M=monthly; Y=less than monthly)

Source: Retrieved from NVivo, based on 78 interview transcripts concerning 84 cases

The figure 3.15 shows the distribution of cases' NIGs as regards to the frequency of contact they have with their EIG. The data were collected via an interview question (question stated as follows: "How many contacts do you have with the European organisation? [Daily? Weekly? Monthly? Less?]"). During the interviews, the interviewer highlighted the fact that the number of contacts includes the 'exchange of information' and not only the reception of information (since the vast majority of EIGs send newsletters or e-mails to their members on a daily basis). It concerns phone conversation, e-mails and meetings (usually, the information about the frequency of meetings is also available for each NIG-EIG relations). Moreover, one should note that the frequency of contact includes the contacts of all NIGs' employees or elected

representative. On that basis, frequencies of contact NIGs have with their EIG are classified in four groups (see the legend of the figure). 12 groups have less than monthly exchange with their EIG. 17 NIGs exchange with their EIG on a monthly basis, 37 on a weekly basis and 18 have contact with their EIGs every working day.

3.6. Summary

This chapter presented the research design of the dissertation. The first part of the chapter was dedicated to methodology and provides justifications and explanations of methods used for both empirical analyses of the dissertation. This part of the chapter also outlines technical details about each method and presented the software solutions used to conduct the analyses. First, as regards to the first empirical analysis, the thematic analysis and the analysis based on ideal types were presented. The objective of the thematic analysis is to provide an overview of the themes present in the discourse of NIGs and categorise these themes to get a meaningful synthesis of the content of the interviews. This synthesis is intended to present how national groups understand the EIGs legitimacy in the context of the European multi-level polity. The analysis with ideal types aims at identifying if legitimization elements found in NIGs' discourse correspond to elements of the *participatory* model promoted by the Commission from the 2000s or unveil the persistence of affirmation of elements from the *partnership* model. Such an analysis also allows to understand if NIGs have internalised elements from one model or the other.

As regards to the second empirical analysis, QCA was presented. QCA is an original method solution that allows to conduct multiple cross-case comparisons and test different models while keeping an eye on the 'qualitative' specificities of cases (Rihoux, 2017, p. 383). The main reason driving the choice of QCA to tackle the issue of NIGs' perceived congruence is that it allows to compare multiple (combinations of) conditions in order to explain complex social phenomena. The complexity-orientedeness of QCA fits perfectly with the analysis of NIGs perceived congruence as it appeared during field research that explaining it cannot be done through clear or 'isolated' variables.

Following these methods presentations, the chapter presented the strategy of case selection. The initial rationale of case selection is to select first a population of EIGs on the basis of a consultation of the Commission and then contact their members in four countries. The choice to select first EIGs — on the basis of an EU consultation — and then NIGs member of these

European umbrellas is based on the idea of ‘study Brussels from outside Brussels’. The objective of this case selection is to acquire a comprehensive picture of all types of national interest groups that are members of a given sample of EIGs. In brief, the strategy of selecting the cases on the basis of the stakeholders consultation of the ‘fitness check’ of the EU Nature Legislation allows to analyse different NIGs by keeping policy-specific and overall European context idiosyncrasies under control. While the fitness check was a ‘gateway’ to select EIGs, this consultation is not the focus of this research which essentially addresses relations between NIGs and EIGs.

Concerning data collection, the chapter presented the details of interviews conducted for the research. Each case is analysed on the basis of an interview with the ‘NIG’s key actor’ when it comes to understanding NIGs activities related to EU issues. The objective of these interviews is twofold: collect facts and understand actors’ perceptions. A total of 111 interviews were conducted. Amongst them, 78 interviews concerned representatives of 79 national organisations (one interviewee working for 2 NIGs).

Finally, the chapter provided an overview of cases. The cases are dyadic relations between NIG and an EIG. 84 dyadic relations between 79 NIGs and 29 EIGs in four EU member states (France, Malta, Slovenia and Sweden) constitute the cases under scrutiny (some NIGs being members of more than one EIG). A table provided details about all the potential cases which could have been included in the research and specified which ones are actually included and which ones are not. The last part of the Chapter was dedicated to an overview of the cases actually under scrutiny in the dissertation. Different figures provided distributions of cases as regards to different variables, primarily concerning NIGs.

This chapter and the previous two set up the basis of both empirical analyses. The following chapter (Chapter 4) is exclusively dedicated to the first empirical analysis and the presentation of its outcome. Chapter 5 will present the second empirical analysis.

4

European interest groups legitimacy: perspectives of national interest groups

The three first chapters set up the basis of both empirical analyses at the core of this dissertation. This chapter presents the first empirical analysis. The qualitative analysis of data and its outcome aims to reply to the first research question of this dissertation: What are the perceptions of « EIGs legitimacy » by national interest groups? This question addresses the perceptions of NIGs about their EIGs and how they legitimise these ‘European representatives’ which are supposed to represent them in Brussels. A thematic analysis is processed to answer the question (following the method presented in Chapter 3, section 3.1). The outcome of this analysis takes shape of a thematic tree. This thematic tree presents aggregated results and provides an overview of how NIGs across the EU perceive the legitimacy of their EIGs. The first section (4.1) unfolds the preparatory elements of this thematic analysis. Section 4.2 presents the three readings constituting the first steps of thematic analysis (4.2.1 and 4.2.2). Section 4.3 provides the thematisation list and the thematic tree resulting from these successive readings of the data⁶⁹. Then, the discursive analysis is presented (section 4.4): each cluster of the thematic tree is put in relation with quotes from the interviews. This discursive analysis also points out the divergences or convergences of the themes (grouped under clusters) and discusses the ‘weight’ of each of the clusters. A discussion, as intermediary conclusion, closes this first part of the chapter dedicated to the thematic analysis (section 4.5).

Further, the section 4.6 presents an analysis with ideal types which constitutes an additional step. This analysis uses the thematic tree (and more particularly, the clusters) resulting from the thematic analysis. This second qualitative analysis aims to identify if the discourse of NIGs unveil the integration by these national actors of norms related to the *participatory* model

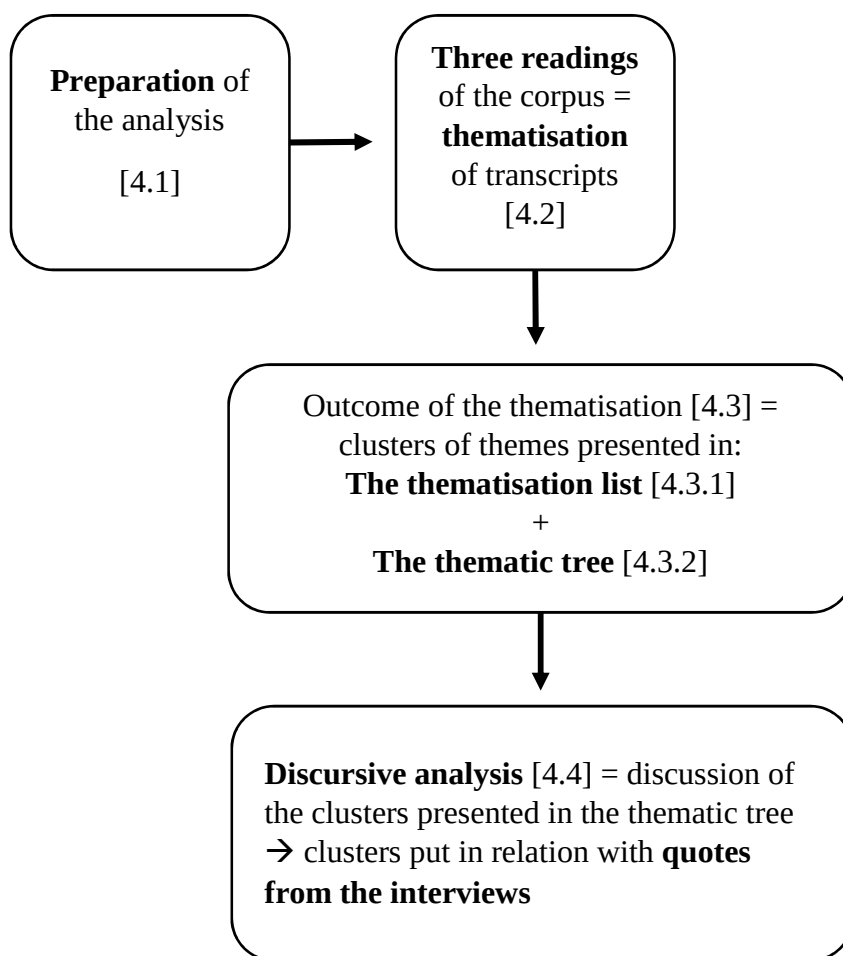
⁶⁹ The purpose of these points is to provide information about the steps of the analytical process as well as the techniques guiding the analysis. Crespy (2015, p. 105) notes about discourse analysis in European Union studies: “While most scholars provide effective conceptual tools, information on the empirical data and the specific techniques guiding the analysis are scarce, if not completely absent, from many publication.”

currently promoted by the Commission, or the persistence of norms related to the *partnership* model. The elements identified in the discourse of NIGs through the thematic analysis are classified and confronted to two ideal types representing both of the EU-society relation models (the participatory one and partnership one). First, the building of these ideal types is presented (4.6.1). Second, empirical data are confronted with this ideal type model (4.6.2). Ultimately, an overall discussion concludes this chapter (4.7).

4.1. Preparation of the thematic analysis

The thematic analysis focuses on the perceptions of “EIGs legitimacy” by national interest groups (first research question). The figure 4.1 presents the sequence of the thematic analysis and its different steps (the figures also provides the sections of the chapter corresponding to each step. The section 4.5 will concludes the thematic analysis with an intermediate discussion (before the second part of the chapter dedicated to the analysis based on ideal type: section 4.6).

Figure 4.1 The sequence of the thematic analysis



Source: author's own elaboration

Two points have to be considered prior to start the thematic analysis: technical choices and the framework of the research (determining the relevance of the themes). As regards to the technical choices to address before the thematic analysis, the different options were presented in Chapter 3 (point 3.1.1.1). The medium used to lead the analysis is a software package: NVivo 10 (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). The themes are registered in the margin (this registration mode is imposed to the researcher by the selected software). The type of thematic analysis is a sequenced one: some of the items of the corpus (cases for which a 'full transcription' is available) are analysed during a first reading and then all the items are included for the second and the third reading. This choice is made because all the recordings of all the interviews conducted are not transcribed (see hereafter, point 4.2.1, *Cases and data included at each step of the analysis*).

As regards to the framework of the research, the analyst needs to consider four points which will determine what a ‘relevant’ themes are: (1) what is the object of study?, (2) what is the research question?, (3) what are the objectives of the analysis?, (4) what is the expected result?.

The object of study under scrutiny in this thematic analysis is (1): the legitimacy of EIGs in the perspective of national interest groups (which are members of these EIGs). The research question leading the analysis is the following (2): which perceptions of “European interest groups legitimacy” do national interest groups have? The objective of the analysis (3) is to identify the elements of discourse of national interest groups about the legitimacy of EIGs, which are supposed to represent them in Brussels. The analysis strives to understand the ‘assessment’ of EIGs’ legitimacy by NIGs without theoretical *a priori* about criteria of legitimacy or what legitimacy means for the concerned actors (subjective approach of organisational legitimacy, see Chapters 1 and 2). The expected results are the identification of different elements of EIGs legitimization in the discourse of NIGs. The categorisation of the elements of discourse should lead to the identification of salient elements constituting the perception of NIGs when they consider the legitimacy of their ‘European representatives’. These elements can then be compared to the conception of legitimacy studied by literature so far and to the role attributed to EIGs in the discourse of EU institutions (see Chapter 1, section 1.1).

Beyond these four points to keep in mind by the analyst during the thematisation, other elements have to be taken into consideration. For instance, it is important for the researcher to remind, at each step of the analysis, some fundamental definitions at the core of the dissertation. Amongst these definitions, the definitions of *legitimacy*, *organisational legitimacy*, *audience* or *legitimation discourses* (presented in Chapter 1, point 1.2.3) are of crucial importance. Moreover, the tension between two concepts used in this dissertation – ‘elements of discourse’ and ‘perceptions’ – should be addressed prior to the analysis. The objective of the research is to identify *perceptions* of NIGs while the thematic analysis identifies *elements of discourse* of NIGs about the legitimacy of their EIGs (descriptive aim of this analysis). The low-level of inference used during the thematisation (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016, p. 254) allows to outline the content (themes) of the interviews of representatives of NIGs. Consequently, the thematisation list provides *elements of discourse* and not perceptions *per se*. As explained in Chapter 3, content analyses allow social scientists to understand other people’s cognitive schemas as the interpretations of actors are embedded in the discourse they produce (Knorr-Cetina, 1981). Consequently, this thematic analysis assumes that the outcome of the

thematization along with the discussion of the themes allow the researcher to draw conclusions about perceptions of national interest groups.

The last potential issue to address before starting the thematic analysis is the fact that the interviewees responding to the questions of the researcher are *individuals*, while the cases under scrutiny concerns relations between *organisations*. The assumption of this dissertation is that the content of the interviews with the individuals selected can be considered as reflecting the positions of the organisation, on behalf of which they speak. Two arguments stand behind this assumption. First, the interviewees invited to participate to the survey are key actors as regards to the relations between the NIGs they are working for (or more rarely for which they are elected representatives). Usually, interviewees are coordinators of NIG or persons in charge of European Affairs (for bigger organisations). These key actors have the broadest perspective and a global knowledge on the relationship between their organisation and their EIGs. When they are part of the staff, they usually are responsible for communication and advocacy (including consultation with members, drafting positions if any and communicating with the EIG) on European issues. Second, it is understood for the interviewer and the interviewees that the questions are addressed ‘to the organisation’⁷⁰. In some cases, the interviewees ask or state clearly that their answers reflect the position of the organisation (which can sometimes differ from their own views). However, in few cases and for few questions, some interviewees state that they don’t know the positions of the organisation and thus they answer usually with their own views or what they think the vision of their organisation is. This reminds to the social scientist studying interest groups that organisations’ decisions or visions are actually decisions and visions which are answerable to individuals or groups of individuals (Yates, 2010, p. 36). Under those circumstances, the perceptions of an organisation are finally the perceptions of a group of individuals.

⁷⁰ Except questions of the last part of the interview precisely dedicated to the interviewee herself or himself. Besides, the sequence of the interview is always presented to the interviewee as for instance in the interview 96: “If it’s okay, we could do maybe our discussion in three parts. First, really on your organization and the features of the organization. And then more really on your EU-related activities and your relation with [name of the EIG]. Then, I have a few questions about your professional background but it’s mainly to identify who is replying to the survey.”

4.2. The three readings of the sequenced thematic analysis

As noted above and explained in Chapter 3 (point 3.1.1.3), the thematic analysis of this dissertation is a sequenced one, which includes three readings and a discursive analysis. The following paragraphs are written on the basis of the ‘thematisation logbook’ where some notes of the analyst about the analysis process are registered⁷¹. First, the cases under scrutiny at each step of the analysis are presented. Next, some observations about the thematisation and the successive attempts at organising themes and drawing the thematic tree are exposed.

4.2.1. Cases and data included in each reading

The first sequence concerns only the ‘fully transcribed interviews’. As explained in Chapter 3, the choice to not transcribe all interviews is made on the basis of resource availability (as regards to time and money). Consequently, 16 interview recordings are selected to be fully transcribed⁷². These 16 transcriptions concern 17 cases (as one interview concerns two cases). The selection of interviews to be transcribed in full is made on the basis of different elements. The objective was to have fully transcribed interviews for ‘typical cases’ but also for ‘deviant cases’ (see the table 4.1. hereafter) as regards to NIGs’ attitude towards their EIGs. The deviant cases were selected as regards to the following points: the legitimacy of the EIG is challenged by the NIG (cases 25, 31, 69) and/or the policy positions of the EIG is perceived by the NIG as (strongly) deviant from its own policy positions (cases 1, 29, 31, 38, 52, 56, 64)⁷³. An attention was also given to have interviews transcribed in full for NIGs from each member state selected. Overall, the cases selected for a transcription in full are also made on the basis of the knowledge of the researcher — who have conducted the interviews — about the content of the recordings.

⁷¹ The ‘thematisation logbook’ is not provided in the dissertation as the document is ‘messy’ and contains mainly notes which are no relevant. The information written in the logbook are provided in this chapter.

⁷² 13 out of 16 interviews were transcribed by M. Nicolas Gallant, student from the Université de Montréal in exchange at UCL. He is bilingual (French Canadian from Ontario) which facilitates the transcription of both interviews in French and in English. A meeting was organised with the student in order to explain how to proceed, the objectives of the research, the context of the interviews and reply to all his questions. The author thanks M. Gallant for his work and his seriousness when transcribing the interview recordings. The three other interviews were transcribed by the author. All the ‘focused’ transcriptions were also written by the author as well as some exploratory interviews.

⁷³ This also concerns research question 2 (second empirical analysis): see Chapter 5. It was also important to have ‘fully transcribed’ interviews which are relevant for the second empirical analysis.

Table 4.1 Cases under scrutiny for the first reading (full transcriptions available)

Cases id (NIG-EIG relation)	Perception of legitimacy of the EIG by the NIG [1]	Perceived congruence between own positions (NIG) and EIG's position [2]	Member states of the NIG
1	9	3	France
2	10	7	France
3	10	8	France
6	10	6	France
20	9	7	Malta
24	9	8	Malta
25	4	10	Malta
28	8	6	France
29	8	5	France
31	1	3	France
38	7	5	France
50	10	7	Slovenia
52	9	4	Slovenia
56	7	5	Slovenia
60	7	6	Sweden
64	8	5	Sweden
69	5	7	Sweden

[1] Indication about the perception of the NIG about the EIG's legitimacy. The question is stated as "Is the European organisation of which you are a member, a legitimate interest group?". Answer on a 1–10 scale (1 = Not legitimate at all, 10 = Highly legitimate). The answers to this question should not be analysed as such, but they indicate a 'tendency' about the legitimacy assessment of NIG about the legitimacy of its EIG.

[2] Perception of the NIG about the congruence between its positions and the ones of its EIG. The question is stated as "The positions of the European organization of which you are a member and your own positions are:". Answer on a 1–10 scale (1 = Completely different, 10 = Completely similar).

From the second reading, all cases are included in the analysis: those for which full transcriptions are available (read again) and those for which 'focused' transcriptions are available. These focused transcriptions concern the answers of the interviewees to one question of the interview grid: "Is the European organisation of which you are a member, a legitimate interest group?". The interviewees were invited to provide the position of their organisation regarding this question on a 1–10 scale, 1 labelled as "Not legitimate at all" and 10 labelled as "Highly legitimate". The first objective of this question is to obtain an 'overall tendency' about the assessment of the legitimacy of EIG from the viewpoint of the NIG. More importantly, the interviewees were invited to explain their answer and "identify the elements" that makes their EIG a legitimate interest group (see box 4.1). Their answer to the scale was also the occasion to make the interviewees speaking on the topic. For instance, if an interviewee selected a "7", but only provided positive elements, the interviewer could thus ask what elements could

improve the legitimacy of the EIG (or what are the negative elements driving down the score). In other words, the scores on the scale are not considered as an outcome to analyse as such, but as a means to drive the interviewees to develop their answer in order to understand how they perceive “EIGs legitimacy” and collect data which will be analysed through a qualitative analysis.

During the second reading, the recordings of all interviews (which were not transcribed in full) are listened to in order to have an overview of the cases. All the transcriptions, in full or focused, are thematised. The third reading aims to check and refine the thematisation. Thereupon, the data are not read case-by-case (as during the two first readings) but theme by theme. NVivo allows the researcher to display all the quotes similarly ‘coded’ (or more precisely here, ‘thematised’ under the same theme). Each theme is thus checked by the analyst during this third reading in order to refine, precise and organise the thematisation list. The objective of this third reading is to make the thematisation list more cohesive.

Box 4.1 Using scales to drive interviewees to speak

The purpose of the scale question about the legitimacy of European interest groups was not to obtain a precise score and get the “true” opinions or the accurate positions of NIGs. On the contrary, the objective was to understand the “*cultural frameworks*” interviewees had available to think about a problem “*rather than seeking interviewees’ “true” opinions or attitudes*” (Lamont & Swidler, 2014, p. 161). Here, the objective is to understand interviewees’ perceptions and reconstruct the latent content of meaning of the interviews (Bogner et al., 2009, p. 6). The interviewed actors from NIGs (see Chapter 3, section 3.4.1, for details about interviews) are considered as experts who acquired specialised problem-solving and analytical knowledge (Meuser & Nagel, 2009) that is of relevance to understand how issues are perceived within national interest groups.

4.2.2. Notes and observations about the successive readings

The first reading (of the fully transcribed interviews) allows to point out several observations relevant for the overall analysis. First, it is interesting to note that interviewees encounter no difficulties to answer the question about the legitimacy of their own organisation (question stated as “What does make your organization, a legitimate organization? (*Towards political institutions? towards the public?*)”). This question is the second of the interview guide and is part of the first section about the overall characteristics and activities of the NIG. Usually, the question was specified as in the following example “*What makes your organization a legitimate organization when you're speaking to public institutions in Slovenia? Or any audiences.*” (Interview 77). Only one interviewee did not reply directly to the question⁷⁴. This shows that the vast majority of the interviewees has a clear vision of what makes their interest group a legitimate organisation (in their own country) and are able to identify which are the elements that build organisational legitimacy. Even the interviewee voicing reservations about the question, replies to it and points out elements of the same kind of other respondents. This shows that the interviewees have a conception of what (organisational) legitimacy is, and particularly as regards to the activity of interest groups⁷⁵.

Second, the first reading was the occasion to identify if some themes are already recurrent in the discourse of the NIGs included in the sample. Only three themes created during the first reading are present in the discourse of more than two NIGs⁷⁶. The first theme stated by three NIGs' representatives is the competition between NIGs' interest (Theme: “Competing NIGs' interests”): the interests of the different member organisations (national groups) of the EIG are competing which is downgrading the legitimacy of the EIGs. The second one is the “Monopoly of EU representation”: the EIG is legitimate from the viewpoint of the NIG because it is the only organisation that represents the sector in question at the EU level. Finally, the theme “Representation of an economic sector” is stated by four NIGs: the EIG is legitimate because it represents an economic sector. The EIG represents a common position for an entire economic sector at the EU-level which makes this organisation legitimate.

⁷⁴ Quote from interview 87: “[Interviewer:] *And when you are speaking to public institutions or the general public also, what do you think makes your organization a legitimate organisation in Sweden? What are the different sources of your legitimacy let's say?* [Interviewee:] *I don't know if I understand, but why do they listen to us?*”

⁷⁵ It should be noted here that some interviewees were not identifying their own organisation as an ‘interest group’. However, for academic purpose and given the definition of interest groups provided in chapter 2 (point 2.1.1), all organisations under scrutiny in this dissertation are considered as interest group.

⁷⁶ The thematisation list counts after the first reading a total of 31 themes. 21 themes identified concern only one case and 7 themes are stated by 2 different NIGs.

Finally, the first reading is also the occasion to sort and organise the themes and make a first attempt at drawing the thematic tree. The different themes are first classified into two groups: positive discourse elements and negative discourse elements. In fact, it appears clearly that some elements in NIGs' discourse legitimise EIGs (positive elements) and others point out weaknesses or breaches that lower the legitimacy of EIGs (negative elements). On the one hand, positive elements of discourse are used by NIGs to express that the actions of their EIG are desirable, proper, or appropriate. These elements of 'legitimation discourse' procure legitimacy to the EIG (as a political actor). On the other hand, negative elements of NIGs' discourse are elements expressing that the actions of the EIG are not desirable, proper, or appropriate. These elements challenge the legitimacy of EIGs (as political actors). Given these points, each theme is defined as either positive or negative (as shown in the figure a.4.1 in appendixes).

Additionally, the different themes could be classified as regards to a categorisation of legitimisation mechanisms draw in the literature on legitimacy and more precisely on legitimacy of interest group. If a low level of inference is advisable during the thematisation process as such (Paillé & Mucchielli, 2016), the organisation of the themes created can be inspired by theoretical framework which stick to the outcome of the data analysis. The definition of 'meaningful axes' for the thematic tree is thus rooted in theoretical elements considered *a posteriori*. The thematisation as such stays 'close' to the content of interviews and is processed without any theoretical conception of legitimacy defined *a priori* (in the sense of what can be considered as elements potentially legitimising EIGs and what cannot). This is a crucial point to drive a subjective analysis of organisational legitimacy (see Chapter 1, point 1.2.3). If the analysis starts from the empirics, as it goes along, theoretical elements could enter into play (as shown by the arrow on the left in figure 3.1, above in Chapter 3, section 1.3; see also the box 4.2 hereafter). The analysis starts from the empirics, but theoretical framework could help the researcher to organise the data once already analysed. The selected theoretical framework — if it exists — should fit or should be adapted to fit the data analysed (here the thematisation list) at risk of losing the connection with the elements actually stated by the interviewees (and then losing the benefits of a subjective approach of organisational legitimacy). In other words, circles should not be transformed in squares in order to fit to an existing categorisation set. With this in mind and after the examination of the thematisation list obtained from the first reading, it appears that the distinction between input mechanisms and output mechanisms of legitimisation could be relevant to organise the themes created.

Box 4.2 Thematic analysis, induction and grounded theory

The analytical perspective of this dissertation stands aside from research designs used by grounded theory scholars (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). If the thematic analysis of this dissertation is an inductive process, its objective is not only to 'translate' the content of the interviews (Demazière & Dubar, 2004, cited in; Jacquet, 2017) but to conceptualise this content and participate in the understanding of a social phenomenon by replying to a research question. The thematic analysis does not consist only in the labelling of the content of interview but includes also a back-and-forth movement between data, theoretical framework and created themes (Kalberg, 2005, p. 17). To put it another way, the researcher is not considered as 'virgin' at the beginning of the analysis and expected to discover and conceptualise a new theory at the end of the process. Conversely, the knowledge of the researcher, its experience and readings constitute helpful tools for the analysis of empirical data.

This distinction between output mechanisms and input mechanisms of legitimation is rooted in the notions of *input* and *output* legitimacy, originally conceptualised to study European integration (Scharpf, 1999). Both forms of legitimacy express public assessment of the worth of European integration, input legitimacy is a matter of institutional design while output legitimacy concerns EU's performance. These two notions of legitimacy were translated for the purpose of analysis EIGs' legitimacy (Wiercx, 2011). *Input* legitimacy refers to the functioning and machinery of EIGs. It concerns for instance, the procedures by which decisions are made. *Output* legitimacy relates to the assessment of the relevance and quality of the organisation's outcomes. Wiercx (2011) describes legitimation mechanisms as following. On the one hand, input mechanisms are based on direct or indirect involvement of members in the decision-making process of the EIG. On the other hand, output mechanisms are based on the satisfaction for the members with policy outcomes of the EIG. The categorisation made on that basis by Wiercx (2011) is adapted in order to fit the outcome of the thematisation work⁷⁷. Nevertheless, this distinction between input and output mechanisms covers all the themes identified and allows to organise them within a relevant framework (see the discussion of the results of the thematic analysis, in point 4.5). Details about the final categorisation are provided in the next section.

Some additional observations result from the second reading (with all cases included; N=84). The thematisation list includes 60 themes, which is twice the number of themes identified during the first reading (N=17). As the low level of inference of the thematisation work produces 'detailed' themes (providing quite precise information on the content of the interviews) and given the number of additional cases (N=67) included for this reading, the increase in number of themes is very moderate. This allow the researcher to observe that the thematic analysis fulfils the saturation criterion, one of the validation criteria of qualitative methods (see the box 3.3, in Chapter 3, point 3.1.1.2). The saturation criterion refers to the moment when the addition of new data in the sample does not participate anymore at a better understanding of the phenomenon under scrutiny (Savoie-Zajc, 2009b). Saturation depends on the diversity of the data collected. It signals that the results based on the analysis of data are rich and tend to a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon studied (in a particular

⁷⁷ As a reminder of chapter 1, (point 1.3.1) Wiercx defines legitimacy as "*a generalized degree of trust of the members towards the organisation, in which trust could be the result of input and output mechanisms*" (p. 43). Input mechanisms concerns *participation, representation, transparency and accountability*. Output mechanisms concern *effectiveness and problem solving capacity* of EIGs. These six standards are theoretically set and discussed by the author. In an earlier paper, the author added *deliberation* and *agenda-setting capacity* to her list (see, Wiercx, 2009).

context). The second reading allows the researcher to observe this saturation criteria, as the purpose of creation of additional themes is to provide details about the content of the interviews (low level of inference) but did not show new patterns in the data. Correspondingly, the additional themes could all fit in the categories designed for the thematic tree at the end of the first reading. No additional meaningful axes or adaptation of the thematic tree (categorisation) turn out to be necessary.

Moreover, at the end of the second reading, it appears more clearly that it is not relevant to compare cases with each other. The important point is not that a NIG is using one element of discourse (and not other ones) but that some elements of discourse are recurrent, or used by different NIGs (in different contexts or with different features). For this reason, the analysis of elements of discourse at an aggregated level is relevant. The objective of this thematic analysis is not only to track the elements of discourse (gathered in a thematic list) but interpret them by grouping elements around meaningful axes and provide an inter-textual analysis (Gephart, 1993). This analysis of recurrence of themes and their relations is of interest for the understanding of the phenomenon under scrutiny: the legitimization of EIGs by NIGs. The objective of such an analysis is to identify shared framework of meaning for actors interpreting a social reality (see Chapter 1 for details about the subjective approach of organisational legitimacy, point 1.2.3). This shared framework produces for actors a shared interpretive scheme or meaning system for interpreting the world.

Finally, the third reading leads to the completeness\cohesiveness criterion, one of the validation criteria of qualitative methods (see the box 3.3, in Chapter 3, point 3.1.1.2). The completeness\cohesiveness criterion aims to obtain a dense and saturated interpretation of the results (Savoie-Zajc, 2009a). The results should be as parsimonious as possible, while having the richest and most comprehensive explanatory scope possible. In other words, the interpretation of the results optimise the ratio of the highest variation in the selected and analytical categories and the smallest number of concepts used. While the level of inference was very low during the two first readings, a higher level of inference is adopted during this step to merge similar themes and reorganise the thematisation list and the thematic tree in order to obtain cohesive analytical categories and a comprehensive analysis of themes identified. The number of themes in the final thematisation list is of 50. Several themes were also clustered 'under' others, these 'under' themes becomes thus 'child-themes' (as NVivo labels them: 'child-nodes'). This operation allows to keep detailed information about the content of interviews as well as better organise the thematisation list.

4.3. Outcome of the three readings

4.3.1. The thematisation list

As a reminder, the thematisation list (table 4.2, hereafter) includes all the themes identified (first column) during the thematic analysis and a brief description of each of the themes (third column). The second column specifies if the theme is positive or negative (in the NIGs' discourse). The fourth column provides the number of cases for which the theme is identified. The themes are sorted by alphabetical order. The thematisation list includes 60 themes, which is twice the number of themes identified during the first reading (N=17). As the low level of inference of the thematisation work produces 'detailed' themes (providing quite precise information on the content of the interviews) and given the number of additional cases (N=67) included for this reading, the increase in number of themes is very moderate.

An additional note is necessary to clearly understand the number of cases provided in the third column. Some themes (becoming 'child-themes') are clustered under others. In this case, the number of cases provided for the themes includes cases concerned by the 'child-themes' but also cases coded only with main theme⁷⁸. For instance, the 7th row about the theme "EU institutions lobbying" concerns 9 cases. Amongst these 9 cases, 3 are concerned by the 'child-theme' "Contacts with EU institutions", one by the 'child-theme' "European message" and another one by the 'child-theme' "Informal lobbying". It means that 4 cases are coded only with the main theme and 5 with three different 'child-themes'.

Finally, in order to read the following table for what it actually is, two points are important to take into consideration. The theme listed hereafter are built on and reflect the words used by NIGs' representatives. That being said, it is important to note that the content of the table provides information about the *reality of the interviewees* reflecting NIGs' positions. At this stage, the content of the table should not be considered in any way as verified facts (for instance, checked by the researcher).

⁷⁸ The main theme "Legal recognition" is only clustering two 'child-themes' without being used to 'directly' code any element of discourse.

Table 4.2 Thematisation list

Theme	+/-	Description	#Cases
Common positions	+	The EIG represents common positions, gathering the positions of all the member NIGs.	3
Common vision	+	The EIG shares a common vision with the NIG about the issues at stake.	2
Communication issues	-	The EIG does not communicate appropriately with the NIG about its activities.	2
Competing NIGs' interests	-	The interests of the members (NIGs) of the EIG are competing with each other. The divergence of positions lowers the legitimacy of the EIG.	6
EU information provider	+	The EIG provides the NIG with information about EU issues.	3
EU institutions lobbying	+	The EIG does lobby EU institutions.	9
└ Contacts with EU institutions	+	└ The EIG has regular contact with EU institutions.	└ 3
	+	└ The EIG delivers the messages of the NIG in European terms towards the EU level.	└ 1
└ European message	+	└ The EIG can informally lobby the EU level (vs. the formal way used by the NIG, which lobbies national competent authorities).	└ 1
└ Informal lobbying			
Exchange of good lobbying practices between NIGs	+	The EIG is a platform for exchange of lobbying experiences between NIGs.	1
Expertise (about a sector-cause)	+	The EIG's positions are based on expert knowledge about a sector or a cause (and related issues).	9
Funded by the EU	+	The EIG is funded by EU institutions.	3
Influence EU institutions (getting results)	+	The EIG actually influences the decisions of EU institutions.	6
Interest at stake not salient at the EU level	-	The EIG represents the interest of a sector which is perceived as not important at the EU level.	1
Language issues	-	There are language issues, which create a communication gap between the NIG and the EIG.	1
Legal recognition	+	The EIG is legally recognised.	4
└ Recognised in EU legal texts	+	└ The EIG is recognised by EU legal texts (Treaty, Directives ...).	└ 2
	+	└ The EIG is established under the Belgian law.	

└ Established under the Belgian law			└ 2
Less radical	-	The EIG's positions are less radical than the NIG's positions.	2
Limited influence towards the EC	-	The European Commission does not (have to) listen (only) to this EIG.	1
Located in Brussels	+	The EIG is located in Brussels, close to the EU institutions.	1
Missing NIGs from several MS	-	Some member states are not represented within the EIG (some NIGs are missing).	2
Mutual recognition	+	The EIG is 'mutually recognized' by other EIGs.	1
No EU institutions lobbying	-	The EIG does not lobby EU institutions to represent the economic sector in question, because there is no will from NIGs (members) to participate to such a common enterprise.	1
No fair representation of all the members' interests within the EIG	-	The EIG does not take into account all the interests represented by each NIG.	4
No involvement of NIGs in the EIG's decision-making process	-	Member NIGs (or some NIGs) do not take part actively in the EIG's decision process.	4
Old-fashioned	-	The EIG is considered as slow and not very innovative. It represents old times.	1
Organic affiliation	+	The EIG is an organic partner of the NIG (members of the same family).	2
Participation of NIGs to the EIG's decision-making process	+	The NIG participates in the decision process of the EIG.	12
Recognised stakeholder having access to EU institutions	+	The EIG is a recognised stakeholder at the EU level. It is an interlocutor of EU institutions. It has access to EU institutions.	12
└ Traditional representative	+	└ The EIG is the traditional representative of a sector\cause in Brussels.	└ 3
Representation of many NIGs	+	The EIG represents (a lot of) NIGs.	13
Representation of (NIGs from) many MS	+	The EIG has members in many or all MS. The membership is sometimes extended to NIGs from countries not member of the EU.	10
Representation of a lot of individuals	+	The EIG represents (indirectly) a lot of people (e.g. employers, anglers, employees ...).	4
Representation of an economic sector	+	The EIG represents an economic sector (a common position for an entire economic sector). The EIGs represent the peculiarities of this sector.	22

Representation of SMEs	+	The EIG represents the SMEs (against big industries' interests).	3
Representation of an important economic sector	+	The EIG represents an important economic sector (important market share).	3
Representation of an international network	+	The EIG represents an international network of NGOs.	1
Representation of big companies	+	The EIG represents directly big companies. The big companies from this sector are participating directly to the EIG's decision-making process.	4
Representation of major NIGs	+	The EIG counts major NIGs amongst its membership.	4
Representation of territories	+	The EIG represents local territories (recognized as important by the EU: "territorial cohesion" is included in the Treaty of Lisbon).	1
Representation of the interest of everyone (common good)	+	The EIG acts for the common good, the interest of everyone.	2
Reputation	+	The EIG is recognised as working effectively for a long time.	1
Scientific data and fact-based positions	+	The EIGs' positions are based on scientific data, verified facts or scientific analysis about an issue.	7
Social Partner	+	The EIG is recognised as social partner at the EU level.	5
Tasks sharing	+	The EIG shares advocacy tasks with the NIGs. Both can lobby EU institutions.	3
Threat of corporate stranglehold	-	The representativity of the EIG is threaten by an important presence of companies within its structure.	1
Transparency in the decision-making process	+	The EIG is transparent which a source of trust is for the NIG.	1
Unique representative of this sector or cause at the EU level	+	The EIG is transparent about how decisions are adopted, which a source of trust is for the NIG.	9
Voice of the planet	+	The EIG is the voice of the planet (it is an independent organisation, which is not yoked to any economic interest).	2

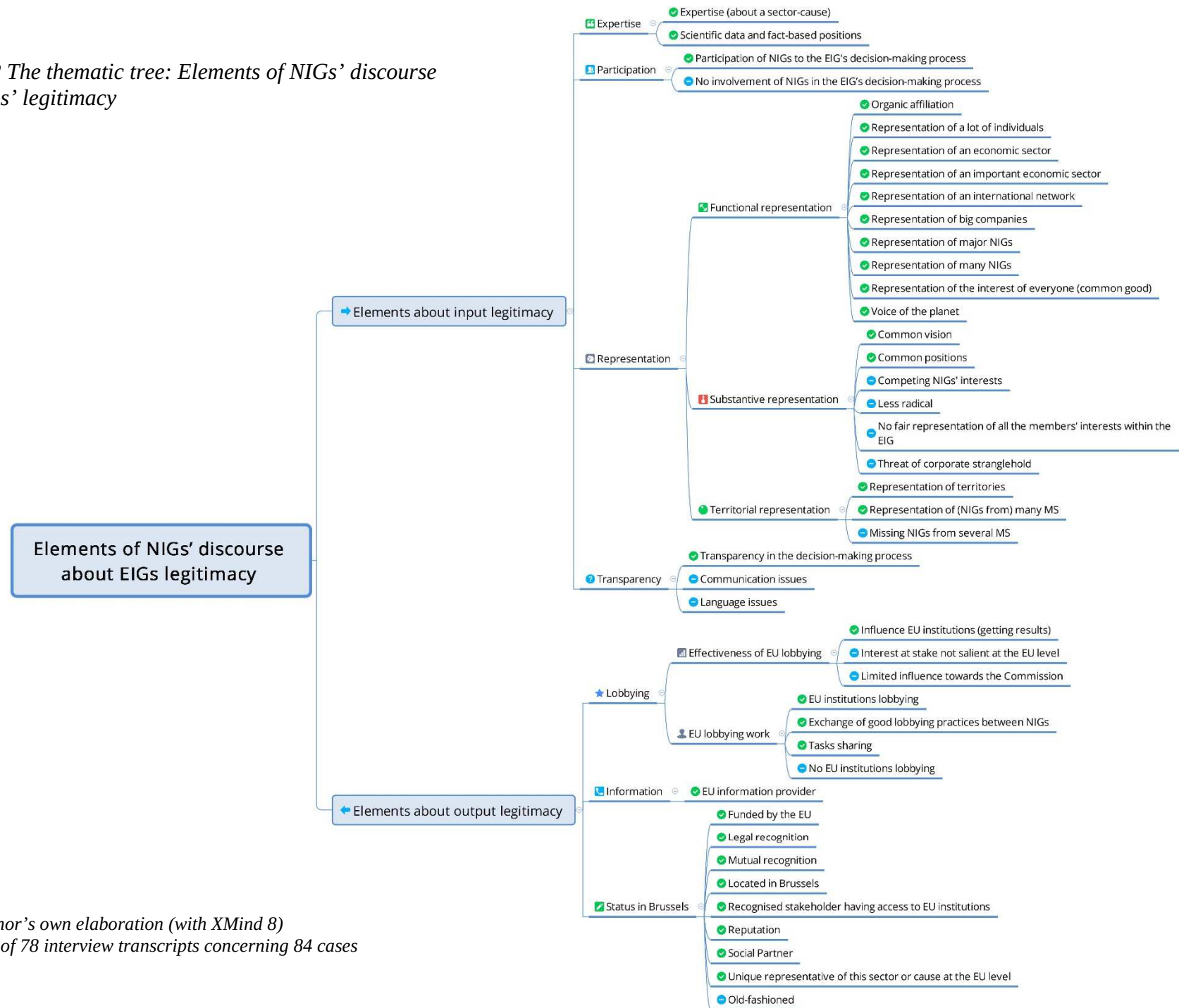
Source: Author's own elaboration on the basis of 78 interview transcripts concerning 84 cases (since 6 NIGs interviewed are member of 2 EIGs under scrutiny). List exported from NVivo 10.

4.3.2. The thematic tree

The thematic tree presented hereafter provides an overview of the elements of NIGs' discourse about EIGs legitimacy. In other words, the thematic tree is a conceptual categorisation of the elements of discourse of NIGs about the legitimacy of EIGs representing them at the EU level. These elements of discourse were identified by the thematisation process. The building of the clusters around meaningful axes aims to *identify underlying constructs* (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 137) that frame NIGs' perceptions. Clusters group themes by category of signification and include both positive and negative elements of discourse. Positive elements are identified with a “v sign” (✓) in a round and negative ones by a minus sign (-) in a round.

The following paragraphs explain each of the clusters constituting the thematic tree (see hereafter, the figure 4.2, *The thematic tree: Elements of EIGs legitimation in the discourse of NIGs*). There are two encompassing clusters (one about input legitimacy, the other about output legitimacy). Each of these encompassing cluster gather together four clusters. First, *input legitimation elements* is defined as well as all related clusters (*expertise, participation, representation, and transparency*). Second, output legitimation elements and related clusters (*effectiveness of lobbying, EU lobbying, Services, and Status in Brussels*) are defined. Finally, the thematic tree with the relative weight of each themes and clusters (with percentage) is presented and briefly discussed.

Figure 4.2 The thematic tree: Elements of NIGs' discourse about EIGs' legitimacy



Source: Author's own elaboration (with XMind 8)
on the basis of 78 interview transcripts concerning 84 cases

4.3.2.1. *Elements of input legitimacy of EIGs*

This encompassing cluster contains clusters on elements of discourse of NIGs about the aspects of input legitimacy of their EIGs. Elements of input legitimacy of EIGs refer to the elements on which are based the EIGs' decisions or the procedures through which these decisions are taken (according to their member organisations, the NIGs). Input legitimacy refers to the internal organisation, functioning and machinery of EIGs. It concerns for instance, the conditions and characteristics of procedures by which decisions are made (participation and transparency) or the foundations on which the positions of the EIGs rest on or depend on (expertise and representation). Input legitimacy refers to *what do reflect* the positions of EIGs.

Elements of discourse about *expertise*

This cluster contains elements of discourse about the expertise on which are based the positions of the EIGs. This expertise refers to either scientific data or expert knowledge. Expertise is detailed information on particular policy issues, industrial sector, social, environmental or economic issues (impact assessment, know-how...) ⁷⁹.

Elements of discourse about *participation*

This cluster is about elements of discourse concerning the participation of NIGs (as members of the structure) in the decision-making process of EIGs. It could refer to the participation in decisions about overall political course of EIGs, the drafting of policy positions as well as 'organisational' decisions (status, membership ...). The arenas in which participation takes place are General Assembly meetings (and/or board meetings, executive committee meetings ...), technical committees or working groups, as well as via electronic exchanges.

Elements of discourse about *representation*

This cluster contains elements of discourse about representation and is divided in three sub-clusters: substantive representation, functional representation, and territorial representation. "To represent" means to bring into presence something which is actually absent (Pitkin, 1967). Substantive representation refers to the idea that actions and opinions of representative must correspond to the wishes, needs and interests of those for whom she/he acts, that he must put

⁷⁹ For a discussion on expertise, see for instance: Restier-Melleray (1990). The author adopts the description of "situation of expertise" as "the encounter of a problematic situation and a specialised knowledge" (1990, p. 549). For a discussion about expertise and interest groups, see for instance: Saurugger (2002) or De Bruycker (2015).

her·himself in their place, take their part, act as they would act (Pitkin, 1967, p. 114). Substantive representation stands for a representation relationship focusing on ideas, ideals, opinions and values. The representative is acting as a substitute for the represented and aims to advance policy preferences of its constituency.

Functional representation refers here to the representation by EIGs of groups of individuals, companies or organisations that share one or several characteristics as professions, level of incomes, activities ... Are also included in this cluster, elements referring to broad symbolic functions of interest groups, as representing “the common good”, for instance. Functional constituencies are composed by individuals, companies or organisations commonly affected or concerned by some issues or policies (Wolff, 2013). While substantive representation refers to interest groups *speaking for* or acting for their constituencies (*transmitting* their message), functional representation refers to interest groups as *voice of* their constituencies, standing for their constituencies (producing a message *on behalf of*).

Finally, territorial representation refers to individuals, companies or organisations represented according to the territorial constituency to which they belong. The issue at stake here is about the cover of the largest possible (or the entire) territory (here, the EU) or selected and particular areas.

Elements of discourse about *transparency*

This cluster contains elements of discourse about the transparency of EIGs towards their membership. Transparency could be defined as follows: “*Transparency refers to the degree that information is made available about how and why decisions are produced within a certain institution*” (De Fine Licht, Naurin, Esaiasson, & Gilljam, 2014, p. 112). Transparency could thus concern EIGs’ decision-making process but also more generally, any activities of the EIGs. Different types of transparency exist. Mansbridge (2009) distinguishes transparency in process and transparency in rationale: “transparency in rationale refers to information on the substance of the decision and of the facts and reasons on which it was based” and “transparency in process refers to information on actions such as deliberations, negotiations, and votes that took place amongst and between the decision makers during the decision-making process and were thus directly fed into the decision” (De Fine Licht et al., 2014, p. 113; based on Mansbridge, 2009).

4.3.2.2. *Elements of output legitimacy of EIGs*

This encompassing cluster contains elements of discourse of NIGs about the aspects of output legitimacy of their EIGs. Elements of output legitimization of EIGs refer to the EIGs' activities, the outcomes of these activities and the status EIGs have in the perspective of external audiences. Output legitimacy relates to the assessment of the relevance and quality of the organisation's status and outcomes. It concerns for instance, the actual efficiency of EIGs' work (effectiveness of lobbying), the EIGs' activities (EU lobbying, services) and their political situation (status in Brussels). The idea of output legitimacy of EIGs is based on the assumption that the results of EIGs lead to the support of the membership. Output legitimacy refers to *what do EIGs*, or what do they have achieved.

Elements of discourse about *lobbying*

Elements of discourse concerning the EIGs' lobbying are gathered under this cluster. This cluster is divided in two sub-clusters: EU lobbying work and effectiveness of EU lobbying. On the one hand, the sub-cluster 'EU lobbying work' concerns lobbying activities which are understood broadly, and thus include any contact of EIGs with EU institutions: formal or informal meetings, regular or one-off contacts. This sub-cluster includes all themes that are related to the activities of lobbying of EIGs no matter the influence these organisations have on EU policies. On the other hand, the sub-cluster 'effectiveness of EU lobbying' contains elements of discourse about the actual effectiveness of lobbying actions of the EIGs, which means their attributed influence on the decision-making process of the EU. These elements concern the level of influence the EIGs have on EU institutions (and more particularly, the Commission). One should note that these elements of discourse reflect the perception of NIGs (and not a potential scientific assessment of the actual influence or non-influence of EIGs on EU's policies).

Elements of discourse about *information*

This cluster concerns elements of discourse about information that EIGs provide to their members. This information provision is a service provided by EIGs to their member that is not directly link to the lobbying work of the EIGs at the EU level.

Elements of discourse about *status in Brussels*

This cluster contains elements of discourse about the status EIGs hold in Brussels. The concept of ‘status’ is broadly understood here. It may concern ‘formal’ status (in the sense of directly verifiable) as legal recognition and tangible features; or may concern more abstract considerations as reputation or informal recognition.

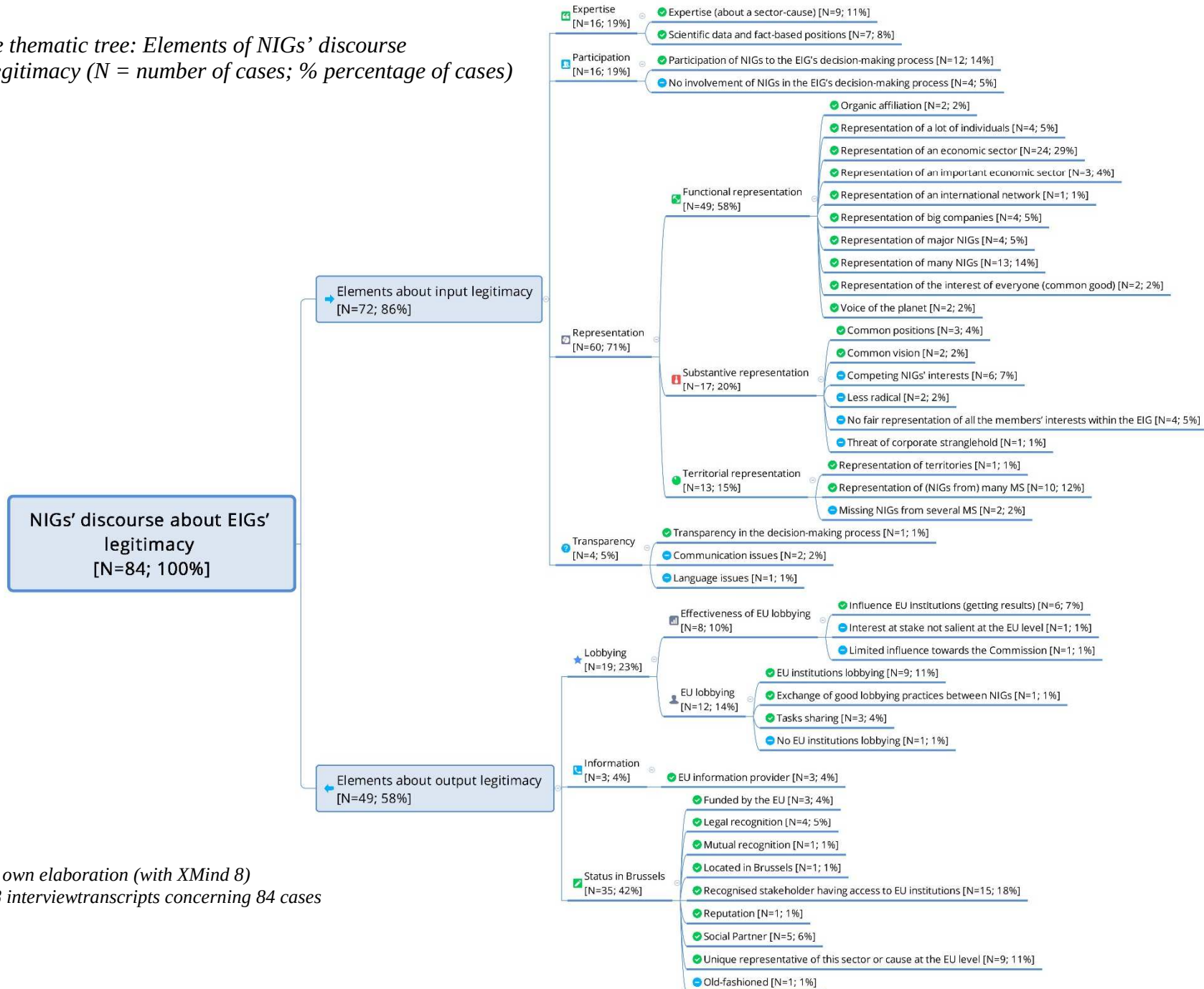
4.3.2.3. *The thematic tree weighted by importance of themes and clusters*

The thematic tree presented hereafter (figure 4.3) is the same as the one above (figure 4.2), but it provides the number of cases for each theme or cluster. The percentage of cases it represents is also included in the tree⁸⁰. The numbers (and percentages) provided for each cluster are not the addition of numbers provided for the concerned themes (as two or more themes of the same cluster could be identified for one case; this case is thus only counted once for the cluster’s percentage).

A third figure (figure 4.4) presents the thematic tree with clusters in different font sizes, proportionated according to their relative weight (percentage). This thematic tree shows which cluster of themes are more present in the discourse of NIGs about the legitimacy of their EIGs. On the basis of these two figures, several observations can be made. Elements about input legitimacy of EIGs are much more present in the discourse of NIGs, than elements about output legitimacy (86% vs 58%). Concerning EIGs’ input legitimacy, elements of discourse about *representation* (and particularly *functional representation*) emerge clearly. At the same time, *expertise* and *participation* concern almost one case out of five. On the side of output legitimacy, the cluster *status of EIGs in Brussels* clearly emerges. It is also interesting to note that the two most important clusters, *status in Brussels* on the one hand, and *functional representation* (or more broadly *representation*) on the other hand, include almost no negative elements of discourse (with the exception of *substantive representation*).

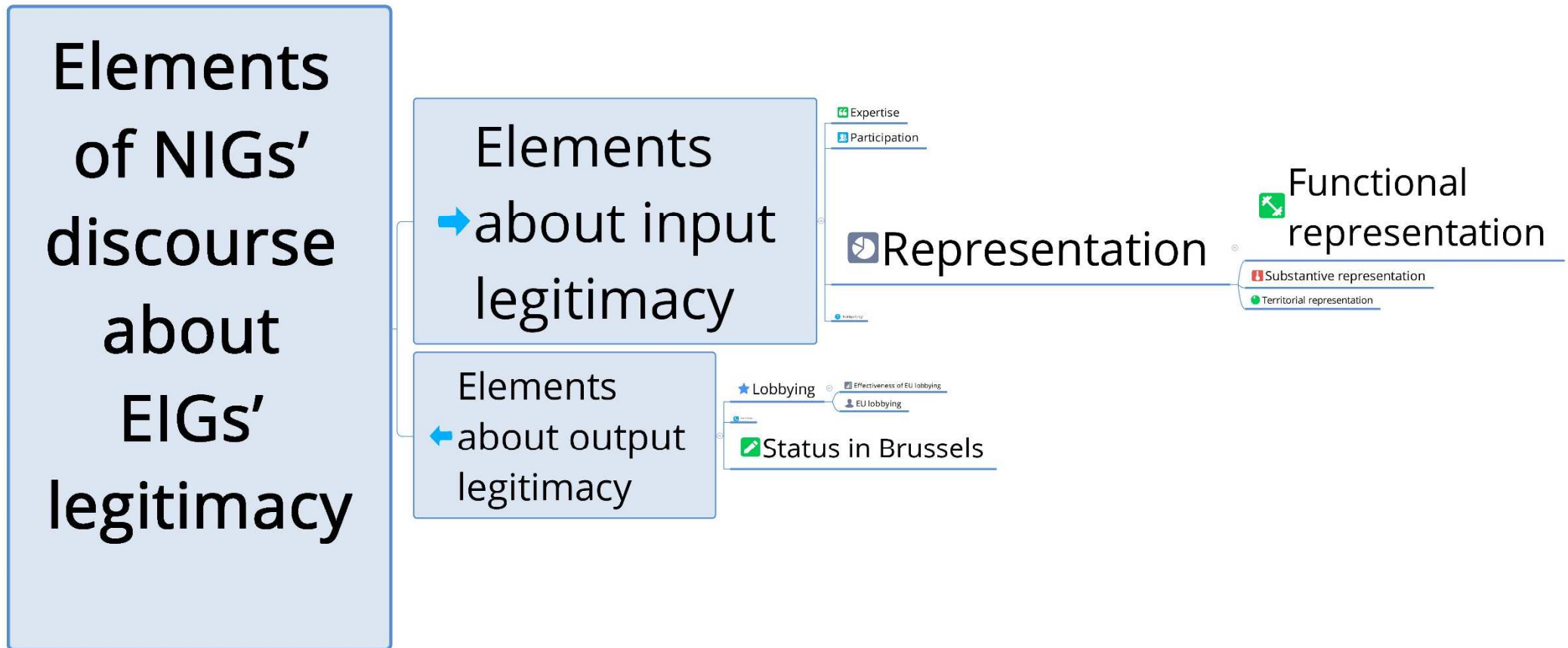
⁸⁰ The percentages provided in the thematic tree as well as during the discursive analysis aim at provide an indication about the balance between the different clusters and highlight the overall tendencies concerning the ‘weight’ of these clusters.

Figure 4.3 The thematic tree: Elements of NIGs' discourse about EIGs' legitimacy (N = number of cases; % percentage of cases)



Source: Author's own elaboration (with XMind 8)
on the basis of 78 interview transcripts concerning 84 cases

Figure 4.4 The thematic tree: Elements of NIGs' discourse about EIGs' legitimacy. Font sizes according to relative weight of clusters



Source: Author's own elaboration (with XMind 8) on the basis of 78 interview transcripts concerning 84 cases.

4.4. Discursive analysis

This part presents all the clusters and put them in relation with quotes from the interviews. As a reminder, the discursive analysis is the last step of the thematic analysis which aims to analyse in details each category of themes identified and conceptualised through the three readings of the corpus. Divergences, oppositions, convergences or complementarity between the themes are highlighted. The recurrence of themes and the weight of clusters are also discussed.

The following points are organised systematically. For each cluster, a table provides information about the themes included in the cluster (and if these themes indicate either positive or negative elements of discourse) and the number of cases stating such elements of discourse (see the example below). The clusters are then illustrated with quotes from the interviews⁸¹.

Table 4.3 Example of a summary table: themes related to name of the cluster

Name of the cluster [N=x; y%]	Name of the theme A [N=a; b%]	Positive or negative
	Name of the theme B [N=c; d%]	Positive or negative

A discussion of each cluster and the features of the cases stating the elements of discourse in question are provided. The objective is to have a look at the distribution of cases' NIGs stating similar elements of discourse as regards to the entire sample of cases under scrutiny in this dissertation (see Chapter 3, section 3.5, and appendixes, figure a.4.2 to figure a.4.161). The aim of such a review is to identify whether different elements of discourse are only stated by particular types of groups or if some elements are widely shared amongst NIGs across Europe (and diverging as regards to their organisational features). These features may concern: their national environment (NIGs' member state), the nature of interest they advocate (cause group or sectional group), the saliency of EU issues, their (direct, indirect or non-) EU-related lobbying activities, their (non-) membership to other EIGs, the frequency of contact with their EIG (on a daily, weekly, monthly or yearly basis), their organisational structure (umbrella organisation, direct membership of individuals or companies, mixed membership or non-

⁸¹ As a reminder from Chapter 3 (point 3.4.1): All quotes provided in the dissertation are anonymised. It was guaranteed to the interviewees that their declarations will not be made public in direct relations to their organisations' name. Some interviewees clearly asked a confirmation about this when they were speaking about their relations with their EIGs or with their counterparts from other member states. Because of this, NIGs' names are never provided in direct relations with interviews' quotes. Each quote is linked to the nature of interest a NIG represent and its member state of origin (e.g. "Maltese cause group"). Of course, other information about the cases are put in relations with quotes when necessary, but it does not allow linking directly a quote to a NIG. The id of interviews are used by the researcher to organise the chapter. It shows also to the reader the diversity of interviews mobilised. Moreover, it also must be noted that quotes from interviews conducted in French are translated into English by the author. These translations are made for indicative purposes only. Readers are invited to refer to the original quotes in French (in footnotes) to get the actual words used by the interviewees.

membership based organisation) and the number of NIGs' staff members(that may provide indications about their financial resources).

4.4.1. Elements of discourse about input legitimacy of EIGs [N = 72; 86%]

Elements of discourse about *expertise* [N=16; 19%]

Table 4.4 Summary table: themes related to expertise

Expertise [N=16; 19%]	Expertise (about a sector-cause) [N=9; 11%]	Positive
	Scientific data and fact-based positions [N=7; 8%]	Positive

These elements of discourse concern either general expertise hold by the EIG about a particular sector or cause, or more precisely on scientific data or fact based analysis on which are based the positions of the EIGs. The legitimacy of the EIGs is thus based on expertise. Expertise is detailed information on particular issues (in the quote hereafter, information about an industrial sector) that may help decision makers to design relevant policies:

[Speaking about the EIG:] Nowadays, there is nothing like that that exists, so we need this type of structure. When you are a MEP, I know MPs, well, you get there, you cannot know everything. And it is not a crime of lèse-majesté to recognise it. So fortunately, there are professional structures that come to bring some. So, of course, we can always say that it is done on purpose, but everyone is doing so, is lobbying – which is a connoted word in France – without knowing it. Everyone promotes its own agenda, etc. [...] We are working on technical issues or regulatory issues, or on blockages, etc. And again, as I told you, when you have just been elected MEP or when you work at the Commission you cannot know everything. Indeed, we're talking about a very specific issue, [industrial sector]. Without insulting anyone, the experts on that issue, we can count them on the fingers of both hands. It's not, not everyone can be a great expert on all subjects. So, there is need to feed the public decision. (Interview 32, French sectional group)⁸²

⁸² Original quote in French: *Il y a rien d'autre aujourd'hui qui existe donc on a besoin aussi de ce type de structure-là. Quand vous êtes parlementaire européen, moi j'en connais des députés, ben vous arrivez là, vous ne pouvez pas tout connaître. Et ce n'est pas un crime de lèse-majesté que de le reconnaître. Donc heureusement qu'il y a des structures professionnelles qui viennent apporter des. Alors, évidemment, on pourra toujours nous dire que c'est fait à dessein, mais tout le monde fait du, enfin en France c'est un mot connoté, mais du lobbying, sans le savoir. Tout le monde prêche pour sa paroisse aussi, etc. [...] C'est vraiment, on est sur des sujets techniques ou des sujets réglementaires, ou sur des blocages, etc. Et c'est encore une fois, comme je vous dis, quand vous venez d'être élu parlementaire européen ou quand vous travaillez à la Commission vous ne pouvez pas tout connaître. Bon, on parle quand même d'un sujet qui est très précis, [le secteur industriel], sans faire injure à personne, donc, les experts vous les comptez sur les doigts des deux mains quoi, hein. Ce n'est pas, tout le monde ne peut pas être un grand sachant sur tous les sujets. Donc, il y a besoin d'alimenter la décision publique.*

Cause groups claim also this source of legitimacy for their EIG:

Their legitimacy certainly relies on the same basis than ours. That is, [...] their expertise, that makes them no jokers when they say something, they have actual proposals. (Interview 54, French cause group)⁸³

The rationale of “facts”, data and scientific analyses backing the EIG’s positions, and consequently their legitimacy, is claimed mainly by cause groups:

So, they're not just making some comments based on, their dreams, let's say, last night, but they make their comments based on the studies, and analysis, that are being prepared either by them, or by relevant institutions or research centre in the, I don't know, EU level. (Interview 73, Slovenian cause group)

I mean, it's definitely the data that are unique and that are the hardware so to speak of, to get the arguments reliable, so yeah, the data is the most important part of course. (Interview 101, Swedish cause group)

Expertise is thus perceived by different groups as a source of legitimacy for EIGs representing them in Brussels. This element of discourse meets the observation of researchers: *“Policy-makers face complex policy problems and to solve them they need different sorts of expertise and know-how. Usually they lack detailed information on each policy issue that they care about and time pressure prevents them from collecting all the relevant information themselves. This leads them to seek information from external sources, such as interest organizations”* (De Bruycker, 2015, p. 2). Interest groups are thus expected to exploit EU officials’ demand for special expertise and reliable information to establish their reputation and “encapsulate” EU institutions, in order to become their sole source of expert knowledge (van Schendelen, 2010, p. 120).

19% of cases identify expertise as a source of their EIGs’ legitimacy. Expertise is thus clearly part of the EIGs legitimization discourse of NIGs but it is not identified as one of the most important element. Such elements of discourse about expertise are identified in the discourse of six French, five Swedish, four Slovene and one Maltese groups (see appendixes, figure a.4.2), reflecting thus the distribution of NIGs by member state of the entire sample under scrutiny. Moreover, it is interesting to note that elements about expertise are identified in the discourse of as many cause groups than sectional groups (cause = 8; sectional = 8). This means that the argument of expertise is relatively used more by cause groups than sectional groups (as 22 cause

⁸³ Original quote in French: *Mais du coup, leur légitimité vient certainement de la même que la nôtre. C'est-à-dire, [...] la capacité d'expertise qui font que c'est pas des guignols s'ils racontent quelque chose, y'a des propositions concrètes.*

groups and 62 sectional groups are part of the sample). In an article about trade policy lobbying by cause groups (NGOs) and sectional groups (business groups), Dür and De Bièvre (2007a) expected the latter to use more expertise arguments than the former to influence EU institutions, since business groups were expected to have “*more expertise than NGOs*”. ‘Surprisingly’, according to the authors, they found that: “*both sides feel that expertise gives them certain influence, a result that runs counter to our expectation*” (Dür & De Bièvre, 2007a, p. 88). The result of this dissertation reinforces this observation and even goes beyond: cause groups use more the argument of expertise than sectional groups. This suggests that cause groups (as sectional ones) have integrated the importance of supply technical or scientific-based information above other information types in EU legislative lobbying (Chalmers, 2011; cited in De Bruycker, 2015).

Altogether, in the perspective of NIGs, expertise has a relatively low importance as source of EIGs’ legitimacy, although EU interest representation has long been described as a system in which apolitical and technical information prevails (Bartolini, 2005). This result is in line with research pointing out that “*technical information is used more intensively, but interest groups also rely substantially on political information to represent their views*” (De Bruycker, 2015, p. 16).

Elements of discourse about *participation* [N=16; 19%]

Table 4.5 Summary table: themes related to participation

Participation [N=16; 19%]	Participation of NIGs to the EIG’s decision-making process [N=12; 14%]	Positive
	No involvement of NIGs in the EIG’s decision-making process [N=4; 5%]	Negative

This cluster is about elements of discourse concerning the participation of NIGs in the decision-making process of EIGs. An EIG is considered as legitimate because NIGs, as members of the organisational structure of the EIG, participate to the decisions of their European umbrella. The majority of NIGs speaking of participation as a source of EIGs’ legitimacy, do so in a positive way:

They are organised in working groups, so you can really go in depth discussion. And, I mean, in the one you want, of course, not in all. But this is like, speaking generally, how they work. So you would have a working group and they would be an intense exchange of opinions and positions and then, like a compromised position is established which is then also communicated to the outside and argued. And this is, I think the legitimacy of these organisations. (Interview 82, Slovenian cause group).

A very strong legitimacy. It is a structure of which we are a part of, in which we have the right to decide. So we, [the name of the NIG], we have several people who are sitting in steering committees. [...] And consequently, we participate with them in the policy making of the organisation. (Interview 54, French cause group)⁸⁴

On the other hand, few NIGs (4 out of 84) consider that the absence of involvement member organisations in EIG's decision-making process undermines the legitimacy of their European umbrella organisation. Some blame themselves:

Well, it's true that, I think we also have some responsibility there. It also means that we may not be sufficiently involved in the organisation's structures, in the working groups. (Interview 28, French sectional group)⁸⁵

Some blame their counterparts across the EU:

No, I don't give... [He gives a 4. The interviewee is comparing with a high 'legitimacy score' (10), he just attributed to another EIG of which they are a member] What happened to [the EIG], is that... [the EIG], I've been participating in [the EIG] for the last six, no I've been participating from 2006, so it is ten years now. Except that we've been out for two years. Situation in [the EIG], [the EIG] is funded by the British, and the Dutch, mostly. Italians are not taking care about [the EIG]. They're not attending. And Mediterranean are not attending at [the EIG]. There is no French attending, so the only country attending in [the EIG] is Malta, actually. (Interview 40, Maltese sectional group)

So I would say it is a very legitimate organisation, but I will not put a 10. I will put an 8. I think it's legitimate, but it's still an organisation that needs to make progress, and not all member organisations are involved so much on the issue [name of an issue], or on the issue [name of another issue], as we are. (Interview 31, French sectional group)⁸⁶

At the exception of the Maltese organisation quoted above (which has a tough discourse challenging the legitimacy of its EIG), NIGs stating negative discourse about participation of members within EIGs' internal structures do not challenge the legitimacy of their European umbrellas. The reason put forward by NIGs to explain the low level of participation of member organisations is the scarcity of resources (mainly money and time).

⁸⁴ Original quote in French: *Une très forte légitimité. C'est un espace dans lequel on est et auquel on a, sur lequel on a droit de pilotage. Donc, nous à [le nom du groupe national], on a plusieurs personnes qui sont dans les comités de direction. [...] Et du coup, on participe avec eux à l'élaboration des politiques.*

⁸⁵ Original quote in French: *Bon, alors c'est vrai que, je pense qu'on a aussi une part de responsabilité, ça veut dire aussi qu'on ne s'implique peut-être pas suffisamment dans les structures, dans les groupes de travail.*

⁸⁶ Original quote in French: *Donc je dirais qu'elle est très légitime, mais je ne vais pas mettre un 10, quoi. Je vais mettre un 8 sur le sujet quoi. Je pense qu'elle est légitime, mais c'est toujours une organisation qui doit faire des progrès, et toutes les organisations membres ne sont pas autant investies sur les questions [un domaine] justement, ou sur la question [un autre domaine], que nous quoi.*

To sum up, considering all NIGs stating elements of discourse (mainly positive) about member organisations' participation, it represents 19% of cases. These cases do not share particular features that could distinguish them from the entire sample⁸⁷. In brief, participation is thus part of 'EIGs legitimisation' discourse of NIGs but it is not identified as one of the most important element of this discourse.

Elements of discourse about *representation* [N=60; 71%]

This cluster concerns elements of discourse about representation. The idea stated by NIGs is the following: EIGs are legitimate because they represent something, may it be particular constituencies, the actual positions of these constituencies, or territories. Consequently, this cluster is divided in three sub-clusters: functional representation, substantive representation, and territorial representation.

Table 4.6 Summary table: sub-clusters related to representation

Representation [N=60; 71%]	Functional representation	[N=49; 58%]
	Substantive representation	[N=17; 20%]
	Territorial representation	[N=13; 15%]

Functional representation [N=49; 58%]

Table 4.7 Summary table: themes related to functional representation

Functional representation [N=49; 58%]	Organic affiliation	[N=2; 2%]	Positive
	Representation of a lot of individuals	[N=4; 5%]	Positive
	Representation of an economic sector	[N=24; 29%]	Positive
	Representation of an important economic sector	[N=3; 4%]	Positive
	Representation of an international network	[N=1; 1%]	Positive
	Representation of big companies	[N=4; 5%]	Positive
	Representation of major NIGs	[N=4; 5%]	Positive
	Representation of many NIGs	[N=13; 14%]	Positive
	Representation of the interest of everyone (common good)	[N=2; 2%]	Positive
	Voice of the planet	[N=2; 2%]	Positive

Elements of discourse about functional representation refer to NIGs legitimising their EIGs because they represent a particular groups of individuals, organisations, companies or industrial sector. The focus is put on the composition of EIGs' constituencies. EIGs represent officially or formally these constituencies. First, NIGs put forward the fact that EIGs count an important

⁸⁷ Variables checked: member states of origin, nature of interest, saliency of EU issues, direct EU lobbying, membership to other EIG, number of staff members, type of membership, number of members and number of contact with the EIG (see appendixes figures a.4.18 to a.4.33).

number of NIGs as members. NIGs highlight the importance of the *representativeness* of EIGs, in the sense of representing a lot of members:

Why [the EIG] is legitimate? Simply because it gather together all associations, federations, and chambers. Because, if we take Greece for instance, it is mandatory for [companies] to be registered with the Chamber of commerce, so it is this Chamber that is member of [the EIG]. The same for Poland. In this context, [the EIG] has its place at the European level. (Interview 107, French sectional group)⁸⁸

They have a very wide representation in terms of membership through them and their organisations. (Interview 85, Swedish cause group)

Because they are, it's very important for member organisations, irrespectively if it's a national organisation or it's an international organisation, to have a large group of members that they will represent. Otherwise they will only speak for one, two, or three companies or countries, or whatever, making them less legitimate on the international debate. So, I think it is very important. (Interview 86, Swedish sectional group)

Interviewee: [...] The strength of having all the [cause in question] movements of Europe behind them.

Interviewer: Their representativeness?

Interviewee: Exactly! (Interview 88, Swedish cause group)

It [the EIG] doesn't have its own supporters or its own members as an office, but it represents the offices also in Europe, besides being representative of the all [the international] Network. So that's one source of legitimacy. (Interview 108, Swedish cause group)

In the same vein, some NIGs point out that some big NIGs are member of the EIG, which is also a source of legitimacy: *"All the major cooperative organisations, is it the [German NIG], or is it the French. [...] All the biggest cooperative unions I would say are members of it"* (Interview 77, Slovenian sectional group); *"I would say that they have some very big organisations in the network that also has that legitimacy. [...] I mean that they can get more things across thanks that"* (Interview 100, Swedish cause group).

EIGs are also legitimised by NIGs because they represent all, or the majority of agents of an economic sector. This concerns of course only sectional groups:

But [the EIG] itself, there was no question about its legitimacy, it was THE stakeholder, or rather THE European representative of stakeholders. So, from this point of view, it's a simple definition of legitimacy. You are the

⁸⁸ Original quote in French: *Pourquoi [le groupe européen] est légitime? Tout simplement parce que c'est le regroupement de toutes les associations, fédérations, chambre de métier. Parce que si on prend la Grèce par exemple, les [entreprises] sont obligatoirement enregistrés dans la chambre de métier, donc c'est elle qui est à [l'organisation européenne], pareil pour la Pologne. Donc à partir de ce moment-là, [l'organisation européenne] a sa place au niveau européen.*

stakeholder, and you represent more than X% of the economic operators. You are legitimate, period. (Interview 60, French sectional group)⁸⁹

I mean [the EIG] is... it's an association that has been formed by national associations. Each national association is representative of its own industry and therefore they are delegating to a common, they are putting in common something on behalf of, you can say you represent all the industry, basically. (Interview 46, Maltese sectional group)

I think the very fact of being united in the representation of [the companies of the economic sector], it enhances legitimacy. Because of that, we do not represent the interests of a country but of an entire economic sector. (Interview 39, French sectional group)⁹⁰

When the Commission needs the position of the business sector, they know that if they press the button [“name of the EIG”], they will get the position of the business sector. And the main position of the business sector. (Interview 26, French sectional group)⁹¹

Some highlight the fact that the EIG represents all the components of an economic sector:

I mean, I think it's a, it's a big strength that we have all the, all value chain within the organisation and there is no other organisation which has this... (Interview 90, Swedish sectional group)

Other sectional NIGs point out the importance of the business sector in question or the fact that some big companies are member of the EIGs:

Yes, indeed, I think they have about sixty members, who represent roughly about 12 million companies in Europe. So obviously that's a very important weight. (Interview 109, French sectional group)⁹²

I think that representing 99.8% of companies is already a pretty important source of legitimacy. (Interview 39, French sectional group)⁹³

As I said before, all, all major railway industries are part of [the EIG]. I think they have 80, 90 maybe even more. But, I mean, there is a lot, all, as [Canadian multinational], [French multinational], [German multinational],

⁸⁹ Original quote in French: *Mais sinon [le groupe européen] lui-même, il y avait aucune question sur sa légitimité, c'était LE stakeholder, ou plutôt LE représentant européen des stakeholders. Donc, de ce point de vue-là, c'est une définition simple la légitimité. Vous êtes stakeholder, et vous représentez plus de X % des opérateurs économiques. Vous êtes légitime, point final.*

⁹⁰ Original quote in French: *Et je pense que le fait même d'être tous unis dans la représentation des [entreprises d'un secteur], c'est une légitimité. Parce que du coup, on ne représente pas les intérêts d'un pays mais de toute une catégorie économique.*

⁹¹ Original quote in French: *Mais quand la Commission a besoin d'avoir l'avis du business, elle sait que si elle appuie sur le bouton [« nom de l'organisation européenne »], elle aura un avis du business. Et l'avis principal du business.*

⁹² Original quote in French: *Oui, effectivement et puis je veux dire, il y a énormément de, je crois qu'ils ont une soixantaine de membres, il y a à peu près, qui représentent à peu près 12 millions d'entreprises en Europe donc forcément c'est, c'est un poids très important.*

⁹³ Original quote in French: *Je pense que le fait de représenter 99,8% des entreprises, c'est déjà une sacrée source de légitimité.*

all the big ones are there, so. I think they are quite legitimate (Interview 99, Swedish sectional group).

Moreover, some groups note also the organic affiliation linking them with their EIGs: “*it's the same family; therefore, a very strong legitimacy*” (Interview 54, French cause group)⁹⁴; “*For us, clearly it's a legitimate organisation, we created it. And so, in way, it's a part of ourselves that we put in Brussels*” (Interview 38, French sectional group)⁹⁵. In the same fashion, another NIG highlights the affiliation of the EIG to a broader international network of NGOs : “*I think that, [the EIG] is representative, or [the international network]. So it's seen as [the international network], also take global international organisation*” (Interview 108, Swedish cause group).

Are also included in this cluster, elements referring to symbolic constituencies. Cause groups see the legitimacy of their EIGs in their attributed role of representative of the common good, or being the voice of the planet:

I mean that the fact that they also not tied to any economic interest, it's very important. There is no hidden agenda. There is you know, the reason why, why [the EIG] or [another EIG] are pushing for something is to, you know, save the planet basically. No other reasons why they work. [...] I think that would be the most important. And as you know, this ‘voice of the planet’, or the ‘voice for nature’, something like that. (Interview 73, Slovenian cause group)

But the environmental NGOs are not there for themselves. They are there for everybody let's say. So it's more an altruistic approach, not the egocentric, for just follow your own interest. And for that reason, I would say that they are highly legitimate. They won't get more profit if the decision that is in line with their position is adopted. They won't profit, in any kind of way. So, I would say there is high legitimacy. (Interview 108, Swedish cause group)

Elements of discourse about functional representation of EIGs are all positive. 58% of cases identify functional representation as a source of their EIGs’ legitimacy. Functional representation is clearly the most important element of discourse of NIGs to legitimise their EIGs. The group of cases using such elements of discourse does not show particular deviation compared to the entire sample of cases under scrutiny (see appendixes, figures a.4.34 to a.4.49).

Legitimacy of EIGs based on functional representation refers to the legitimacy of EIGs as *standing for* their constituencies (Dovi, 2014), delivering messages *on behalf* of constituency considered as important. This kind of elements is close to the symbolic representation described

⁹⁴ Original quote in French: *C'est la même famille ; donc, une très forte légitimité.*

⁹⁵ Original quote in French: *Pour nous, clairement c'est une organisation légitime, on l'a créée et donc quelque part, c'est une partie de nous-même qu'on a mis à Bruxelles.*

by Pitkin (1967). A representative is legitimate to represent its referent, “*not because of its actual resemblance to the referent, not because of any real connection, but just because it is so considered*” (Pitkin, 1967, p. 100). Actually, the reality is not so extreme, there are actual connections with the constituencies, but rationales of functional representation is not based on EIGs reflecting positions of their constituencies, but on EIGs standing for them. In the words of the interviewees, EIGs are “*the voice of the member groups*” (interview 44) — but not in the sense of reflecting their opinion — or even more symbolically, the “*voice of the planet*” (interview 73) for instance. EIGs are considered as legitimate because they formally represent constituencies considered as relevant by NIGs in order to lobby EU institutions; but not because they act as delegates (aggregating and transmitting NIGs’ positions) at the EU level. The words used by the interviewees are about the number of members, their importance or the scope of the constituencies.

Substantive representation [N=17; 20%]

Table 4.8 Summary table: themes related to substantive representation

Substantive representation [N=17; 20%]	Common positions [N=3; 4%]	Positive
	Common vision [N=2; 2%]	Positive
	Competing NIGs’ interest [N=6; 7%]	Negative
	Less radical [N=2; 2%]	Negative
	No fair representation of all members’ interest within the EIG [N=4; 5%]	Negative
	Threat of corporate stranglehold [N=1; 1%]	Negative

Substantive representation refers to the idea that actions and opinions of EIGs must correspond to the positions and interest of those for whom they act in Brussels. Substantive representation focus on the alignment of EIGs’ and NIGs’ ideas and opinions. EIGs is considered as acting as substitutes or delegates of NIGs. Such elements of discourse about substantive representation are mainly used in a negative way. As an illustration, some EIGs are considered as less radical than their members⁹⁶:

⁹⁶ Beyond the political positioning of EIGs compared to NIGs, some interviewees also pointed out a different identity between NIGs’ and EIGs’ staff members. In the following quote, a Belgian NIG’s staff member talks about the staff members of the EIG: “we feel that in their office it’s much more polished and all that. It’s more like a lobbying firm. Even in clothing or things like that, it’s more formal than here [...] they are ultra multicultural. The people who are there, they come from different countries. While we, we are all Belgian” (Interview 16, Belgian cause group). Original quote in French: “*Mais on sent, on sent que dans leur bureau c’est beaucoup, c’est beaucoup plus policé et tout ça. Enfin, c’est des gens, c’est des gens. C’est plus un bureau de lobby quoi. Même dans les tenues vestimentaires ou des choses comme ça, c’est déjà un peu plus formel que, que ici, quoi. [...] ils sont ultra multiculturel, quoi. Les gens qui sont là-bas, ils viennent de tous les pays. Tandis que nous, on est tous belges quoi*”.

And why I put eight and not ten. This is because there is this a small difference of positioning, between [the NIG] and [the EIG], on two pillars of radicalism, that makes [the EIG] traditionally less radical in their vision of how to change the system, compared to us. But that's the case with all families, where we do not always agree with uncle, and so far, we continue to have dinner at the same table, and adjust the positions, and to create debate around that and that's it. (Interview 54, French cause group)⁹⁷

Nowadays, my elected officials think, and I do so, that [the EIG] does not sufficiently play a strong “union lobbying” role. So, I understand why. The organisation works in arenas where it must be politically correct. I worked for a MEP in a previous life, so I know this, you must not hurt, and it has to be smooth. And moreover, the Commission, to buy the peace, subsidises all the NGOs, amongst which [the EIG], and thus, it divests [the EIG] of a trade union dimension, that the countries of the South of Europe, including France, would like to have. (Interview 34, French sectional group)⁹⁸

Another NIG describes the threat hanging over the governance of the EIG as “companies” could take control of the EIG and thus impose their views and positions, threatening thus the legitimacy of the European umbrella: “*there is always a risk that companies, as I said, take the control, or be overrepresented*” (interview 63, French sectional group)⁹⁹. Other NIGs consider also their EIGs as not fairly representing the interests of their entire membership:

At some point, we considered that French interests were totally, not at all taken into consideration. Well. But, how to say, finally, me I, finally, personally I ... well, it was unimaginable that we would be no more member of the European organisation. No, it's, finally, I mean, uh ... And then, including what we wanted to with [the EIG], well. No, it would not have been serious. After all, it's true that we still have trouble finding the benefits of it. (Interview 24, French sectional group)¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Original quote in French: *Et pourquoi j'ai mis huit et pas dix. C'est parce que y'a cette petite différence de positionnement qui existe entre [le groupe national] et [le groupe européen] sur deux piliers de radicalité qui fait que [le groupe européen] sont traditionnellement moins radicaux dans leur vision du changement du système qu'on peut l'être. Mais ça c'est le propre de toutes les familles où on n'est pas toujours d'accord avec tonton, et pour l'instant pour autant, on continue à déjeuner à la même table, et ajuster les positions, et à créer du débat autour de ça et voilà.*

⁹⁸ Original quote in French: *Aujourd'hui, au goût de mes élus, et au miens d'ailleurs aussi, [le groupe européen] ne joue pas suffisamment un rôle de lobbying syndical fort. Alors, je comprends pourquoi. Elle est dans des instances où il y a du politiquement correct. J'ai travaillé pour un parlementaire européen dans une vie antérieure, donc je connais ce discours, il ne faut pas heurter, il faut que ce soit lisse. Et en plus, la Commission, pour acheter la paix, subventionne toutes les ONG, dont [le groupe européen], et du coup, ça prive un petit peu [le groupe européen] d'une dimension syndicale que les pays du Sud de l'Europe, dont la France, dont les pays du Sud aimeraient bien qu'elle soit plus marquée, au niveau de la base.*

⁹⁹ Original quote in French: *y'a toujours un risque des entreprises, comme je le disais, de prendre le contrôle, voire d'être surreprésentées.*

¹⁰⁰ Original quote in French: *On a considéré à un moment donné que les intérêts français étaient totalement, pas du tout pris en compte. Bon. [Toux] Mais, comment dire, enfin, moi je, enfin, à titre personnel je... enfin, c'était inimaginable qu'on ne soit plus adhérent à une organisation européenne. Non, c'est, enfin, je veux dire, euh... Et puis bon, y compris dans ce qu'on avait voulu faire [du groupe européen], quoi. Non, ça n'aurait pas été sérieux. Après, c'est vrai qu'on a quand même du mal à s'y retrouver.*

Yeah, an ongoing discussion. Because we hear, we have heard some comments about maybe [the EIG] having too much of an interest in the [particular economic sector] in the former eastern, like East-Germany, former East-Germany, Poland and... Our members do not want to be dealing with [particular economic sector]. So, it's an ongoing debate, so that's why I don't put it in nine or ten but maybe seven, because I still think it's, it is one legitimate interest groups that we have. (Interview 93, Swedish sectional group)

But the issue with [the EIG] is that they concentrate more on the Atlantic. So they abandoned the Mediterranean. Since the formation of [a Mediterranean interest group], which is the [name of the Mediterranean interest group], the Mediterranean [NIGs] have abandoned [the EIG]. Because it was always what the British want to say. They've been promoting the big [companies], not the small [companies] and the, situation became worth. So I don't think that [the EIG] is that effective anymore. (Interview 40, Maltese sectional group)

Six NIGs state that the interests of the EIGs' members are competing with each other (so, themselves and their counterparts). This divergence of positions lowers the legitimacy of the EIG:

They have or we have difficulties in presenting strong common positions since you have a very wide spectrum of opinions between different countries, different member organisations. (Interview 95, Swedish sectional group)

So, what does [the EIG] say? As I told you, it makes "*du milieu de chez l'eau tiède*", it takes the positions of everyone and then it tries to find a medium term that is often, very, very, very little, very little marked what. We are shouting and the Germans are shouting. You see that there is a problem. So ... (Interview 27, French sectional group)¹⁰¹

There has been a phenomenon of dilution. [...] First of all, because of a number of positions we defend... I will give you a very concrete example. For instance, the Posted Workers Directive. We are in favour of this directive being totally revised. Of course, we are very much in favour of freedom of movement... But finally, if free movement is to create distortions of competition because if you come from Poland or Bulgaria it will cost less than if you are ... well, I mean, we cannot build ... and again, we are very pro-European. And of course, our Bulgarian and Polish friends, they tell us: "Oh no, no, no, no, we find that very good". So in a way, actually, today, in our relationship with [the EIG], how to tell you that ... So, to be honest, we demonstrated our disagreement, uh ... we even suspended the payment of the membership fee. (Interview 24, French sectional group)¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Original quote in French: *Alors, il dit quoi [le groupe européen]? Comme je dis, il fait du milieu de chez l'eau tiède, il prend les postures de tout le monde et puis il essaye de trouver un moyen terme qui est souvent, très, très, très peu, très peu marqué quoi. Nous, on gueule et les Allemands gueulent. Vous voyez bien qu'il y a un problème. Alors pourtant...*

¹⁰² Original quote in French: *Il y a eu un phénomène de dilution. [...] D'abord parce que sur un certain nombre de, de positions que nous défendons, je vais vous donner un exemple très concret, par exemple la directive*

Few NIGs point however that a common vision or the similarity for their positions and the ones of the EIGs is an element participating to the legitimacy building of their European umbrella:

Interviewee: You know there is some, for instance, there is some working-group in the Commission, and they [(the EIG and NIGs)] are quite...before every meeting in the Commission, it's meeting on the [EIG]. And they are making a position, and next day or the same day in the afternoon they are presenting to the Commission one more or less...

Interviewer: Common position?

Interviewee: Yes! (Interview 80, Slovenian sectional group)

They have a vision that is quite similar to the one of the Foundation, on environment management, etc. (Interview 112, French cause group)¹⁰³

In summary, elements about substantive representation are part of the NIGs' discourse about EIGs' legitimacy, but are not the most present ones (20% of cases stating them). NIGs using elements of discourse about substantive representation have on average less contact with their EIGs than all the NIGs in the sample (fewer Swedish organisations are also concerned, see figures a.4.50 and a.4.64, in appendixes). This suggest that on the average, having less contact or being less involved within EIGs' structures leads to a negative perception (from the point of view of NIGs) of the alignment between European and national positions.

It is important to realise that substantive representation elements are mainly used in a negative way. For the most part, this means that ideas related to similarity or alignment of positions are mobilised to challenge the legitimacy of EIGs. When EIGs are described as 'delegates' (in opposition of 'trustees'¹⁰⁴), it is thus mainly to criticise their ability to follow their constituents' preferences. This result suggests to be prudent towards official discourse or academic works that would consider interest groups as "superconducting transmitter linking the issues of

détachement. Nous on est pour que cette directive soit totalement revue. Évidemment qu'on est tout à fait favorable à la libre circulation, enfin, si la libre circulation c'est faire en sorte que vous créez des distorsions de concurrence parce que si vous venez de Pologne ou de Bulgarie ça coûtera moins cher que si vous êtes... enfin, je veux dire, on marche sur la tête. Je veux dire, on ne peut pas construire... et encore une fois, on est très pro-européen. Et évidemment, nos amis bulgares et polonais, ils nous disent : « ah Ben non, non, non, nous on trouve ça très bien ». Donc si vous voulez, en fait, aujourd'hui dans notre relation avec [l'organisation européenne], comment dire... Alors pour tout vous dire d'ailleurs, on a battu froid l'an dernier, euh... Puisqu'on avait même suspendu les cotisations.

¹⁰³ Original quote in French: *Ils ont quand même une vision qui est assez proche de celle de la Fondation, sur [mot incompréhensible] la gestion de la nature, etc.*

¹⁰⁴ See for instance Dovi (2017), for a general overview about political representation: "Both the delegate and the trustee conception of political representation place competing and contradictory demands on the behavior of representatives. Delegate conceptions of representation require representatives to follow their constituent's preferences, while trustee conceptions require representatives to follow their own judgment about the proper course of action."

concern to organizations to responsible officials [...] with perfect fidelity” (Lowery & Marchetti, 2012, p. 140).

Territorial representation [N=13; 15%]

Table 4.9 Summary table: themes related to territorial representation

Territorial representation [N=13; 15%]	Missing NIGs from several member states [N=2; 2%]	Negative
	Representation of (NIGs from) many member states [N=10; 12%]	Positive
	Representation of territories [N=1; 1%]	Positive

Territorial representation refers to the idea that EIGs are legitimate if their constituencies cover large territory of the EU (or the entire, or the largest possible). The interviewees are thus referring to the number of member states represented, which actually means the number of member states where member NIGs come from:

All countries, with a few exceptions, but overall all countries are members. Therefore, [the EIG] is legitimate in the representative sense. (Interview 34, French sectional group)¹⁰⁵

Well, I think they cover a lot of countries, and a lot of, there are a lot of members in this forum that... I think they are a good voice for the things that they work with. (Interview 102, Swedish sectional group)

Regarding relations with European institutions, well, there is also a legitimacy, because we represent ... uh, 26 or 27 out of the 28 member states. I think that the Bulgarian organisation is a bit in trouble, but we represent almost all the member states. (Interview 38, French sectional group)¹⁰⁶

Additionally, some NIGs also refer to territorial that goes beyond the EU:

The good thing with [the EIG] is that they have members in all EU member states, which have the same role as us, as a social partner. And also, that we have some members that are outside EU, which are in Europe but they want to be members or have an agreement with the European Union. So we have the same role and target to get the European system right and we are all pro-EU, even if we want to make things better. And, I would say, to have the legitimacy, is that you are represented in all the Member-States. (Interview 110, Swedish sectional group)

They're gathering together all representative national structures, of the business sector. They have in it, there are 41 members, representing 35 countries. Because there are some countries where there are two

¹⁰⁵ Original quote in French: *Bah, tous les pays, à quelques exceptions près, mais globalement tous les pays adhérent. Donc, elle [(l'organisation européenne)] est légitime au sens représentatif.*

¹⁰⁶ Original quote in French: *Et puis par rapport aux institutions européennes, ben, il y a aussi une légitimité, parce qu'on représente... euh, 26 ou 27 des 28 Etats-Membres, je crois que l'organisation bulgare en fait a des difficultés je crois, mais bon on représente la quasi-totalité.*

[NIGs]: Germany, Iceland, Denmark, I don't know the others, Turkey. So obviously, they have members beyond the European Union. (Interview 26, French sectional group)¹⁰⁷

Because [the EIG] has 29, I think member states or something like that, most of the European member states, except Slovakia I think, and then in addition, there is Turkey and, there's another, I don't know, but... So... [...] Norway, yes, Norway. And, more or less, also from the discussion of all the, let's say, representatives, so other member states in [the EIG], it seems that [the EIG] represents the huge majority of the [sector] industry in Europe (Interview 70, Slovenian sectional group)

Few NIGs point out that the EIG does not cover the entire EU territory (which is perceived as the most legitimate representation): *"Still they don't have members in every countries, in that case they're not 100% legitimate"* (Interview 103, Swedish sectional group). Finally, a French sectional group states that one of the EIGs to which it adheres, represents local territories. According to the interviewee, this point is recognised as important by the EU since "territorial cohesion" is included in the Treaty of Lisbon:

It is a territorial legitimacy, which is based on one of its successes [(of the EIG)] too, since we managed to bring territorial cohesion into the treaty. [...] it was mentioned in the Treaty of Lisbon that territorial cohesion was one of the objectives of the Union. And consequently, special measures for mountain areas. And this legitimacy of territorial structure is useful, and in terms of influence, it is very positive for us. (Interview 38, French sectional group)¹⁰⁸

Compared to the entire sample under scrutiny, the group of NIGs using elements of discourse about territorial representation to qualify the legitimacy of their EIGs counts more French groups and have more contact with their EIGs (which at first sight does not explain much). More interestingly, this group counts more umbrella organisations and is composed by sectional groups only (see figures a.4.66 to a.4.81 in appendixes). Concerning the structure of membership, it could be argued that NIGs that are themselves umbrella organisations are also struggling with territorial representation at the national level. Consequently, they have integrated such a standard and 'apply' it to the assessment of legitimacy of their EIGs.

¹⁰⁷ Original quote in French: *ils fédèrent avec eux, l'ensemble des structures nationales représentatives, du business. Ils ont dedans, il y a 41 membres qui représentent 35 pays. Parce qu'il y a certains pays où il y a deux [groupes nationaux] : Allemagne, Islande, Danemark, je sais plus quoi encore, Turquie. Alors évidemment, ils vont au-delà de l'Union européenne, ils vont au-delà de l'Union européenne.*

¹⁰⁸ Original quote in French: *C'est une légitimité territoriale, qui s'appuie sur un de ses succès [(du groupe européen)] aussi, puisqu'on a réussi à faire entrer la cohésion territoriale, dans le traité. Ça été inscrit en fait, à l'occasion du défunt traité constitutionnel mais ça été repris dans le traité de Lisbonne, que la cohésion territoriale faisait partie des objectifs de l'Union. Et du coup des mesures particulières pour les zones de montagnes. Et cette légitimité de structure territoriale est utile, et en termes d'influence, c'est très positif pour nous.*

Concerning nature of interest, this result suggests that territorial representation is ignored by cause groups. A potential explanation could be that the interest they advocate goes ‘beyond borders’ and is not anchored in any territorial constituencies. Sectional groups however have to highlight that their EIGs do not represent only the interest of one sector in few member states but represent the line share of the sector in question all-over the EU.

To sum up, elements about territorial representation are part of the sectional NIGs’ discourse about their EIGs’ legitimacy, but it is not much present. 15% of all cases are stating such elements of discourse. The identification of elements about territorial representation supports the observations made above about function representation. Legitimacy of EIGs based on territorial representation refers again to the legitimacy of EIGs as ‘formal’ representative of territorial-based constituencies, which is considered as relevant by NIGs to lobby EU institutions. EIGs are thus not legitimised because they act as delegates of NIGs. EIGs *stand for* territorial constituencies and deliver messages *on behalf* of a land base (and detached from substantive considerations).

Elements of discourse about *transparency* [N=4; 5%]

Table 4.10 Summary table: themes related to transparency

Transparency [N=4; 5%]	Transparency in the decision-making process [N=1; 1%]	Positive
	Communication issues [N=2; 2%]	Negative
	Language issues [N=1; 1%]	Negative

This cluster contains elements of discourse about transparency of EIGs, identified as a source of EIGs’ legitimacy. These elements of discourse are mainly negative, and perceived by NIGs as an issue undermining EIGs’ legitimacy. For instance, NIGs point out communication issues. This show the absence of *transparency in rationale* towards their member organisation, which means a lack of information on the substance of the EIG’s decisions and the reasons on which they are based (see above; De Fine Licht et al., 2014):

Interviewee: [...] their communication is ancient. They're really competent, their experts are really competent. But they don't seem use it. I've been working in these kind of organisations for so many years, like, interest organisations. And you have, when you have experts that tend to...spare, to hold the information, the knowledge, but they don't really translate it or share it. Especially not in the kind of lobby, opinion-making way you want it to be if you want the effect. I would say that they haven't really developed the way they should. [...]

Interviewer: So, their legitimacy, the issue is coming from, kind of a lack of efficiency in the way they work?

Interviewee: And the lack of transparency. (Interview 96, Swedish sectional group)

Another NIG points out a language issue which indicates a lack of *transparency in process*¹⁰⁹:

Interviewee: But then, moreover, today, there is the language issue. For a very long time, everything was translated. [The EIG], it was the luxury, huh. I mean, you had at least translation into English, French, and German. That was ... and then often Italian. Well, today, it's all over. Today, we receive everything in English. I know a little bit of English, I have collaborators who know it too, well, that's it. But then...

Interviewer: But, yes, yes, there is a gap that can...

Interviewee: There is a gap, yes absolutely, that has been created. So, when it's a hot topics that will concern us very directly, obviously we do what we have to, in order to react. But, that makes things... (Interview 24, French sectional group)¹¹⁰

One NIG stresses the transparency shown by its EIG, described as “pure white”:

We know how they work, we know what they represent, we know how they feel, think, and we do have contact with them. Every time I have an issue, I contact them, I get them on the phone, and they respond immediately and say honestly what they think about the situation. Like in [incomprehensible word], they said, "Look we can't take a position," it's not like, "Yeah, ok, we see what we can do," and nothing happens. But they are like we Slovenian say, they're pure white. So we know what it's about. They do get very clear about it, so it's a certain respect. (Interview 77, Slovenian sectional group)

Given the small number of NIGs using elements of discourse about transparency, a comparison of the four NIGs concerned with all the organisations in the sample seems not relevant¹¹¹. Altogether, transparency, in the perspective of NIGs, is of a relatively low importance as regards to EIGs' legitimacy. Moreover, elements of discourse about transparency are used mainly in a negative way. This echoes the results of previous studies assessing negatively the

¹⁰⁹ As a reminder: “*transparency in process refers to information on actions such as deliberations, negotiations, and votes that took place among and between the decision makers during the decision-making process and were thus directly fed into the decision*” (De Fine Licht et al., 2014, p. 113; based on Mansbridge, 2009).

¹¹⁰ Original quote in French:

Interviewé : *Mais du coup, en plus, donc aujourd'hui, il y a la langue. Pendant très longtemps, tout était traduit. C'est-à-dire que vous aviez, [l'organisation européenne] c'était le grand luxe, hein. C'est-à-dire que vous aviez au moins une traduction, donc anglais, français, allemand. Ça c'était... et puis souvent en italien. Bon, aujourd'hui, c'est fini tout ça. Aujourd'hui, donc on reçoit tout en anglais. Alors bon, je baragouine bien un peu anglais, j'ai des collaborateurs qui eux aussi, bon, voilà. Mais du coup, du coup...*

Intervieweur : *Mais, oui, oui, il y a un décalage qui peut...*

Interviewé : *Il y a décalage, oui absolument, qui s'est créé. Alors bon, quand c'est des sujets chauds qui vont nous concerner très directement, évidemment que, évidemment qu'on fait ce qu'il faut pour réagir. Mais, mais, voilà, ça a ajouté un...*

¹¹¹ Following, few pieces of information about the distribution of cases stating elements of discourse about transparency: there are two French, one Slovenian, and one Swedish groups. All are sectional groups. Three have contact with their EIG on a monthly basis (and one, on a daily basis). For details, see figures a.4.82 to a.4.97 in appendixes.

performance of EIGs with regard to transparency towards their members (Kotzian & Steffek, 2012; Wiercx, 2011). For instance, Wiercx (2011, p. 183) notes: “*European organisations strive for transparency but are faced with large difficulties on this point. Differences in expertise and knowledge [in the membership] make it difficult to guarantee full transparency and keep all members involved in decision-making*”. Although this may be true, the analysis of NIGs’ discourse suggests that transparency is not one of the main concerns of the cast majority of EIGs’ members.

4.4.2. Elements of discourse about output legitimacy of EIGs [N=49; 58%]

Elements of discourse about *lobbying* [N=19; 23%]

This cluster concerns elements of discourse about lobbying and is divided in two sub-clusters: EU lobbying work and effectiveness of EU lobbying.

Table 4.11 Summary table: sub-clusters related to lobbying

Lobbying [N=19; 23%]	Effectiveness of EU lobbying [N=8; 10%]
	EU lobbying work [N=12; 14%]

EU lobbying work [N=12; 14%]

Table 4.12 Summary table: themes related to EU lobbying work

EU lobbying work [N=12; 14%]	EU institutions lobbying [N=9; 11%]	Positive
	Exchange of good lobbying practices between NIGs [N=1; 1%]	Positive
	No EU institutions lobbying [N=1; 1%]	Negative
	Task sharing [N=3; 4%]	Positive

Elements of discourse concerning the EIGs’ lobbying work are gathered under this cluster. Only one NIG notes the absence of lobbying work undertaken by its EIG. The interviewee explains that this absence of concrete advocacy actions is due to a lack of actual will from NIGs to work together at the European level¹¹². From the perspective of some NIGs, EIGs are legitimate because they are active at the EU level and do important lobbying actions:

So, the first reason and I come back to it because it is essential. Today, I remind you, European directives are translated into national laws. So, what is the most upstream of our regulation, is the European directives. So the

¹¹² The interviewee, speaking about the ‘legitimacy scale’ presented to him: “Currently, if I consider this scale, we are at zero or one. But potentially, we should be at nine or ten” (interview 56, French sectional group). Original quote in French: “*Aujourd'hui, je reste sur la première en échelle, on est à zéro ou un. Mais potentiellement on devrait être à neuf ou à dix*”.

European representation exercised by [the EIG] is absolutely essential. (Interview 59, French sectional group)¹¹³

It's a legitimate organisation, it has a foot in the European Parliament, and it does policy monitoring. (Interview 33, French sectional group)¹¹⁴

Some NIGs explain also that their EIGs are legitimate because they do lobbying work, but they have to leave some space to their national members to do their own lobbying work at the EU-level. In this way, EIGs and NIGs are sharing the task of advocacy towards EU institutions. For instance, this French cause group explains:

[...] both voices are important. The voice of our European federations is important, but at the same time, that France [(meaning their own organisation)] can express itself directly, for us this is an important point. [...] In long-term European policies, which sometimes we may not follow, and therefore what happens and we agree with that, is that they intervene... But we can also intervene. (Interview 30, French cause group)¹¹⁵

This element is also explained by the institutional design of the EU, in which national governments hold a substantive leverage:

There is a point that they cannot manage, in my opinion, or which, if they wanted to work on it, they would not do it well. But they do it a little sometimes, but with us. And sometimes they delegate it, as I think it's the best. That's the whole relationship with the member states. Because, how does Europe work? There is the triptych: Commission, Parliament, and Council. (Interview 27, French sectional group)¹¹⁶

In the same vein, another group points the function of exchange of information of the EIG:

I just give you an idea of the strength of such a partnership. [...] We are getting direct handover from the Czechs, from the partners. Why? Because, they have followed six months of presidency with the Czech, and now they want to give us a handover of what they were doing, what they were studying,

¹¹³ Original quote in French: *Alors, la première raison et je reviens dessus parce qu'elle est essentielle. Aujourd'hui, je rappelle, les directives européennes sont traduites dans les droits nationaux. Donc ce qui est le plus en amont de notre réglementation, ce sont les directives européennes. Donc la représentation européenne qu'exerce [le groupe européen] est absolument essentielle.*

¹¹⁴ Original quote in French: *C'est une organisation légitime, elle a un pied vers le parlement européen, elle a une activité de veille.*

¹¹⁵ Original quote in French: [...] *les deux voix sont importantes. La voix de nos fédérations européennes on y tient, mais en même temps que la France [(c'est-à-dire l'organisation nationale française)] puisse s'exprimer directement, pour nous c'est un point important. [...] Dans des politiques européennes à long terme, que parfois nous on peut ne pas suivre, et donc ce qui amène et on est tout à fait d'accord que eux interviennent... [Incompréhensible] mais que nous on puisse aussi intervenir.*

¹¹⁶ Original quote in French: *Alors, il y a déjà un point qu'ils ne peuvent pas gérer, à mon avis, ou qui, s'ils voulaient le faire, ils ne le feraient pas bien. Mais ils le font un peu parfois, mais avec nous. Et parfois, ils le délèguent, comme je pense que c'est le mieux. C'est toute la relation avec les États-Membres. Parce que, il y a quoi, dans le fonctionnement européen, il y a le triptyque : Commission, Parlement, Conseil.*

where they failed, and why they failed, so maybe we can do better, what they succeed, so we copy it. (Interview 43, Maltese cause group)

Compared to the entire sample under scrutiny (see figures a.4.98 to a.4.113 in appendixes), the group of NIGs using elements of discourse about EU lobbying work counts more NIGs which do not lobby directly themselves EU institutions and which have less contact with their EIGs (contact on a monthly-basis). This result shows unsurprisingly that NIGs which do not lobby the EU level tend more to highlight that EIGs are legitimate because they are active in Brussels. The lower level of contact with their EIGs shows also this tendency to engage less on EU issues. To sum up, elements about EU lobbying work are part of the NIGs' discourse about their EIGs' legitimacy, but it is not much present as 14% of all cases are stating such elements of discourse.

Effectiveness of EU lobbying [N=8; 10%]

Table 4.13 Summary table: themes related to effectiveness of EU lobbying

Effectiveness of EU lobbying [N=8; 10%]	Influence EU institutions (getting results) [N=6; 7%]	Positive
	Interest at stake not salient at the EU level [N=1; 1%]	Negative
	Limited influence towards the Commission [N=1; 1%]	Negative

Elements of discourse about the effectiveness of lobbying refer to the idea that EIGs are legitimate because their lobbying actions towards the EU institutions are effective and are followed by actual outcomes. The issue at stake here is the perceived influence the EIGs have on the decision-making process of the EU (and more particularly, the Commission):

No, I mean, I think they, I mean they, I think, do an excellent work in this aspect. And of course, if they would have even more money and even more personnel, they could probably do an even better work. But, I mean, I think they really have a large impact, in this aspect. (Interview 101, Swedish cause group)

In Brussels, now, they do statistical studies or media analysis – I don't know how they actually do – which identify the most important lobby groups, the most influential, and [the EIG] is in fifth position. So, we see that there is recognition by the Commission, by the Council. (Interview 38, French sectional group)¹¹⁷

I follow their work, I follow their reports. It's actually... I mean, they're doing a good job, I think, they're quite influential. Although, they have a tricky job.

¹¹⁷ Original quote in French: *Et sur la place de Bruxelles, maintenant qu'ils font des études statistiques ou médiatiques je ne sais pas comment ils sortent en fait les lobbyings, les groupes de lobbying les plus importants, les plus influents, et [l'organisation européenne] est en cinquième position. Donc, on voit qu'il y a une reconnaissance par la Commission, par le Conseil.*

They're actually confronting big... Euh... They're confronting many issues and challenges. (Interview 67, Slovenian sectional group)

At the opposite, another NIG points the limited influence its EIG has towards EU institutions:

They have been very, very important in the advocacy with a new regulation. But, they're, it's also limited how much they are listened to. So, they're very good for us to have an organisation that puts all this together, but maybe they could phone the Commission there, like: "Yeah, ok, maybe we listen but we don't do like you want". (Interview 87, Swedish sectional group)

The interviewee is using a clear negative tone, as she adds directly after, about the potential for the EIG to have a stronger influence on the Commission: *"I don't think it's possible because the Commission can't just listen to one organisation"* (Interview 87, Swedish sectional group). Another interviewee develops the reason why the EIG to which the NIG adheres is not taken into account by the Commission:

[Speaking about the legitimacy of the EIG] It's a bit weak. [...] And there's a reason why. [The EIG], unfortunately, with regards to [the sector], [the sector] is not a policy thing. There's no [sector] policy with the EU. So, you know, the respect that [the sector] has in Brussels is not omnipresent. There's not, you know. Even by the same politicians, you know, if people are discussing with economic people with a background or on taxation or on services, they have more respect than somebody coming from the [sector] side. [...] [The EIG] needs to push more, but I think it's coming from Brussels, I blame Brussels for this, I blame the European Commission on this, you know. Because this, I worked in [the sector] in the past, I know this sector quite well, and every time you bring this, [...] they say, "It's a national issue". It's not a national issue. Why? Because we have the free movement of workers. So, up to five years ago, if you went into a [company of this sector] in Malta, out of ten employees, there were two foreigners and eight Maltese, up to five years ago. Now, there are nine foreigners and one Maltese. So, it is a European issue. It's very interesting, just imagine that if you have somebody from Serbia, if you have somebody from Poland, if you have somebody from the UK, all of them have got the same certificate, you know. What I mean is, there's a standard; I know there could be a language issue, but that is a national issue then, you know. It's up to your duty, you know. (Interview 49, Maltese sectional group)

10% of cases identify effectiveness of lobbying as an element to take into consideration to assess the legitimacy of their EIGs (output legitimacy in this case). This topic is thus part of the EIGs legitimisation discourse of NIGs but it is not identified as one of the most present. The comparison of NIGs using such elements of discourse with all the organisations in the sample does not reveal clear trends, probably because of the relatively small number of cases concerned (see figures a.4.114 to a.4.129 in appendixes). Although, it could be noted that it concerns less French organisations and almost only sectional groups. Surprisingly, NIGs mentioning

effectiveness of lobbying of their EIGs are less concerned about European issues than the average (lower score on “saliency of EU issues” compared to the entire sample). All things considered, results suggest that, from the perspective of NIGs, the influence EIGs have on EU institutions is not a crucial element founding EIGs’ legitimacy.

Elements of discourse about *information* [N=3; 4%]

Table 4.14 Summary table: theme related to information

Information [N=3; 4%]	EU information provider [N=3; 4%]	Positive
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These elements of discourse concern the information about EU issues provided by the EIGs to their members, namely NIGs. Here, as in the previous cluster (lobbying), NIGs assess the legitimacy of their European groups considering the functions they fulfil:

[...] they do offer us a lot information about what's going on, do alert us if something should be going wrong, and so on. So it's, we do, I would say, think they're highly legitimate organisation. (Interview 77, Slovenian sectional group)

[...] for instance when there is an import tax I think it is called, when the EU is like imposing an import duty on, I don't know, certain goods from Taiwan, and for us that would represent a lot of retailers and we do not represent the manufacturing sector, we do not want it. But, through [the EIG], for instance, we know that nothing will change because the majority of the member states represent the manufacturing sector, but at least they would give us the information, at least we would feel involved and know what is happening, and not arrive to a situation where our importers are importing something and suddenly they tell them that there is an import duty, they would know at least. (Interview 42, Maltese sectional group)

Given the small number of NIGs using elements of discourse about information, a comparison of the three NIGs concerned with all the organisations in the sample seems not relevant¹¹⁸. Altogether, information providing, in the perspective of NIGs, is of a low importance as regards to EIGs’ legitimacy.

¹¹⁸ Some information about the distribution of cases stating elements of discourse about transparency follows: there are two Slovenian and one Maltese groups. All are sectional groups. For details, see figures a.4.130 to a.4.145.

Elements of discourse about *status in Brussels* [N=35; 42%]

Table 4.15 Summary table: themes related to status in Brussels

Status in Brussels [N=35; 42%]	Funded by the EU [N=3; 4%]	Positive
	Legal Recognition [N=4; 5%]	Positive
	Mutual Recognition [N=1; 1%]	Positive
	Located in Brussels [N=1; 1%]	Positive
	Recognised stakeholder having access to EU institutions [N=15; 18%]	Positive
	Reputation [N=1; 1%]	Positive
	Social Partner [N=5; 6%]	Positive
	Unique representative of this sector or cause at the EU level [N=9; 11%]	Positive
	Old-fashioned [N=1; 1%]	Negative

This cluster contains elements of discourse about the status EIGs hold in Brussels. NIGs legitimise their EIGs because they have a ‘formal’ status at the EU level (in the sense of ‘official’ or directly verifiable). EIGs’ status may also concern more abstract considerations as reputation and informal recognition. Almost all elements of discourse about the status of EIGs in Brussels are positive. Only one NIG uses such an element in a negative way:

[The EIG] does not have this status as it used to have. [...] we hear from others in Brussels that [the EIG] is seen as slow, not very innovative, and represents old times, or the old system. (Interview 90, Swedish sectional group)

All the other NIGs identify positive elements that legitimise their EIGs. For instance, the EIG is considered as enjoying a good reputation (“[How they] *have been working and behaving previously, gives... they have a long continuity of working effectively*”; interview 88, Swedish cause group) or being ‘mutually recognised’ (by other EIGs). The location in Brussels is also pointed out:

[...] it is a bit weird to say that, but the first thing is that if you are based in Brussels, that already means that you're a legitimate organisation. Because, it is quite expensive to have an office and people working in Brussels, so for them to, just give money, to stay in Brussels, it's an important thing. And then, if you are in Brussels, you are close to different decision makers. So that's for me what it makes them legitimate. (Interview 66, Slovenian sectional group)

EIGs are also considered as legitimate because they are funded by the EU institutions:

And they all receive some sort of funding from the EU so they've been screened by EU Commission, for example, in terms of their activity and their finance and the way they manage their activity and finance. So I think they are highly legitimate. (Interview 85, Swedish cause group)

They are, [the EIG] is largely funded by the European Commission so that, in my opinion, they also have one, maybe even more attentive listening from the institutions. [...] I think for [the EIG] that it, it strengthens the legitimacy [of the EIG]. Because of that, they are considered, in my opinion, as an institutional interlocutor. They are militant, they have strong positions, well, it is better to protect the environment, reduce energy consumption and everything. So, on that matter, there are no particular compromises. (Interview 35, French cause group)¹¹⁹

The legal status (of 'AISBL', according to Belgian law)¹²⁰ or the 'legal recognition' of EIGs is also pointed out by NIGs:

I mean, those, there is a Belgian law, I don't know which one, 1990 or something, where these, they have to obey by a certain [incomprehensible word], from what I, I am not... but to establish an organisation in Brussels. There are certain procedures because of this legislation which is in place that allows... (Interview 51, Maltese sectional group)

What makes them legitimate is that firstly, they are recognised by treaties, to simplify. (Interview 26, French sectional group)¹²¹

This echoes the discourse of NIGs member of EIGs that enjoy the status of social partner of the European social dialogue (Léonard, Perin, & Pochet, 2011; Perin & Léonard, 2011). This special status is asserted by national groups:

Why [they are a legitimate organisation]? Because, they are social partners on EU level. So, that means, how we see them, they are our tent [?] in the Brussels with [another EIG] and the Commission in this tripartite dialogue, same as run in Slovenia. So why is for us so important. (Interview 68, Slovenian sectional group)

It is a European social partner. So, at the European level, it has a particular voice in, in legislation, regulations design. (Interview 39, French sectional group)¹²²

¹¹⁹ Original quote in French: *Et ils sont, alors [le groupe européen] est largement financé par la Commission européenne ce qui fait que, à mon avis, ils ont aussi une, peut-être même une plus forte écoute de la part des institutions. [...] Moi je pense pour [le groupe européen] ça la, ça la renforce [(en parlant de la légitimité du groupe européen)]. Parce que du coup, ils sont considérés, à mon avis, comme un interlocuteur institutionnel. Ils sont militants, ils ont des positions assez fortes sur, bah il faut mieux protéger l'environnement, réduire la consommation énergétique et tout. Donc, là-dessus il n'y a pas de compromissions particulières.*

¹²⁰ As reminder from chapter 2 (point 2.1.3): this type of associations is organised by the Belgian law of the 2nd of May 2002, modifying the original text of the 27th of June 1921 ("Loi sur les associations sans but lucratif, les associations internationales sans but lucratif et les fondations", published in the "Moniteur Belge", the Belgian Official Journal, the 11th of December 2002).

¹²¹ Original quote in French: *Ce qui fait leur légitimité, c'est que un, ils sont reconnus par les traités, pour simplifier.*

¹²² Original quote in French: *C'est un partenaire social européen. Donc, déjà au niveau européen, il a une voix particulière dans, dans la législation, la formation de la réglementation.*

Because they are also a social partner on European level, so I think this is important. (Interview 81, Slovenian sectional group)

Oh no, but it's totally legitimate. It is at 10. Likewise, it is a social partner. Before each European summit, there is, what is called the tripartite summit. With, with the ... uh, the Commission, the Trade Union Confederation and Business Europe. So, they are recognised as legitimate by the European authorities. That's it, they have this recognition. Which is almost in the treaty. (Interview 26, French sectional group)¹²³

An element stressed by many NIGs (N=9) is that their EIG is the only organisation that represents a particular sector or cause at the EU level:

[Speaking about the legitimacy of the EIG] Very strong, very strong! 10 too. [The EIG] is ... there is no competition in Europe. There is one [EIG] that speaks on behalf of all the countries [concerned by the sector], of all the member states [concerned by the sector]. [...] It's a real, I would say, on both sides, it's a real legitimacy. There is no competition, there is nobody, neither in France nor in Brussels, there is no other body that defends the same subject. That's also the legitimacy. To be unique and recognised. (Interview 36, French sectional group)¹²⁴

First of all, that's the only federation of associations at the European level. It is definitely the only lobbying organisation for, or in the name of the [sector]. (Interview 71, Slovenian sectional group)

That's one part of their legitimacy, one source of their legitimacy, is that they are the unique one. (Interview 93, Swedish sectional group)

The element which is the most present in the discourse of NIGs about the legitimacy of their EIGs is about the 'recognition of EIGs as stakeholder' by the EU institutions. EIGs are described as partner that can have entry to EU institutions which constitutes a guarantee of their legitimacy. The focus is thus on *access* to the institutions:

[...] they have good connections everywhere in the Commission and Parliament and everywhere in Brussels. And they are listened to and invited everywhere to give them [incomprehensible word]. (Interview 99, Swedish sectional group)

¹²³ Original quote in French: *Ah non, mais il est totalement légitime. Il est à 10. Pareil, il est partenaire social. Avant chaque sommet européen, il y a ce qu'on appelle le sommet tripartite. Avec, avec le, ... euh, la Commission, la confédération des syndicats et Business Europe. Donc, ils sont reconnus comme légitimes par les instances européennes. Voilà, ils ont cette reconnaissance. Qui est quasiment dans le traité.*

¹²⁴ Original quote in French: *[En parlant de la légitimité du groupe d'intérêt européen] Très Fort, très fort! 10 aussi. [Le groupe européen] c'est... il y a pas de concurrence en Europe. Il y a un [groupe européen] qui parle au nom de tous les pays [concernés par le secteur], de tous les Etats-Membres [concernés par le secteur]. [...] C'est une vraie, je vais dire, de part et d'autre, c'est une vraie légitimité. Il n'y a pas de concurrence, il n'y a pas un organisme, ni en France, ni à Bruxelles, il n'y a pas un autre organisme qui défend le même sujet. C'est ça aussi la légitimité. C'est d'être unique et reconnu.*

[...] they have strong connections. I mean it's no problem for them to meet the Commissioner and ministers. (Interview 94, Swedish sectional group)

[...] they are a known organisation within Europe and the European Commission and Parliament. (Interview 100, Swedish cause group)

They are highly legitimate, because we are actually, we are partners of all European organisations [(sic=institutions)]. Because next week, for example, we will have a conference in the European Parliament about one of the problem about Water frame directive. Last week we had a conference about social economic positions of [the sector in question]. So we have very close relations to all important European organisations and bodies. (Interview 64, Slovenian sectional group)

So, if it is legitimate, how is it for the Commissioner? I think if the Commissioner receives something from [the EIG], he doesn't say "Oh, another [name of the EIG]" and throw it on the side. He knows that he has to pay attention. Because, it is the biggest partnership, the European partnership on the [cause in question] issues. (Interview 43, Maltese cause group)

They have entry doors at the level of some parliamentarians, at the level of the people of the Commission, also European, etc. So, they are recognised. They organise conferences, things about infrastructures issues, so they are recognised. (Interview 32, French sectional group)¹²⁵

To answer your question, yes, they are legitimate because [the EIG] is still present in a number of programs funded by the European Commission. I think that if this was not the case, the services of the Commission would have stopped working, or in any case would have put in place different working methods, which involve them less. So, no, I, they seem to me quite legitimate. (Interview 28, French sectional group)¹²⁶

The status EIGs hold (and acquired) in Brussels is thus perceived by many NIGs groups as building the legitimacy of the EIGs representing them at the EU level. These elements concern mainly two issues: the access EIGs have to EU institutions (being 'recognised stakeholder') and the 'monopoly' they enjoy being the unique representative of a particular sector or cause in Brussels.

42% of cases identify the status EIGs have in Brussels as an element of their EIGs' legitimacy. It is thus clearly part of the EIGs legitimisation discourse of NIGs and is one of the most important

¹²⁵ Original quote in French: [...] ils ont des portes d'entrée au niveau de certains parlementaires, au niveau des gens de la Commission, aussi européenne, etc. Donc, ils sont reconnus. Ils organisent des conférences, des choses sur les sujets des infrastructures, donc ils sont reconnus.

¹²⁶ Original quote in French: Pour répondre à votre question, oui, ils sont légitimes puisque [le groupe européen] est quand même présent dans un certain nombre de programmes portés et financés par la Commission européenne, je pense que si tel n'était pas le cas, les services de la Commission auraient arrêté de travailler ou en tous cas auraient mis en place des méthodes de travail différentes, enfin qui, moins, moins, qui les impliquent moins. Donc, non, moi je, ils me paraissent tout à fait légitime.

argument asserted. Such elements of discourse about expertise is identified in the discourse of twelve French, twelve Swedish, six Slovene and five Maltese groups (see figures a.4.146 to a.4.161 in appendixes.). Following a comparison to the entire sample of groups under scrutiny, this means that French groups tend to use less this type of element of discourse than groups from the three other member states. It appears also that groups having contact on a monthly basis with their EIG tend to use more this type of element than those having more frequent contact with their European umbrella (which at first glance does not mean much). All other characteristics of the NIGs stating elements of discourse under scrutiny here reflect the distribution of the entire sample.

4.5. Intermediate discussion on the thematic analysis's outcome

The objective of the thematic analysis is to identify the elements of discourse of national interest groups about the legitimacy of EIGs in order to answer the first research question: Which perceptions of “European interest groups legitimacy” do national interest groups have? The thematic analysis allows to answer this question and identify the most significant elements of discourse used by NIGs to describe European interest groups legitimacy, as well as provide all the details about perceptions of NIGs. Several outcomes emerged from the discursive analysis and the scrutiny of the thematic tree. Before detailing these points in the following paragraphs, a first general observation must be raised. Elements of discourse used by NIGs are for the most part positive statements. This is consistent with the fact that almost no NIGs challenges the legitimacy of its European umbrella. However, two notable exceptions concern the elements of discourse about substantive representation and transparency, which are mainly used in a negative way.

Foremost, legitimacy of EIGs — from the perspective of NIGs — is assessed as regards to the function of EIGs to represent a particular interest, and lobby the EU institutions. This may appear straightforward but it is important to note that the discourse of NIGs are focused on the legitimacy of EIGs *acting as their representative* in Brussels. The issue at stake is thus the relation between a represented (the NIG) and a representative (the EIG). This structural arrangement linking EIGs and NIGS is a *representation* relationship. This intrinsic purpose of EIGs — to represent the interests of their membership at the EU level — is reflected in the discourse of national actors. A representation relation presupposes three entities: the represented, the representative, and the one before whom the representation takes place (Pitkin,

1967, p. 105). In the case of the NIGs-EIGs relation, ‘the one before whom the representation takes place’ are the EU institutions, and mainly the Commission¹²⁷. In the discourse of NIGs about the legitimacy of EIGs, the most significant elements (*Functional representation* or *Status in Brussels*) relate to the legitimacy of EIGs as interlocutor of EU institutions. Legitimacy of EIGs is assessed as regarding EIGs acting ‘in front’ of EU institutions¹²⁸. However, other elements, but much less present, relate to the legitimacy of EIGs ‘in front’ of the represented, the NIGs themselves (*Effectiveness of EU lobbying, Information or EU lobbying*). NIGs assess the legitimacy of their European groups considering the functions they fulfil. Here, legitimacy merges with the effectiveness of the actions of EIGs.

Second, following the scrutiny of the thematic tree (see figures 4.3 and 4.4), it is clear that two clusters of themes emerge as the most significant: *Functional representation* and *Status in Brussels*. Coming back to a more general observation, the thematic tree shows that elements of discourse of NIGs concern more input legitimacy of EIGs (86% of cases using such elements of discourse) than output legitimacy of EIGs (58% of cases using elements of discourse related to the later). This suggests that NIGs’ perceptions of “European interest groups legitimacy” is predominantly structured around standards related to input legitimacy. These standards refer to the conditions of procedures by which EIGs’ decisions are made but more importantly on the foundations on which EIGs’ positions rest on. Thereby, the discourse of NIGs about EIGs’ legitimacy concern mainly *functional representation*: NIGs legitimise their EIGs because they represent a particular group of individuals, organisations, companies or industrial sector. Participation and expertise are also part of NIGs discourse but to a smaller extent (19% of cases stating elements of discourse of each of these clusters). More significantly, 58% of cases identify functional representation as a source of their EIGs’ legitimacy. NIGs put the focus on the composition of EIGs’ constituencies. According to NIGs, legitimacy of EIGs is based on their role of provider of messages *on behalf* of their constituency. EIGs are described as *standing for* their constituencies (Dovi, 2014). EIGs are considered as legitimate because they formally represent constituencies — which are considered as relevant by NIGs in order to lobby EU institutions — more than because they act as delegates of NIGs at the EU level (aggregating

¹²⁷ Another kind of actor might be added here: the members of NIGs. Indeed, in their own ‘quest for legitimacy’, NIGs used their membership to EIGs as a proof of the relevance of their work. NIGs can also rely on EIGs’ results to acquire or maintain their own members’ support. Moreover, the adhesion to an EIG is sometimes used by NIGs to secure their position and relations with national level policy-makers.

¹²⁸ This is for example illustrated by quotes from interviews such as: “So, if it is legitimate, how is it for the Commissioner?” (Interview 43); “Ask the European Commission, they’ll tell you the same” (Interview 60). Original quote in French: “Demandez à la Commission européenne, ils vous diront la même chose”.

and transmitting NIGs' positions). If referring to seminal representation theories and the distinction between 'trustees' (Burke, 1951) and 'delegates' (Hamilton, Madison, & Jay, 2008)¹²⁹, NIGs see their EIGs as legitimate in their role of trustees and not of delegates. This result has normative implications (related to the European democracy) with regard to the role assigned to EIGs in the EU decision-making process. In fact, the 'trustees' conception of political representation has a different (competing and contradictory) demands on the behaviour of representatives, than the 'delegate' conception (Dovi, 2017): "*Delegate conceptions of representation require representatives to follow their constituents' preferences, while trustee conceptions require representatives to follow their own judgment about the proper course of action*". If EIGs should be considered as representative of NIGs, the analysis of perception of NIGs suggests that they must be considered first and foremost as trustees of their constituencies (and not as delegate).

As noted above, the second most significant issue structuring the discourse of NIGs about EIGs' legitimacy concerns EIGs' *status in Brussels*. 42% of cases identify the status EIGs have in Brussels as an element of EIGs' legitimacy. This concerns output legitimacy of EIGs, which is based on the assumption that the actions and achievements of EIGs lead to the support of their membership. For example, the *status* of EIGs may concern 'formal' recognition (EIGs enjoying legal recognition or being appointed as social partners) or abstract considerations as reputation. More precisely, two points emerge from the analysis of the cluster *status in Brussels*. These are the 'monopoly of representation' EIGs have at the EU level and the access they enjoy to EU institutions. On the one hand, the acknowledgement by NIGs of the necessity to have a unique representative in Brussels provides information about the conceptions national groups have about the functioning of the interest representation system of the EU. This suggests that NIGs perceive the EU as a 'corporatist-type' system where "*representational monopoly*" (Kohler-Koch, 1999, p. 22) is valorised by public institutions (see, the next point and the analysis based on ideal types). On the other hand, access – which could be defined as "*the exchange of policy-relevant information with public officials through formal or informal networks*" (Beyers, 2004, p. 213) – is considered by NIGs as an important achievement that procures (output) legitimacy to EIGs. This suggests that NIGs assess the 'performance' of EIGs through the evaluation of their access to EU institutions, and less as regards to the actual effectiveness of their lobbying work. It is interesting to note, that an approach focused on access is also the one adopted by

¹²⁹ For detailed discussion of the distinction between "trustee" and "delegate", see for instance Pitkin (1967, pp. 112–143) or Rehfeld (2005).

many scholars studying interest groups success or influence during the last decade (Beyers, 2004; Bouwen, 2002, 2004; Henning, 2004)¹³⁰.

Third, it is interesting to have a look at the distribution of NIGs stating similar elements of discourse as regards to the entire sample of national groups under scrutiny in the dissertation (see appendixes, figures a.4.2 to a.4.161). The objective of such a review is to identify whether some elements of discourse are only stated by particular types of groups (with similar organisational features) or if these elements are widely shared amongst different NIGs across Europe. The characteristics of groups concern: member states of origin of NIGs, nature of interest they advocate, saliency of EU issues for NIGs, direct EU lobbying activities run by NIGs, their membership to other EIGs, the number of their staff members, the type of their own membership, the number of their members and the frequency of contact they have with their EIG (see table 4.16). Concerning input legitimacy, the groups of NIGs using elements of discourse about *expertise*, *participation*, *functional representation* or *effectiveness of EU lobbying* reflect the distribution of NIGs of the entire sample under scrutiny (and this for all variables). Too few NIGs use elements related to *transparency* or *information provision* to draw trends from a comparison with the entire sample.

¹³⁰ For instance, Bouwen (2004, p. 337) notes: “Instead of focusing on influence, I shall study the access of business interests to the EU institutions involved in the legislative process”. While he still specifies: “It needs to be emphasized that access does not necessarily imply influence.”

Table 4.16 Features of NIGs classified by groups using similar elements of discourse (clusters)

Clusters of elements of discourse	Related elements of discourse used more by:
Participation [N=16; 19%] Functional representation [N=49; 58%] Substantive representation [N=17; 20%] Status in Brussels [N=35; 42%]	<i>No particular trend</i>
Expertise [N=16; 19%]	Cause groups; NIGs perceiving EU issues as not salient
Territorial representation [N=13; 15%]	NIGs that are umbrella organisations; sectional groups (only); NIGs having frequent contact with their EIGs; French groups
EU lobbying work [N=12; 14%]	NIGs which do not lobby directly EU institutions; NIGs having no frequent contact with their EIGs
Transparency [N=4; 5%] Information [N=3; 4%] Effectiveness of EU lobbying [N=8; 10%]	<i>Too few NIGs are concerned to draw trends from the comparison with the entire sample</i>

Source: Author's own elaboration

Even if there are some particularities related to some clusters, no clear pattern emerges from all the comparisons of groups using similar elements of discourse and the entire sample. For instance, nature of interest advocated by NIGs or their resources – may it be human resources (staff) or political resources (e.g. number of members) – do not seem to significantly matter. This result suggests that national groups have integrated similar cognitive frames, beyond their level of resources, the nature of interest they advocate or the national context in which they evolve.

However, it should be noted that differences are also observed (as shown in the table 4.16). As noted by Sanchez Salgado and Demidov (2018), the effects of the EU multi-level system on activities and perceptions of national actors do not seem to be consistently related to their capabilities in terms of resources, domestic institutional environment and circumstances (see also for instance, Beyers & Kerremans, 2012; Eising, 2007). Consequently, the integration of 'European' cognitive frames by NIGs — which have very different profiles — has to be explained beyond the particular organisational features or domestic environments of these national actors.

The sociological approaches of the EU (see Chapter 2, point 2.2.1) and literature on europeanisation of national actors provide indications to explain the integration of similar cognitive frames by different NIGs (Favell & Guiraudon, 2011). Cognitive frames developed at the EU level may lead national actors — which are interacting with this level — to respond

similarly to particular issues within the environment of the EU (Surel, 2000). This indicates the significance of interactions through which socialisation takes place: *“The overall effect of these interactions is to change the identity of organizations and individuals. People who travel and work across borders do not have just national identities, but come to see themselves as Europeans. [...] Non-profit organizations help organize Europe-wide interests”* (Fligstein, 2008, p. 2). The outcome of the current thematic analysis, identifying which perceptions of “European interest groups legitimacy” do national interest groups have, is an example of the integration of common cognitive systems of norms by national organisations across Europe. The ‘ways of doing things’ and shared beliefs get Europeanised (Radaelli, 2000).

Beyond the first research question of this dissertation, this first empirical analysis also aims to identify which norms are integrated by NIGs when they consider the legitimate role of their EU-level representative organisations (see Chapters 1 and 2). For this purpose, the next section analyses NIGs’ discourse in the light of the model of EU-society relations promoted by EU institutions (conceptualised as polity norms) which were described in Chapter 1 (point 1.1.3).

4.6. Analysis based on ideal types: did NIGs integrated the participatory model currently promoted by the EU?

This second section presents an analysis with ideal types. This analysis constitutes an additional step using the result of the thematic analysis. This second qualitative analysis aims to identify if the discourse of NIGs unveils the integration by these national actors of elements of the *participatory* model currently promoted by the EU, or the persistence of affirmation of elements from the *partnership* model. The clusters of elements identified in the discourse of NIGs through the thematic analysis are confronted to two ideal types corresponding to the two EU-society relation models (the participatory one and partnership one).

This analysis is less developed than the thematic analysis. Indeed, it goes beyond the purpose of replying to the first research question. The analysis based on ideal types is a means to put the outcome of the thematic analysis into perspective in a more systematic way than a usual discussion. This analysis based on ideal types is an instrument to structure the discussion about NIGs-EIGs relations as regards to the EU-society relations models.

4.6.1. Building the ideal types

EU-society relation models, the *participatory* model and the *partnership* model, were presented in Chapter 1 (point 1.1.2). For the purpose of the current analysis, these models are considered as polity norms¹³¹ promoted successively by EU institutions. The participatory model is the model currently promoted and implemented by the EU. The partnership model is the one previously organising the interest representation system at the EU level. The objective of the analysis is to determine if NIGs actors have integrated the norms of the *participatory* model promoted by the EU. For this purpose, a second-level type of content analysis – where “*the researcher is interested in the latent content and deeper meaning embodied in the text*” (Duriau et al., 2007) – is performed on the basis of the thematic tree presented above. The confrontation of , on the one hand, the clusters of elements identified in the discourse of NIGs, and on the other hand, the ideal-types corresponding to the two EU-society relation models, strives to find if national actors have integrated the elements of the *participatory* model promoted by the EU since the beginning of the 2000s.

It is important to note that this analysis focuses only on the discourse of NIGs about the legitimacy of their EIGs, which is consistent with the previous analysis and the topic of this thesis. The assumption of this analysis based on ideal types is that such a focus — as narrow as it is — allows to study the (non-)integration of polity norms by NIGs. Moreover, as the interactions between NIGs and EIGs and the perceptions of NIGs about EIGs diverge in the two models, a focus on NIGs’ discourse about EIGs legitimacy is particularly relevant to study the potential integration of the participatory model by national groups. Two ideal types are built. They are ideal types of NIGs’ discourse about EIGs legitimacy according to two different polity norms (the two EU-society relation models). Both ideal types are based on the explanations developed in Chapter 1 (point 1.1.2, see particularly the table 1.1). Without coming back to all the details about each model, some highlights are recalled in the following paragraphs to briefly explain the building of both ideal types. The table 4.17 presents these ideal types of NIGs’ discourse about EIGs’ legitimacy under two EU-society relation models. The elements displayed in one column ‘respond’ to the elements in front of them in the other column. These legitimisation elements concern (in order): the composition of EIGs’ membership, the foundation

¹³¹ As a reminder, polity norms are defined as “*the collective understandings of the proper behaviour of actors. They regulate actors and their environment.*” (Saurugger, 2010, p. 2). For details, see chapter 2, section 2.3.

of EIGs' representativeness, the EIGs' internal organisation, the type of information EIGs provide to decision makers and the purpose of their activities in Brussels.

Table 4.17 Ideal types of elements of NIGs' discourse about EIGs' legitimacy under the participatory model and the partnership model

NIGs' discourse about EIGs' legitimacy under the partnership model	NIGs' discourse about EIGs' legitimacy under the participatory model
✓ EIGs are legitimate because their membership is encompassing and includes a large number of constituents.	✓ EIGs are legitimate because their membership is cohesive and advocates similar positions.
✓ EIGs are legitimate because they are the only organisations representing a particular cause or sector at the EU level.	✓ EIGs are legitimate because they echo the positions of their members at the EU level.
✓ EIGs are legitimate because they are trusted by their membership that acknowledges their representativeness.	✓ EIGs are legitimate because they are transparent and responsive towards their membership.
✓ EIGs are legitimate because they provide (technical) expertise-based information to EU institutions.	✓ EIGs are legitimate because they provide political information (about popular demands) to EU institutions.
✓ EIGs are legitimate because they have a privileged access to lobby EU institutions.	✓ EIGs are legitimate because they are a partner of NIGs and assist them (and citizens) to lobby EU institutions.

Source: author's own elaboration

On the one hand, the ideal type corresponding NIGs' discourse about EIGs legitimacy in the *partnership* model corresponds to a neo-corporatist setting. With this in mind, in such a model, umbrella organisations (the EIGs) enjoy a representational monopoly. EIGs are strong and occupy a central position in the interest representation system. EIGs are considered as 'partners' by decision makers, and are privileged actors included in institutions' consultations. For instance, the creation of the 'social dialogue' constitutes the perfect example of this kind of institutionalisation of privileged access of EIGs to EU institutions. Some EIGs (cause groups) are funded by the EU. EIGs are expected to promote European policies across the continent. EIGs are considered as the (only) representative of large but specific constituencies and speak on behalf of the European society. A prevalence is given to expertise-based exchanges (De Bruycker, 2015) and EIGs are expected to provide technocratic and apolitical information to feed rational deliberation at the EU level.

Under this model, NIGs are expected to legitimise their EIGs as political champions of broad political objective and trust their European umbrellas. In such a neo-corporatist setting, EIGs are understood as encompassing associations that control membership behaviour. Accordingly,

EIGs legitimacy is expected to not be challenged by their member organisations. Their legitimacy is based on their privileged access to decision makers (EIGs being considered as ‘partners’ by institutions), their representational monopoly, the encompassing character of their membership base and the expertise they hold.

On the other hand, the ideal type about NIGs’ discourse about EIGs’ legitimacy in the *participatory* model corresponds to participatory democracy and pluralist-related norms. Umbrella organisations are no more considered as the only way to access decision makers. NIGs claim the opportunity to have a significant say in the EIGs’ decisions. The open consultation model implemented by the EU institutions encourages a competition between interest groups. This competition does not only concern different interest groups acting at the same political level but happens between organisations from the different levels of the EU multilevel polity. Concerning expertise, ‘pressure politics’ (as opposed to ‘technical expertise’) are favoured under the *participatory* model. Indeed, “*the pressure politics resonates better with the image of the EU as a pluralist and democratic policy making system, one that is receptive to public pressure and popular demands*” (De Bruycker, 2015, p. 2).

NIGs are expected to legitimise their EIGs as transmitters of their political demands in a bottom-up arrangement. EIGs are expected to faithfully echo NIGs’ positions. Moreover, EIGs are legitimised as “additional strings to NIGs’ bow”. EIGs are not perceived as gate-keepers to access EU institutions but as partners of NIGs in their advocacy engagement at the EU level. EIGs’ legitimacy is also perceived by their member as based on their transparency and the existence of responsive accountability channels within EIGs’ structures.

4.6.2. Confronting empirical data with the ideal types

Ideal-types designed in the previous part are used as a guide for comparison (see Chapter 3, point 3.1.2). Ideal types are used as conceptual models to be compared with empirical data. This “ideal type method” is a procedure of reflection carried out with conceptual description which serves as a benchmark to classify or hierarchize empirics or cases encountered in the research (Mucchielli, 2009b). The clusters identified by the thematic analysis will be classified using the ideal types of NIGs’ discourse about EIGs’ legitimacy under the participatory model and the partnership model (see figure 4.17). Each cluster is classified in one of the following category: (1) clusters tending to the ideal type of NIGs’ discourse about EIGs’ legitimacy under the partnership model, (2) clusters tending to the ideal type of NIGs’ discourse about EIGs’ legitimacy under the participatory model or, (3) clusters that cannot be classified in any

category. It is important to note that empirical data do not fit perfectly to any ideal types (by definition). Clusters are consequently classified in one category if they *tend* to correspond to that category. Clusters are presented with different font sizes (figure 4.5), according to their importance in the discourse of NIGs (as in the figure 4.4 with clusters displayed with different font sizes according to their relative ‘weight’ in NIGs’ discourse). For more readability, the figure is also presented in a ‘harmonized’ font size (along with indications of percentage of NIGs using each cluster) in the following page (figure 4.6). Note also that the purpose of this analysis and its visual representations is not to provide a very precise calculation of the weight of each ideal type but to show an overall trend (which clearly appears when looking at the figures).

First, clusters *information*, *effectiveness of EU lobbying* and *EU lobbying* are not classified as tending neither to ideal type 1 (NIGs’ discourse about EIGs’ legitimacy under the partnership model) nor ideal type 2 (NIGs’ discourse about EIGs’ legitimacy under the participatory model). As noted above, through these elements of discourse, NIGs assess the legitimacy of their European groups considering the function they fulfil in Brussels. Legitimacy merges with the functions or the effectiveness of the actions of EIGs. These elements of discourse could fit with the two ideal types. Whether in a ‘partnership context’ or in a ‘participatory context’, national groups are expected to assess the legitimacy of their EIGs through the quality of their political work: effective advocacy work, political monitoring or information collection and circulation. The clusters which cannot be classified in any categories do not represent a significant part of the elements present in the discourse of EIGs.

Three clusters are classified as tending to ideal type 2, corresponding to NIGs’ discourse about EIGs’ legitimacy in a ‘participatory context’. These clusters concern *transparency*, *participation* and *substantive representation*. The presence of such elements in NIGs’ discourse about EIGs’ legitimacy suggests that national actors are concerned by the adequacy of EIGs’ positions with their own positions (substantive representation) and claim to have a say in the EIGs’ decisions (participation). This shows that NIGs legitimise their EIGs as faithful transmitters of their political demands. Moreover, an attention is also given by NIGs to the transparency of EIGs towards their members. This highlights the importance—in the perspective of NIGs—of accountability channels within EIGs’ structures. However, it should be noted that elements of discourse denoting the integration of norms corresponding to the participatory model promoted by the EU are not widely shared by NIGs under scrutiny (38% of NIGs using such elements of discourse).

The four last clusters — which are also the most significant in terms of presence in the discourse of NIGs — are classified as tending to ideal type 1, corresponding to NIGs' discourse about EIGs' legitimacy in a 'partnership context'. These clusters concern *territorial representation*, *expertise*, *status in Brussels* and *functional representation*. The presence of elements about territorial and functional representation in the discourse of NIGs shows that these national actors perceive EIGs as legitimate representatives acting as trustees. EIGs are considered as representative of encompassing constituencies on behalf of which they work at the EU level. This arrangement is seen by NIGs as the most appropriate to lobby EU institutions. Moreover, the particular status EIGs have in Brussels (the recognition of the 'stakeholder status' enjoying particular access to EU institutions) is highlighted by NIGs which shows that national actors perceive EIGs as privileged partners of EU decision-makers. Finally, expertise is also perceived by national groups as a source of legitimacy for EIGs representing them in Brussels. This shows that NIGs have integrated that expertise-based pieces of information are privileged by EU institutions to feed their deliberation. Overall, it appears that NIGs use more elements of discourse related to the 'partnership model' which suggests that NIGs have integrated the partnership system of norms, but not yet, or not significantly norms related to the participatory model promoted by the EU.

Figure 4.5 Analysing NIGs' discourse about EIG' legitimacy with ideal types: confronting clusters to ideal types (presentation with different font size)

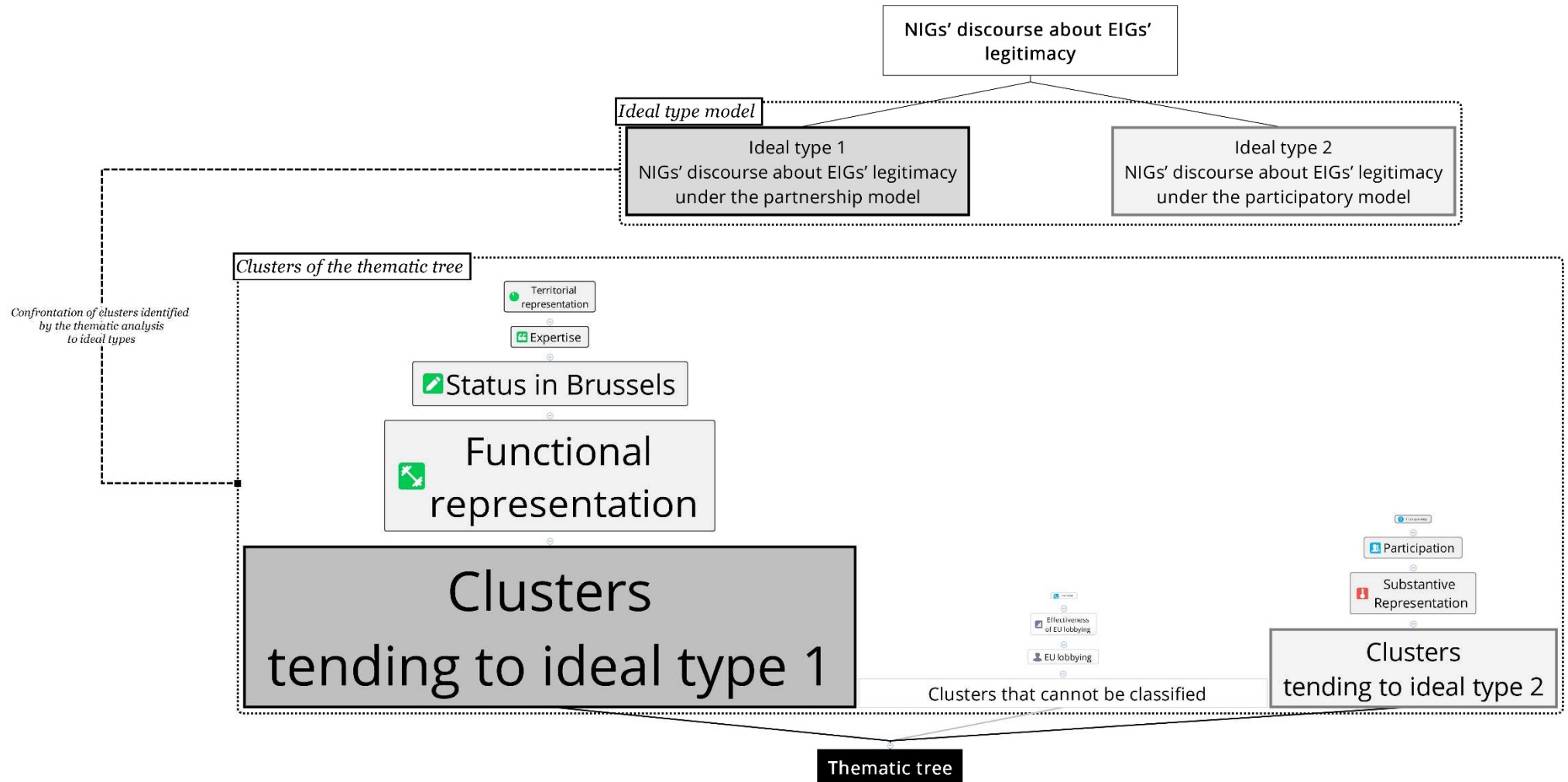
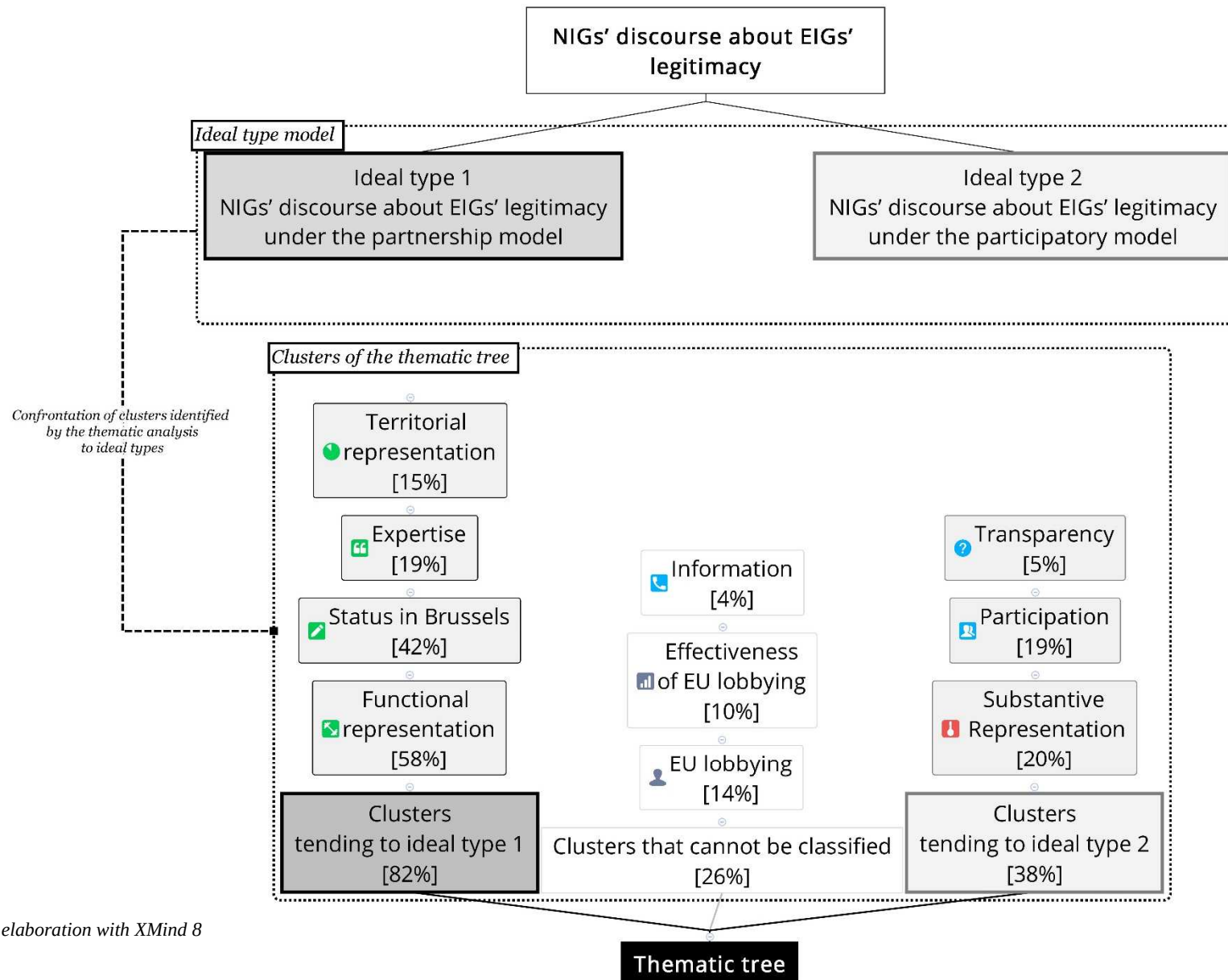


Figure 4.6 Analysing NIGs' discourse about EIGs' legitimacy with ideal types: confronting clusters to ideal types



Source: Author's own elaboration with XMind 8

As explained in Chapter 1, the EU's agenda moved from the promotion of a partnership model with strong EIGs towards the promotion of a participatory model coming along with large, open and multilevel consultation and a particular focus on transparency (Bouza García, 2015b). This new agenda promoting new practices (usage of open online consultations, implementation of ECI) may constitute a challenge for the central position of EIGs (Oleart & Bouza, 2017). Consequently, the following questions appeared: is describing EIGs as central players and gatekeepers to access EU institutions still valid (particularly in the perspective of NIGs)? Did NIGs integrate the norms related to the participatory model currently promoted by the EU? The analysis based on ideal type provides the answers. For brevity, the answer to the first question can be summed up in one word: yes. In the perspective of NIGs, EIGs are still perceived as central players and gate-keepers to access EU institutions. The answer to the second question is very much related to this. If the European 'participatory turn' — going along with the emergence of a participatory model of interest representation at the EU level — is considered as the implementation of a polity norm (Saurugger, 2010), the results of the analysis of NIGs discourse suggest that this polity norm is not integrated by actors at the national level. This is all the more challenging as national interest groups are just amongst the actors targeted by this participative turn that is supposed to bring them 'back in the game'.

4.7. Conclusion of the first empirical analysis

The aim of this Chapter is firstly to identify the NIGs' perceptions about EIGs' legitimacy. The research question addresses the assessment of legitimacy of EIGs in the perspective of their member organisations, without theoretical *a priori* about criteria to take into account to 'speak about legitimacy'. The outcome of the thematic analysis — categorising and conceptualising the content of interviews with NIGs — answers the first research question. Before discussing the content of NIGs' discourse, one should note that on the overall, national groups do not challenge their EIGs' legitimacy. The vast majority of the elements identified in their discourse are positive. This goes against — but is not contradictory with — results of previous research about the legitimacy of European interest groups (see Chapter 1, section 1.3 on the literature review). According to these previous research, EIGs perform badly regarding *democratic* standards: aggregation of members' interests is imperfect (Rodekamp, 2013), participation arenas (when existing) are not used (Kröger, 2016), accountability channels are not functioning (Johansson & Lee, 2014)... European groups are also depicted as elitist, in the sense that they

are disconnected from their members (Warleigh, 2001). Moreover, the professionalisation of these organisations makes them less accountable towards their membership (Saurugger, 2006). At the same time, this situation does not seem to affect the ‘trust’ of member organisations towards their EU-level representative organisations (Wiercx, 2011). The results of the current analysis explain this gap between the normative expectations discussed by scholars and the actual confidence of NIGs. Legitimacy of EIGs are first and foremost conceived by scholars as an issue about *democratic* standards. The thematic analysis suggests that the perception of NIGs about EIGs legitimacy are mainly related to *other issues* than the democratic standards analysed in previous research. Obtaining these results was possible thanks to the subjective approach of organisational legitimacy which neither analyses what organisations are, nor what they should be, but aims to understand what makes them exist within relationships with their audiences (here, their members).

When speaking about EIGs’ legitimacy, NIGs use more elements of discourse related to input legitimacy than output legitimacy of EIGs. NIGs’ perceptions of “European interest groups legitimacy” are thus predominantly structured around standards related to input legitimacy, which refers to the conditions of procedures by which EIGs’ decisions are made but more significantly on the foundations on which EIGs’ positions rest on. EIGs’ output legitimacy is based on the actions and achievements of EIGs that lead to the support of their membership.

On the one hand, with regard to EIGs’ input legitimacy, the discourse of NIGs concerns predominantly functional representation. If EIGs should be considered as representative of NIGs at the EU level, the analysis of perception of NIGs suggests that they must be considered first and foremost as trustees of their constituencies (and not as delegate) in Brussels. This has normative implications for the European democracy as regards to the role assigned to EIG in the EU decision-making process. Though one may consider that EIGs are ‘super-conducting transmitters’ between NIGs and European officials, it appears that is not the role assigned to EIGs by their members (Defacqz, 2018). EIGs are thus not legitimised by their members as accurate transmitters of aggregated national positions to European decision makers but as symbolic champions of encompassing constituencies.

On the other hand, with regard to EIGs’ output legitimacy, the discourse of NIGs concerns predominantly EIGs’ status in Brussels. NIGs assess mainly the ‘performance’ of EIGs through the evaluation of their access to EU institutions, and less as regards to the actual effectiveness of their lobbying work. It is interesting to note, that an approach focused on access is also the

one adopted by many scholars studying interest groups success or influence during the last decade.

Moreover, the ‘additional’ purpose of this Chapter is to identify — through an analysis based on ideal types — if the discourse of NIGs unveils the integration by national actors of the participatory turn (conceptualised as a polity norm) or the significant persistence of elements from the partnership model. It must be stressed again that this analysis – less developed than the other – is used as a means to put the outcome of the thematic analysis into perspective in a more systematic way than a usual discussion. In the perspective of NIGs, EIGs are still perceived as central players and gate-keepers to access EU institutions (which is in line with the partnership model). The analysis of NIGs discourse suggests that participatory norms are not integrated by national interest groups. This calls into question the success and the actual implementation of the participatory model now promoted by the EU since the beginning of the 2000s. As noted by Saurugger (2010, p. 19): *“the construction of the democratic standard – or the ‘participatory imperative’ – in the EU is a fact. The implementation, however, remains partial and leaves large room for manoeuvre for the actors concerned to play their roles”*. If some EIGs (and particularly cause groups) have participated to the construction and diffusion of the norm of participatory democracy at the EU level, it seems that eventually — or at least until now — European groups managed to keep their privileges intact and still occupy the central position (gatekeepers) in the European interest representation system. The promotion of the participatory democracy by some EIGs would thus be understood as a strategic move (Saurugger, 2010). Moreover, the scarcity of resources and the need to prioritise (the level of) advocacy actions (elements that often come up in interviews) may explain the satisfaction of national groups with an arrangement closer to the partnership model. This result may seem grim for the proponents of participative democracy. However, since *“the social construction of an international norm is not a clear linear process, leading from norm emergence to acceptance, and finally to internalisation”* (Saurugger, 2010, p. 18), the current situation of ‘the participatory model’ may not be the last stage of an ongoing process.

Finally, and with regard to methodology, the subjective (and inductive) approach adopted to study the legitimacy of EIGs in the perspective of their member comes with disadvantages. The first one is the impossibility of consistent theory building based on the generalisation of the results. For instance, the survey about the distribution of NIGs stating similar elements of discourse about EIGs’ legitimacy does not allow to make definite claims about the effect of

organisational features on discourse of national actors. However, this drawback would only be considered as unacceptable by those who believe in the possibility of universal generalisations in the first place. As noted by Kröger (2017, p. 13): “*this means that in a situation where ‘there is neither a united research interest nor a unified theoretical perspective on interest groups, nor an established methodological canon’ (Eising, 2017, p. 293) and where producing ‘contingent generalizations rather than law-like statements’ (Eising, 2017, p. 296) is more likely, reasoning at an intermediate level as an abductive approach proposes makes much sense*”. This also reminds the concept of *transferability* of results (Morgan, 2007) mentioned in the conclusion of Chapter 2 .

The subjective approach used in this part of the dissertation does not look at actors through theoretically pre-defined lenses. This approach reveals relevant aspects of EIGs legitimacy that would otherwise have remained unknown. The crucial point about the analysis presented in this chapter is that it seeks not to “*measure the precise weight of individual factors in order to then generalise, but to accept both the context-embeddedness of social interactions as well as some degree of uncertainty as far as research results are concerned*” (Kröger, 2017, p. 13).

5

Congruence between national interest groups' and European interest groups' positions: explaining the perception of national interest groups

After the presentation of the first empirical analysis of this research in Chapter 4, the present chapter is dedicated to the second empirical analysis. This analysis aims to reply to the second research question of this dissertation: under which conditions do national interest groups perceive their policy positions as congruent (or not congruent) with the policy positions of their European interest groups? The Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) method is used to reply to this question. QCA is based on the idea of “multiple conjunctural causation” which fits to the objective of analysing different (combinations) of conditions explaining perceived congruence. In the preamble of this chapter, it is important to note the exploratory nature of the analysis presented in the following pages. Indeed, no coherent theoretical set or propositions exist in order to explain the policy positions' congruence between European interest groups and their member organisations. Therefore, this part of the dissertation strives to provide explanatory paths to better understand the (absence of) congruence between NIGs' and EIGs' positions. The exploratory nature of this analysis has dictated many methodological choices and must be kept in mind while reading the analysis and its results. This chapter is organised as follows. The first section (5.1.) explains the issue under scrutiny in this part of the dissertation as well as the relevance of QCA to handle it. Section 5.2 details the cases under scrutiny in this empirical analysis. Information about the (dichotomisation of the) outcome and the models that will be successively investigated are provided in section 5.3. Section 5.4 outlines all the conditions that are included in the different models. Section 5.5 provides an overview of the data (first descriptive analysis). Section 5.6 is an intermediate conclusion based on the observations made in previous sections. Sections 5.7 and 5.8 concern the Qualitative Comparative Analysis as such, using respectively the partial models and the inclusive models. Section 5.9 presents the attempts of minimisation for the full model (the only model finally minimised, see details in point 5.3.2). Ultimately, a discussion concludes this chapter (5.10).

5.1. Using QCA to analyse perceived congruence between NIGs' and EIGs' policy positions

This part of the research — studying legitimacy of European interest from national groups' perspective — is based on the following assumption: in order to consider an EIG as legitimate, its member organisations (NIGs) have to perceive its positions as congruent with their own national positions (see Chapter 2, section 2.4, for details). It is important to highlight here that this choice to study perceived congruence does not directly stem from the qualitative analysis presented in Chapter 4. Indeed, the basis of this choice is a particular conception of what EIGs must be in order to be considered as legitimate (norm-guided approach for studying organisational legitimacy: see Chapter 1, point 1.2.2, for details). This conception is a 'functionalist' approach of the role of EIGs: the function of European groups is to represent their member organisations' positions or at least act in accordance with national groups' will. In this way, EIGs contribute to the input legitimacy of EU policy making by transmitting to institutions the opinions and requests of interest groups across the EU (Smismans, 2006). Under those circumstances, the legitimacy of EIGs depend on the national groups' perceptions that their EIGs' positions are congruent with their own positions¹³².

More generally, the identification of conditions under which member organisations perceive their EIGs' positions as (not) congruent with their own positions provides insights about the role and status of both European and national groups in the EU system of interest representation.

5.1.1. NIGs' perceived congruence

As regards to EIGs, this analysis provides interesting information about *what* and *who* European groups actually represent. The outcome under scrutiny in this QCA analysis – NIGs' perceived congruence (precisions about this outcome are provided in point 5.3.1) – is first an interesting indication about the overall alignment between EIGs and NIGs. The choice to study perceived congruence is based on the assumption that the positions of EIGs have to satisfy their members. From a democratic perspective, membership's and European umbrellas' positions has to be the most congruent possible. Indeed, if EIGs' function is to represent national groups at the EU level, the messages delivered by EIGs to the EU institutions must be congruent with NIGs' positions or at least must be endorsed by national groups.

¹³² See also for instance, Schrama and Zhelyazkova (2018) for developments about the link between civic participation, CSOs consultation and the quality of EU policy implementation.

Again, EIGs actually claim to represent their members towards EU institutions. For instance, a glance at the websites of these European groups or at the position papers they send to European institutions allows to observe these ‘representative claims’ (Saward, 2010). The box 5.1 provides several examples of these claims. The key point here is the emphasis put by EIGs on the fact that they represent their NIGs, and indirectly their members (“we speak for” or “representing the interest”, in the quotes presented in the box 5.1). With this in mind, the objective of the Qualitative Comparative Analysis is to scrutinise and question the foundations of these claims as regards substantive alignment between EIGs and NIGs.

With attention to NIGs, this analysis provides indications about the ‘losers’ and ‘winners’ amongst the members of EIGs. QCA aims to identify the similarities and disparities of national groups who perceive their EIGs’ positions as congruent with their own and those who do not. The analysis does not explain if national members are successful in their potential enterprise to influence their European representative but it provides information about which national groups perceive their EIGs as aligned with their positions. The scrutiny of the different conditions included in the QCA offers also an overview of the different attitudes of NIGs towards European issues and EU policy making. It is important to remember that this part of the dissertation does not consider a priori EIGs as ‘*super-conducting transmitters*’ (Lowery & Marchetti, 2012) or ‘*transmission belts*’ (Kotzian & Steffek, 2012) between their members and decision makers. The (perceived) congruence between NIGs and EIGs does not mean that NIGs have succeed in influencing EIGs’ positions but it means that NIGs are, at the end of the day, satisfied with EIGs’ positions. In fact, EIGs act not only as transmitters of (aggregated) members’ positions but also as producers of policy positions (see Chapter 2, section 2.4).

In brief, issues at the core of this analysis of conditions under which national interest groups (do not) perceive their positions as congruent with the positions of their European interest groups are the following: on the one hand, who European groups actually represent, and on the other hand, who are the satisfied and dissatisfied amongst the represented (the NIGs). The next point of this first section reminds the relevance of QCA to handle the question raised in this part of the dissertation.

Box 5.1. European interest groups' representative claims

Interest groups are organised to give expression to shared attitudes or pursue the shared interests of a given constituency (see Chapter 2, section 2.1). Accordingly, EIGs aim at represent the interest of their members towards EU institutions. Both parts, the represented and the representatives, play a role in this representation relationship. If the represented play a role in 'choosing' their representatives (by being member of an EIG, for instance), the representatives 'choose' their constituents in the sense of portraying them or framing them in particular ways (Saward, 2006, pp. 301-302). By doing so, EIGs claim to represent their members. Some examples of these portrays — selected amongst the biggest EIGs under scrutiny in this research — are presented in this box. For instance, on the main page of its website, the European environmental bureau (EEB) presents itself as following¹³³:

Figure 5.1b Details of the main page of EEB's website



Source: EEB's website: <http://eeb.org/> (European Environmental Bureau, 2018)

On its website, Business Europe (2018) presents itself as following: “*Business Europe is the leading advocate for growth and competitiveness at European level, standing up for companies across the continent and campaigning on the issues that most influence their performance. A recognised social partner, we speak for all-sized enterprises in 34 European countries whose national business federations are our direct members.*” These kind of ‘representative claims’ can be found also in EIGs’ positions papers. For instance, the first sentence of the

¹³³ The text on the image is the following: “The EEB is Europe’s largest network of environmental citizens’ organisations. We bring together around 140 civil society organisations from more than 30 European countries. We stand for sustainable development, environmental justice & participatory democracy.”

CEPF's reply to the *Commission's draft Action Plan to follow up the Fitness Check of the Nature Directives* is the following: "*CEPF, the European umbrella organisation of national forest owners' organisations, representing the interests of millions of private forest owners across Europe, welcomes the possibility to submit their written contribution [...]*" (2017). These few examples show that EIGs claim to represent NIGs. The composition of their membership, and particularly the NIGs, is highlighted by EIG in their presentation (as well as other points: their territorial coverage, the number of their indirect members ...).

5.1.2. Relevance of QCA for an analysis of perceived congruence

The following paragraphs aim at remind some points about the relevance of QCA for an (exploratory) analysis of perceived congruence between NIGs and EIGs. The main reason driving the choice of QCA to tackle the issue of NIGs' perceived congruence is that this method is "complexity-oriented". QCA is based on the idea that the analysis of single conditions is not sufficient to explain complex social phenomena. QCA' original assumption is that combinations of conditions generate more explanatory power to explain the presence (and the absence) of an outcome. Additionally, as noted by Schneider and Wagemann (2012, p. 5), embracing a set-theoretic perspective on social science phenomena induce unavoidably the recognition of existence of equifinality. Equifinality means that "*alternative factors can produce the same outcome*" (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, p. 5). This fits perfectly with the issue under scrutiny in this second empirical analysis as it appears after field research that explaining NIGs' perception of congruence cannot be explain by some clear or 'isolated' variables. The cases for which (absence of) perceived congruence is observed show very diverse empirical situations.

As the point 5.4 outlines, conditions proposed for this QCA come from 'field-based' knowledge as well as 'theory-based' propositions. This mix, on the basis of which are build conjectures that will be scrutinised, fits perfectly with QCA (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, pp. 15-16). More importantly, for many conditions under scrutiny (see section 5.4), there is no clear expectations (disputable 'expected directions'). This situation is fully consistent with QCA which does not conceive "permanent causal direction" between a given condition and the outcome.

The QCA conducted in this Chapter is a crisp-set one (csQCA). Although csQCA might be considered as entailing limitations (because of the simplification of reality it necessitates), it also offers many advantages, and particularly for an exploratory analysis. The dichotomisation precisely allows simplification which is necessary to progress in the understanding of a complex issue for which no established theory exists (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, pp. 148-152). Clear thresholds allow to get clear indication about the validity of each condition (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, p. 151). Finally, dichotomisation forces to make clear choices and introduces transparency into the research (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, p. 151). One should note here that the relevance of QCA as a method and its fitness within the dissertation's research design are discussed extensively in Chapter 3, point 3.2.2. The next section presents the cases under scrutiny.

5.2. Cases included in the analysis

The cases under scrutiny are dyadic relations between a national interest group (NIG) and a European interest group (EIG). If a national interest group is member of two EIGs (see Chapter 3, section 3.5, for details), it constitutes thus two cases (NIG↔EIG1 and NIG↔EIG2). In this situation, the question about the congruence between NIG's and EIGs' positions is thus asked twice to the interviewee in order to get an answer for each EIG (which are of course potentially different). The total number of cases is 84. It concerns dyadic relations between 79 NIGs and 29 EIGs. A number from 1 to 84 is attributed to each case (dyad).

The value of the outcome (for details about the outcome, see the next section, point 5.3.1.) is missing for three cases: 4, 30 and 77. In order to lose as little information as possible, it has been decided to give as far as possible a score for each 'blank case'. As soon as 'case-based knowledge' is available through primary source of information, it is a QCA good practice to keep as much as cases in the sample (de Block & Vis, 2017; Rihoux & Lobe, 2009). With this in mind and on the basis of interviews, the decision has been made to remove two of these three cases because there are no sufficient information to attribute an 'informed' score to the outcome. For case 30, the interviewee refused to answer the question, because he did not want to give an overall score: "*it depends on the subjects. We cannot give an overall score. [...] No, that's not possible*" (interview for case 30)^{134,135}. For case 77, the interviewee has also no information to provide about the relation of its organisation and the EIG. This NIG is very active within the structure of another EIG, and is almost 'symbolically' member of the first. These two cases are thus removed from the dataset for the purpose of the QCA because of the absence of score for the outcome and the impossibility to provide one on the basis of interviews. For the third 'missing outcome' a score is attributed to the case on the basis of the interview:

Actually, here, for me, it's a little bit irrelevant, in the sense that a priori, no, I cannot identify, spontaneously, positions of [the EIG] that could have bothered us, even reciprocally, I do not see any. [...] Because on technical issues, standards evolutions, regulations, etc., we are not directly working on that, compared to companies or unions. Since it goes in the direction wanted by our members, who are present in different sectors or interests. So, of

¹³⁴ The overall feeling of the interviewer is that the interviewee (director of the NIG) did not want to answer this question (as well as many other questions) because he had no information about its EIG. The organisation has actually no position to compare with EIG's positions and has actually (almost) no contact with the EIG. The interviewee stayed very vague when speaking about European issues. It seems that the activities and priorities of this organisation (with very limited staff) are very distant from EU affairs.

¹³⁵ Original quote in French: *Ça va dépendre des sujets. On ne peut pas donner de note globale. [...] Non, ce n'est pas possible.*

course, if it suits our members, it suits us, finally ... [Laughs]. From this point of view, there is no problem. In relation to our positions, positions that we can take, it's about this global vision, we are not in opposition [...]. (Interview for case 4)¹³⁶

Even if the interviewee wished not to answer the question, a score for the outcome is attributed to that case. The interviewee notes that the NIG's members are satisfied with the EIG's positions, which thus satisfies its organisation. On 'global positions', he notes no opposition. Because of this overall alignment (and the observation of no actual deviation or different priorities), a score reflecting 'congruence of positions' (10, by default) is attributed to that case.

82 cases are thus under scrutiny. They concern dyadic relations between 78 NIGs and 29 EIGs (hereafter, the Table 5.1 provides an overview of all the cases included in the analysis). As presented in Chapters 3 and 4, the sample of interest groups under scrutiny in this dissertation provides a very diverse distribution of cases regarding to a lot of different variables. Without claiming that the sample is representative of interest groups population in the EU – which is moreover very difficult to circumscribe (see for instance, Wonka et al., 2010) – the sample of this research has at least the advantage of covering a very large diversity of potentially observable cases. This diversity is of particular importance for the QCA.

As a reminder from Chapter 3 (point 3.4.1), “non-factual” information from interviews provided in this dissertation are anonymised. It was guaranteed to the interviewees that their declarations will not be made public in direct relation to their organisations' name. Some interviewees clearly asked a confirmation about this when they were speaking about their relations with their EIGs (second part of interviews). This is particularly important for their answers concerning the congruence of their positions with the positions of their EIGs which is the core of this empirical analysis. Because of this, as in Chapter 4, NIGs' names are never provided in direct relations with interviews' quotes (or answers to the scale question about congruence). Each quote is linked to the nature of interest a NIG represent and its member state of origin (e.g. “Maltese cause group”). Of course, other information about the cases are put in relations with quotes when necessary, but it does not allow linking directly a quote to a NIG.

¹³⁶ Original quote in French: *Effectivement, là pour moi, c'est un petit peu sans objet, dans le sens ou a priori, non, moi j'ai, en tous cas spontanément, des positions de [l'organisation européenne] qui auraient pu nous gêner, voire réciproquement, je n'en vois aucune. [...] Parce que sur, sur les dossiers techniques, genre faire évoluer des normes, des règlements, etc., donc là, nous on est assez peu en prise directe par rapport à des entreprises ou des syndicats disons là-dessus, à partir du moment où ça va dans le sens de nos adhérents qui sont présents dans les différents secteurs ou intérêts portés. Donc là, évidemment, si ça convient à nos adhérents, ça nous convient, enfin... [Rire]. De ce point de vue-là, il n'y a pas de problème. Par rapport à des positions propres, nous les positions propres qu'on peut avoir, c'est un peu cette vision globale, nous on n'est pas en opposition [...].*

More importantly, you can find all information about each case (but without the name of the NIG) in tables 5.34 and 5.35 (section 5.5 of this chapter) or in appendixes (table a.5.1 “*cases, conditions and outcome for QCA: raw data (ordered by cases id)*”). Id were given to each case in order to facilitate the reading of the chapter (and identify each case, from one model to another for instance).

Table 5.1 Cases (dyads of NIG↔EIG relations) included in the QCA

NIG	EIG				
BLM	↔	BirdLife Europe	NTM	↔	EEB
DOPPS	↔	BirdLife Europe	GF	↔	EEB
SOF	↔	BirdLife Europe	Umanotera	↔	EEB
MEDEF	↔	Business Europe	TNS	↔	EEB
MBB_MCCEI	↔	Business Europe	ITR	↔	EEB
ZDS	↔	Business Europe	AirClim	↔	EEB
SN	↔	Business Europe	MKG	↔	EEB
JA	↔	CEJA	SSNC	↔	EEB
ZSPM	↔	CEJA	FSF	↔	EFNCP
LRFU	↔	CEJA	SR	↔	EFNCP
SFIC	↔	CEMBureau	AGPB	↔	ELO
Slocem	↔	CEMBureau	FFS	↔	ELO
FPF	↔	CEPF	WWFS	↔	EPO
ZLGS	↔	CEPF	URF	↔	ERF
LRFS	↔	CEPF	SER	↔	ERF
FNSEA	↔	COPA-COGECA	USIRF	↔	ERF
KM	↔	COPA-COGECA	UPF	↔	ESPO
AGPB	↔	COPA-COGECA	SH	↔	ESPO
ZZS	↔	COPA-COGECA	UPC	↔	EuLA
KGZS	↔	COPA-COGECA	UFE	↔	EURELECTRIC
LRF	↔	COPA-COGECA	EZS	↔	EURELECTRIC
AIMCC	↔	CPE	Swedenergy	↔	EURELECTRIC
RZS	↔	EAA	FGdF	↔	Eurogîtes
Sportfiskarna	↔	EAA	ZTKS	↔	Eurogîtes
Sweship	↔	ECSA	SveMin	↔	Euromines
FNE	↔	EEB	FNSEA	↔	Euromontana
ZWF	↔	EEB	UAPF	↔	Europêche
					KM ↔ Europêche
					FNC ↔ FACE
					FKNK ↔ FACE
					LZS ↔ FACE
					FMAP ↔ FEAP
					FFA ↔ FEAP
					FoEM ↔ FoEE
					AdTF ↔ FoEE
					Focus ↔ FoEE
					JV ↔ FoEE
					MBB_MHRA ↔ HOTREC
					UMIH ↔ HOTREC
					TGZ ↔ HOTREC
					Visita ↔ HOTREC
					GNI ↔ HOTREC
					MOAM ↔ IFOAM
					FNAB ↔ IFOAM
					ITR ↔ IFOAM
					KRAV ↔ IFOAM
					EL ↔ IFOAM
					UPA ↔ UEAPME
					CGPME ↔ UEAPME
					GRTU ↔ UEAPME
					OZS ↔ UEAPME
					Företagarna ↔ UEAPME
					APCMA ↔ UEAPME
					FIF ↔ UNIFE
					Swedtrain ↔ UNIFE

5.3. Overview of the data and data preparation for QCA

In this section, the outcome is presented (5.3.1) as well as the different models that will be used for QCA (5.3.2). The next section (5.4) provides detailed discussions about each condition. The outcome is presented first because the analysis is outcome-driven (as all QCA). A detailed and transparent discussion of the outcome is a QCA good practice. Indeed, transparency about the phase of threshold-setting is crucial. During this phase, each decision by the researcher could be subject to critique. Therefore the case-based knowledge acquired during interviews plays a key role in the choices regarding the dichotomisation of the outcome.

5.3.1. The outcome: NIGs' perception of congruence between NIGs' and EIGs' positions

Table 5.2 Summary table: the outcome

Label	perceived_congruence
Definition	Perception of the national interest group about the overall congruence between its policy positions and the ones of its EIG.
Data	Collected via interviews: scale question.
Dichotomisation	On the basis of replies to the scale question: [1-6]=0 ; [7-10]=1

The outcome *perceived_congruence* indicates the fact that national interest groups perceive on the overall their policy positions as congruent or not congruent with the policy positions of their European interest. The data were collected via interviews (see Chapter 3, point 3.4.1) and more precisely via a scale question stated as follows:

Table 5.3 Scale question about congruence between NIG's and EIG's positions

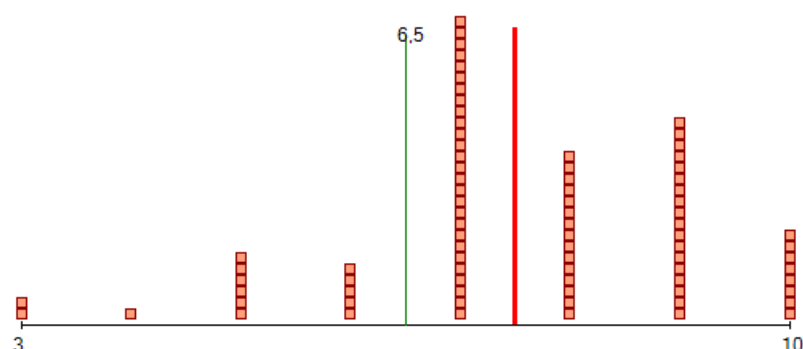
3. The positions of the European organisation of which you are a member and your own positions are:									
Completely different									Completely similar
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Source: author's own elaboration (interview grid, see Chapter 3, point 3.4.1)

The interviewee were invited to provide a score on this scale and an explanation about their choice. The figure 5.1 provides an overview of the distribution of cases as regards their answer to this question. The red line (bold) shows the median and the black line (6.5) shows the threshold used to dichotomise the outcome¹³⁷.

¹³⁷ An analysis was also made with a threshold 7.5: see the box 5.2 (at the end of this point) for explanations.

Figure 5.1 Outcome [perceived_congruence], distribution of cases



<i>perceived_congruence</i>	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	<i>TOTAL</i>
Number of cases	2	1	6	5	27	15	18	8	82

Source: figure retrieved from TOSMANA (version 1.54)

The threshold used to dichotomise the outcome is determined on the basis of qualitative data (explanations provided by interviewees about their choice). For NIGs scoring 3, 4 or 5, the ‘incongruence’ of positions is very clear in the perspective of NIGs:

Interviewee: [Laughing] put a cross in the 3. For a long time, it was there [showing the top of the scale], but frankly, but for the reasons I just mentioned.

Interviewer: Due to enlargement of the EU and due to the fact that...

Interviewee: Absolutely! We had a dilution and thus, everyone comes ... For a long time, in fact, I'll say, first because. Before we were involved, including me, personally, much more in the activity of [the EIG]. We, we ... Finally, I think, finally there was even benefits. [...] Frankly, the problems were very common, whether one is Italian, Spanish, Belgian, Dutch. Well, I mean, there was no, that's it. We felt a unity, a cohesion, everyone spoke the same language, that's it. Uh...

Interviewer: And now, it's no more the case with...

Interviewee: Now, it's less like that. This is less the case. Strangely, this kind of very liberal, ultra-liberal fashion has also invaded all these structures. (Interview 24)¹³⁸

¹³⁸ Original quote in French:

Interviewé: [Rire] Mettez une croix dans le 3. Pendant longtemps c'était par-là [montrant le haut de l'échelle], mais franchement, mais pour les raisons que je viens d'évoquer hein.

Intervieweur: Du aux élargissements et dû au fait que...

Interviewé: Absolument ! On a une dilution et du coup, chacun vient... Moi pendant longtemps, en fait, je vais dire, d'abord parce qu'avant on participait, y compris moi, personnellement, beaucoup plus à l'activité de [the EIG]. On, on... Enfin, moi je trouve, enfin il y avait même un côté très positif. [...] Franchement, les problèmes étaient

Interviewee: So, we are totally different [...] And I totally understand that democracy, Germany have I don't know how many votes in the elections, we in Slovenia have two.

Interviewer: You mean within [the EIG]?

Interviewee: Within [the EIG], yeah. So at the end, the big one wins, in some issues, in another issues there can be, of course, two positions; one positions for this part of membership, another for this part of membership. And I always repeat that of course, we only two votes but we can be stronger if we connect with Austrian [...]. (Interview 80)

[...] the European position, it would be more business-oriented, perhaps every man for himself in a world of competition. While we, indeed, [the NIG], we would rather be in favour of the structures, the organization of things, the norms, the regulation. (Interview 58)¹³⁹

More importantly, the issue of dichotomisation takes place between organisations stating a score 6 and organisation stating a score 7. Reading the interviews allows to separate these organisations. The following quotes are examples of NIGs stating a score 6 (the highlights are added):

There are some issues where we are really perfectly aligned, but on other issues, and this became more precise since we formalise our positions, we disagree. But in fact, we could not express the disagreement as long as we had not formalised it. [...] since we started this, since we have almost all positions formalised, we realise that we have disagreements that are quite substantial. [An illustration is asked by the interviewee] For instance, on the energy transition issue, our European federations... [Explaining the EIGs' positions]. While we think, that the “gas stage” is not fundamental. And on that, we totally disagree. (Interview 30)¹⁴⁰

[The interviewee providing examples] And you can see, ok, yes GMO, not GMO. But GMO today is very complex, you have different scales. Should we have the same position, “no to all GMO”? Or should we discuss what is a GMO and thing like that? That is one example. The other example is this

très communs que l'on soit italien, espagnol, belge, néerlandais. Enfin, je veux dire, il n'y avait pas, voilà. On sentait une unité, une cohésion, chacun parlait le même langage, voilà. Euh...

Intervieweur: *Et maintenant, c'est plus le cas avec...*

Interviewee: *Maintenant, c'est moins le cas. C'est moins le cas. Bizarrement, cette espèce de mode très libérale, ultralibérale, a aussi traversé toutes ces structures. Voilà.*

¹³⁹ Original quote in French: [...] *la position européenne, elle serait plus axée sur le business, puis peut-être le chacun-pour-soit dans le monde de la concurrence. Alors que nous, effectivement, [l'organisation nationale], on serait plutôt dans la structuration, l'organisation, les normes, les critères.*

¹⁴⁰ Original quote in French: *C'est-à-dire que, alors il y a certains points où on est vraiment parfaitement aligné, mais certains points, et là ça se précise parce que comme maintenant on formalise bien nos prises de position où on est en désaccord, mais en fait on ne pouvait pas exprimer le désaccord tant que nous on l'avait formalisé. [...] quand on commence nous maintenant, puisque on a pratiquement tout formalisé, on se rend compte qu'on a des points de désaccord qui sont quand même substantielles. [L'intervieweur demande une illustration] Par exemple, sur la partie transition énergétique, nos fédérations européennes [explaining the EIGs' positions]. Alors que nous, de notre réflexion, l'étape gaze n'est pas fondamentale. Et là on est en désaccord total.*

greenhouse question where they [(the EIG)] have been like supporting the idea of that organic production has to have contact with the soil. So, *sometimes we have different views*. (Interview 87)

These organisations explain that, on some issues, they have concrete and substantial disagreements with their EIGs' positions. They are not always opposed to each other but they use sometimes a right to 'opt-out' from policy positions. Some explain also that fundamental oppositions appear within the EIG ("*we had big arguments*"; originally in French: "*je sais qu'on a eu des bonnes engueulades*"; interview 54). In contrast, organisation stating a score 7 explain differently their answers:

In general, we are not hostile, for several reasons. Because, uh ... It's not the most important, but in the structure, we're a big member of [the EIG]. We represent, I don't know a seventh or an eighth of the budget of [the EIG] with the Germans, with the Italians with the English. So, in general, [the EIG] takes into consideration the positions that we express. Afterwards, on the industrial issues, there is no fundamental disagreement between us, the Germans, the English. (Interview 26)¹⁴¹

I would say 7, because roughly speaking, we share the same interests. Which is the importance of the issues as [enumerating issues at stake]. Then we also work on European standardisation. The same problems, I would say. However, there may be some differences, on specific products. There are not always the same products in France and elsewhere. Because there also is national regulations behind. I would say 7. (Interview 32)¹⁴²

Because the general direction would be in principle, *the general idea would be exactly like ours*. But then when it comes to the *details*, we would include certain things that are more hands-on, that are more detailed, and then we do our own representation because it is stronger to do our own representation; but *the direction would be the same*. (Interview 42)

It's more, *it's not really a question of content, it's more a prioritising*. [...] I would probably say that there is, in the content I would say there is like, if they have ten issues going, obviously three are important. And I would hope

¹⁴¹ Original quote in French: *En général on n'est pas hostile, pour plusieurs raisons. Parce que, euh... Ce n'est pas la plus importante, mais, dans la structure, on est un des grands membres de [l'organisation européenne]. On, on représente, je ne sais pas un septième ou un huitième du budget de [l'organisation européenne] avec les Allemands, avec les Italiens avec les Anglais. Donc, en général, [l'organisation européenne] prend en compte des positions qu'on peut exprimer. Après, sur les sujets industriels, il n'y a pas de désaccord de fond entre nous, les Allemands, les Anglais.*

¹⁴² Original quote in French: *Je dirais 7 parce que grosso modo on partage les mêmes intérêts. C'est l'importance du sujet, [enumerating issues at stake]. Puis on travaille aussi sur de la normalisation européenne. Les mêmes problèmes, entre guillemets. Après voilà, il peut y avoir quelques divergences, sur les produits spécifiques. Il n'y a pas toujours les mêmes produits qui sont en France qui sont ailleurs. Parce qu'il y a une réglementation nationale aussi beaucoup derrière. Je dirais 7.*

that they can leave the other seven be, so they can focus all energy on those three. (Interview 96)

On the contrary of organisations stating a six, these organisations quoted above explain that they have no substantial disagreements with their EIGs' positions. The divergences concern the details or the priority. For the purpose of dichotomisation, and following the reading of interviews, organisations stating 7 or more are considered as perceiving their EIGs positions as congruent with their own positions (N=68), and other organisations as not perceiving on the overall this congruence of positions (N=14).

Table 5.4 Distribution of cases by the outcome (dichotomised)

<i>perceived_congruence</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
Number of cases	14	68	82

Source: author's own elaboration

There is here a gap between the claim of EIGs to represent NIGs (see the box 5.1, above) and the actual perception of some NIGs about the incongruence between EIGs' positions and their own positions. This gap is already a descriptive research result. Which is also interesting to note is that there are much more national organisations perceiving their positions as not (or not much) congruent with their EIGs' positions than those overtly challenging the legitimacy of their EIG¹⁴³. Surprisingly, these two groups of organisations (perceiving incongruence and overtly challenging their EIG's legitimacy) do not overlap much. Only two organisations perceive their EIGs' positions as incongruent with their own positions and overtly challenge their EIG's legitimacy. This is in line with the results of the thematic analysis presented in the previous Chapter. NIGs consider their EIGs as legitimate more because they formally represent their constituencies than because they act as delegates of NIGs at the EU level (aggregating and transmitting NIGs' positions).

¹⁴³ Two NIGs, perceiving their EIGs' positions as not congruent with theirs, have given a 'challenging score' to the 'legitimacy question' (one organisation scored 1; the other scored 4). All other 12 NIGs, perceiving their EIGs' positions as not congruent with theirs, scored 7 or more to this question. As a reminder, the question is stated as follows: "Is the European organisation of which you are a member, a legitimate interest group?" Answer on a 1–10 scale (1 = Not legitimate at all, 10 = Highly legitimate). It is important to note that these scores provide only an indication about the perception of the NIG about their EIG's legitimacy. The scores should not be analysed as such, but they indicate a 'tendency' about the legitimacy assessment of NIGs about the legitimacy of their EIGs.

Box 5.2. Another dichotomisation of the outcome?

An analysis was also made with a 7.5 threshold ($[1-7]=0 \rightarrow N=41$; $[8-10]=1 \rightarrow N=41$) on the basis of 'congruence' defined as quasi total alignment and 'non congruence' as including also the divergence about priorities and details. However, the analysis with the outcome dichotomised at 7.5 induces much more complexity in the analysis, which makes very difficult to calculate simple solutions (or even impossible to calculate with TOSMANA). As noted by Lasse Cronqvist, the designer of the software TOSMANA: *"In this data set [7.5 threshold], the data set produces rather complex prime implicants, and the software can't calculate a simple solution. In TOSMANA, it is possible to calculate the prime implicants using all conditions without any delay. But the calculation of the solutions fails to produce quick results, as no simple solution is found.[...] In fact this is some kind of surprise to me, but I after doing some debugging on this issue, I do think that complexity is the problem here"*¹⁴⁴.

¹⁴⁴ Quote from an e-mail (e-mails exchange with Lasse Cronqvist: "Tosmana: issue with 11 conditions").

5.3.2. The models

In order to explain the different NIGs' perceptions of congruence, 11 conditions are tested in this research. These conditions are selected and designed on the basis of literature on (europeanisation of) interest groups and field-based knowledge. Each condition is detailed in the next point. Different models including different conditions are tested successively. The next table (table 5.5) presents these models and the conditions which they include. The left-hand column provides the [label] of the conditions as well as a short description of what the condition is about. All the other columns indicate which conditions are included (coloured cells) and not included (blank cells) in each model.

The first model includes all conditions related to the domestic environment in which NIGs work. It concerns the date of adhesion of the member states of origin, the institutional leverage the members states have at the EU level, and the domestic system of interest intermediation. The second model includes conditions related to the organisational features of NIGs: the nature of interest represented, the size of the staff as well as the type of membership of NIGs. The third model concerns NIGs' EU-related activities: the saliency of EU issues for NIGs, their direct lobbying actions towards EU institutions and their adhesion to other EIGs. The fourth model includes all the conditions of the model 3 plus the number of member the EIGs have. The fifth model includes all the conditions but the ones related to the domestic environment in which NIGs work. The sixth model includes all the conditions.

Table 5.5 The different models for the QCA

Conditions		Models (conditions included in the)					
		Partial models				Inclusive models	
		1	2	3	4	5	6
		Domestic environment of NIGs	NIGs' organisational features	NIGs' EU related activities	EU related model	All-non MS conditions	All-inclusive model
1	[ms_old] Adhesion of member states						
2	[ms_eu_leverage] Member states' leverage in the EU						
3	[ms_corporatism] Index of interest group pluralism						
4	[cause] Nature of interest						
5	[small_staff] Staff						
6	[no_direct_mem] Type of membership						
7	[non_eu_sal] Saliency of EU issues						
8	[non_eu_lob] Direct lobbying actions at the EU level						
9	[no_oth_eig] Membership to another EIG						
10	[freq_contact] Contact with the EIG						
11	[few_mem_eig] Number of member within the EIG						

Source: Author's own elaboration

The purpose of testing different models is to find a parsimonious explanation of the outcome. Therefore, models with few conditions are first tested. The conditions tested successively (included in the different models) go from the more 'remote' ones to the more 'proximate' ones (Mannewitz, 2011). The different 'clusters of conditions' correspond also to particular dimensions identified as potentially relevant to explain NIGs' perceived congruence. For instance, the model 1 includes 'distant' conditions (related to domestic environment of NIGs), while the conditions included in model 2 are more 'proximate' from the cases, as they concern NIGs' organisational features. The model 3 includes again conditions that are 'closer' to the cases as they concern NIGs' EU-related activities. The model 4 enriches the model 3 with an additional condition. Then, if no results are obtained (presence of contradictory configurations, see below), other more inclusive models (in terms of numbers of conditions included) are tested. Indeed, the strategy of adding conditions (or here, combine greater number of conditions) in

the event of contradictions in truth tables is a QCA good practice (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, pp. 48-49; Schneider & Wagemann, 2012).

One should note here that only the model without contradiction (or more precisely with the fewest contradictions) will be minimised (section 5.9). Moreover, only inclusive models will be presented in details in the chapter (section 5.8). The entire prior sequence presenting each partial model and the related truth tables can be found in appendixes. These appendixes provide the rationale behind the different steps of the analysis and the test of the successive models. This choice to present all the tested models – in appendixes – also participates in the transparency of the QCA conducted in this dissertation. The section 5.7 provides an abstract of this prior sequence concerning partial models.

5.4. Conditions

Under this point, all conditions are presented one by one. For each condition, a summary table provides several information: the condition's label, its definition, how the related data were collected, how the condition is dichotomised and the 'expected direction' of the condition. These expectations are propositions about conditions' effect on the outcome. The word *proposition* (and not hypothesis) is used since the 'expected directions' are conjectured based on knowledge from field research or inspired by related literature.

Under this point, all conditions are presented one by one. Moreover, an additional table (distribution table) is also presented for each condition with its distribution amongst cases under scrutiny (each table provides the following information: for condition x, y cases show a score "1" and z cases show a score "0").

5.4.1. Condition 1: [ms_old] Being from a "old" member state¹⁴⁵

Table 5.6 Summary table: condition 1

Label	ms_old
Definition	The NIG comes from a member state which adhere to the EU for a long time.
Data collection	not applicable (official documents)
Dichotomisation	[adhesion in 2004]=0 ; [adhesion before 2004]=1
Proposition of expected direction	Being based in an old EU member state is a necessary condition that leads to high perceived congruence

¹⁴⁵ The author acknowledges that the words "old" vs "new" member states might not denote the exact situation of the countries under scrutiny. However, this wording (label "ms_old") is chosen to differentiate member states that are "member of the EU for a longer time" than the others.

The rationale behind this condition is that the NIGs that come from member states that are for a long time in the EU are more accustomed to work at the EU level. Through a socialisation process (Checkel, 2007), these NIGs are more inclined to align themselves with their European counterparts. Indeed, as a result of prolonged exposure and interactions, NIGs acquire a sense of “we-ness” and identify the EU as a level primarily designed for finding policy solutions in the interest of a common European good (Beyers, 2005). Moreover, the ‘intensity of exposure’ differ also between groups from different member states. NIGs from new member states tend to use less EU funding and access opportunities (for instance via EIGs) than groups from Western member states (Mahoney & Beckstrand, 2011). In the same vein, Kyriz (2013) provides an example of differentiate impact of the EU on civil society in pre-accession and post-accession period. While interest groups (more particularly CSOs, in that research) can be domestically empowered and develop pro-EU attitudes during the pre-accession period, they will have minimal interactions with the EU in the post-accession period. Given these elements, being based in an old EU member state is expected to be a necessary condition for NIGs to perceive their EIGs’ positions as congruent with their own.

Table 5.7 Distribution of cases for condition 1 (details about date of adhesion of MS)

Member states	Date of adhesion to the EU	Cases concerned
France	1957	31
Malta	2004	11
Slovenia	2004	18
Sweden	1995	22

Source: author’s own elaboration

The dichotomisation is based on the year of adhesion of the member state of origin. NIGs coming from Slovenia and Malta are considered as coming from ‘new’ member states, while groups from France and Sweden are considered as coming from ‘old’ member states.

Table 5.8 Distribution of cases for condition 1 (dichotomised)

<i>ms_old</i>	0	1	TOTAL
Number of cases	29	53	82

Source: author’s own elaboration

5.4.2. Condition 2: [ms_eu_leverage] Being from a member state which has an important institutional leverage at the EU level

Table 5.9 Summary table: condition 2

Label	ms_eu_leverage
Definition	The NIG comes from a member state which has an important institutional leverage at the EU level
Data collection	not applicable (official documents)
Dichotomisation	[small leverage/small MS]=0 ; [big leverage/big ms]=1
Proposition of expected direction	Being based in an EU member state with an important institutional leverage is a necessary condition that leads to high perceived congruence

The rationale behind this condition is that a NIG coming from a member state which enjoys an important institutional leverage has in turn also an important leverage within the EIG decision arenas. If the EIG's positions is more influenced by its own position, the NIG will perceive the EIG's position as more congruent. As noted by a representative of a French group: *"we're a big member of [the EIG]. [...] So, in general, [the EIG] takes into consideration the positions that we express"* (interview 26)¹⁴⁶. On the contrary, a Slovenian representative explains: "So at the end, the big one wins" (interview 80). Consequently, NIGs based in 'big' member state with an important institutional leverage are expected to perceive their EIGs' positions as more congruent with their own positions.

Table 5.10 Distribution of cases for condition 2 (details about MS' leverage at the EU level)

Member states	Seats in the ep	Votes in the council	Cases concerned
France	74	29	31
Malta	6	3	11
Slovenia	8	4	18
Sweden	20	10	22

Source: author's own elaboration

The dichotomisation is based on an overview of the number of seats in the European Parliament and number of votes within the Council of the European Union for each member states. NIGs coming from France are considered as coming from a 'big' member states which has an important (one of the most important) institutional leverage within the EU, while groups from the three other country, in comparison, are considered as coming from 'small' member states.

¹⁴⁶ Original quote in French: *On est un des grands membres de [the EIG]. [...] Donc, en général, [the EIG] prend en compte des positions qu'on peut exprimer.*

Table 5.11 Distribution of cases for condition 2 (dichotomised)

<i>ms_eu_leverage</i>	0	1	TOTAL
Number of cases	51	31	82

Source: author's own elaboration

5.4.3. Condition 3: [ms_corporatism] Being from a corporatist member state

Table 5.12 Summary table: condition 3

Label	ms_corporatism
Definition	The NIG comes from a member state with a corporatist system of interest intermediation
Data	Lijphart (2012, pp. 158-173) + Fink-Hafner (see for instance: Fink-Hafner et al., 2014)
Dichotomisation	[high index of interest group pluralism]=0 ; [low index of interest group pluralism]=1
Proposition of expected direction	Working in a corporatist domestic context is a necessary condition that leads to high perceived congruence

The rationale behind this condition is that interest groups that work in a corporatist environment are much more inclined to negotiate between groups and reach inclusive compromises which are then accepted by the partners¹⁴⁷. The corporatist mode of governance “*includes competing social interests in consensus formation in order to achieve the common good*” (Kohler-Koch, 1999, p. 21) while pluralism “*combines majority rule and the individualistic pursuit of interests*” (Kohler-Koch, 1999, p. 21). Consequently, NIGs who are used to work for consensus formation will have a more positive perception of the aggregated EIGs’ positions than groups working within a context of opposition and competition between groups. Moreover, NIGs from corporatist member states are expected to be more involved in negotiations with their partners in Brussels which should lead to a higher perceived congruence. As noted by Beyers (2002, p. 608): “*associations with privileged access at the domestic level have the opportunity to invest in Euro-level networking.*”

¹⁴⁷ Even it is not exactly the issue under scrutiny in this research, one should note that literature on Europeanisation of national interest groups provides no clear direction about the effect of the type of domestic interest intermediation system. Two competing hypotheses exist, the persistence hypothesis and the compensation hypothesis (Beyers, 2002). Both hypothesis are summarized by Klüver (2010, p. 176): “According to the positive persistence hypothesis, access on the domestic level is positively correlated with Europeanization so that interest groups who enjoy considerable access at the national level are also more likely to Europeanize their lobbying activities [...] In contrast, the compensation hypothesis argues that access at the domestic level is negatively correlated with Europeanization. Interest groups therefore try to compensate for their lack of access at the domestic level by pursuing lobbying activities directly at the European level”. For research supporting the persistence hypothesis, see for instance: Beyers (2002), Eising (2007) or Rumbul (2013) . For research supporting the compensation hypothesis, see for instance: Poloni-Staudinger (2008) or Sanchez Salgado (2014b, 2017).

Table 5.13 Distribution of cases for condition 3 (details about MS' pluralism index)

Member states	Pluralism index	Cases concerned
France	2,9	31
Malta	3	11
Slovenia	~0,5	18
Sweden	0,35	22

Source: author's own elaboration

The dichotomisation is based on the 'index of interest group pluralism' developed by Lijphart (2012, pp. 158-173). The scores presented in the table above are 'pluralism scores' as defined by Lijphart: "The scores are pluralism scores: high scores reflect a high degree of pluralism, and low scores indicate strong corporatism"¹⁴⁸. The score of Slovenia is indicative, as Slovenia was not part of Lijphart's analysis. The score in the table reflects the output of an interview with Prof. Danica Fink-Hafner (University of Ljubljana, expert on civil society and interest groups in Slovenia, interview 79) who describes Slovenia as a neo-corporatist country 'close to Sweden' (see also for instance: Fink-Hafner et al., 2014).

Table 5.14 Distribution of cases for condition 3 (dichotomised)

<i>ms_corporatism</i>	0	1	TOTAL
Number of cases	42	40	82

Source: author's own elaboration

5.4.4. Condition 4: [cause] Advocating a cause

Table 5.15 Summary table: condition 4

Label	cause
Definition	The NIG is a cause group (see Chapter 2, point 2.1.2, for details)
Data	Author's classification based on the distinction cause/sectional NIG
Dichotomisation	[sectional NIG]=0 ; [cause NIG]=1
Proposition of expected direction	Advocating a cause is a necessary condition that leads to high perceived congruence

The political demands of cause groups concern 'broad issues' and are very high compared to the political opportunities provided by EU policy-makers. Consequently, cause NIGs are expected to perceive EIGs' positions as highly congruent with their own. Not because they are similar, but because they are at least 'a step in the right direction'. This is illustrated by exploratory interviews conducted with Belgian environmental NIGs (Defacqz, 2018). For instance, an interviewee summarises the situation:

¹⁴⁸ NB minimum: Sweden = 0,35; maximum: Canada = 3,25. For more details, see Lijphart (2012, pp. 158-173).

[...] the situation of the environment is so, in my opinion, catastrophic, there is so little political will, which we, how to say, our demands and our expectations are colossal compared to this. [...] We do not discuss details and all options are good to take, I mean. Because we realise that basically, there is no listening, so ... Apart from, a political opportunity each year or two, with the Natura directive and a minister, even if it is a liberal, French, who, finally, not a minister, a French, liberal commissioner who puts this directive in place. Opportunity windows like this, we do not have a lot like that, you know. (Interview 18)¹⁴⁹

On the contrary, sectional groups sometimes gather together economical competitors, which may lead to situation where nobody is satisfied because of the economic and industrial competition. This situation is also noticed within NIGs which makes the alignment between positions difficult to obtain:

When there are workload problems, we know very well that each industrialist will have a natural propensity to work only for himself. Normal. He wants to save his factories, his jobs, his turnover, the value of his action, etc. That's fine and fair. Well. And we, we have this responsibility, which is sometimes a bit difficult and a bit painful somehow, because we feel the tensions between our members, to carry messages with a global character. (Interview 27)¹⁵⁰

This situation passes on to the EU level, between member states (or more precisely between NIGs and companies from different member states). Here, the same interviewee uses the trade agreement with the Chinese market as an illustration of opposition between NIGs:

You know, trade relations with China, huh. The free trade agreements with China, Germans and Frenchs, they are pretty much like that [showing a sign of opposition with his hands]. The Germans, it's been a long time, they are perhaps more talented than us for a number of things, yes. But in any case, they do not want us to bother the Chinese. But we, the Chinese, honestly

¹⁴⁹ Original quote in French: [...] *la situation de l'environnement est tellement, à mon sens, catastrophique, il y a tellement peu de volonté politique, qu'on, qu'on se, comment dire, nos demandes et nos attentes sont colossales par rapport à ce qu'il y a. Donc, on. [...] On ne va pas discuter sur des détails et, et toutes les options sont bonnes à prendre, je veux dire. Parce qu'on se rend bien compte que fondamentalement, il y a aucune écoute sure, donc... En dehors de, une opportunité politique en un an ou deux, avec la directive Natura et un ministre, c'est libéral même, français, qui, enfin ministre non, un commissaire français, libéral, qui met en place cette directive. Des fenêtres d'opportunité comme celle-là, on en retrouve pas des masses, quoi. Maintenant c'est plutôt, clac, clac, clac, clac, quoi. Donc [rire].*

¹⁵⁰ Original quote in French: *Quand il y a des problèmes de charge de travail, on sait très bien que chacun des industriels va avoir une propension naturelle à tirer la couverture à lui. Normal quoi. Il veut sauver ses usines, ses emplois, son chiffre d'affaires, la valeur de son action, etc., c'est parfaitement de bonne guerre. Bon. Et nous, nous avons cette responsabilité qui est parfois un peu lourde et un peu pénible d'ailleurs, parce qu'on sent bien les tensions entre nos membres, de porter des messages à caractère global.*

speaking, the industrialists, they fear them, well. So, what does he say [the EIG]? (Interview 27)¹⁵¹

Given these points, NIGs who are cause will perceive EIGs' positions as congruent with their own while sectional groups will not.

Concerning the dichotomisation, the distinction between cause groups and sectional groups is based on the definition provided by Klüver and Saurugger (2013, p. 5). As a reminder of Chapter 2 (point 2.1.2), sectional groups represent special interests that create concentrated costs and benefits for their supporters (e.g. farmers, small and medium enterprises, industrial corporations ...). Cause groups represent some ideas, belief or principle (diffuse interests). The membership of cause groups is not restricted: *"Anyone in favour of the principle can become a member of this group. Cause groups represent diffuse interests that only imply diffuse costs and benefits for their supporters"* (Klüver & Saurugger, 2013, p. 5).

Table 5.16 Distribution of cases for condition 4 (dichotomised)

<i>cause</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
Number of cases	61	21	82

Source: author's own elaboration

5.4.5. Condition 5: [small_staff] Having a limited staff

Table 5.17 Summary table: condition 5

Label	small_staff
Definition	The NIG have a limited staff
Data	Collected via interviews.
Dichotomisation	[more than 11 staff members]=0 ; [0 to 11 staff members]=1
Proposition of expected direction	Having a limited staff is a necessary condition that leads to high perceived congruence

The assumption at the basis of this condition is that NIGs with a limited number of staff members will have a tendency to focus more on national issues than on EU affairs. Given this lower focus on EU issues, these NIGs will outsource their European representation to EIGs. EIGs will assume political activities that would not otherwise have been managed by NIGs with limited staff. EIGs will thus be considered as holding an advocacy function at the EU level with a high degree of autonomy. This will lead to a high perceived congruence. Moreover,

¹⁵¹ Original quote in French: *Savez les relations commerciales avec la Chine, hein. Les accords de libre-échange avec la Chine, ben, allemands et français, ils sont à peu près comme ça quoi [montrant un signe d'opposition avec ses mains]. Les Allemands, ça fait longtemps, ils sont peut-être plus doués que nous pour un certain nombre de choses, ben oui. Mais en tous cas, ils ne veulent pas qu'on prenne les Chinois de traviolo. Mais nous les Chinois, honnêtement parlant, les industriels, ils ont les chocottes quoi, bon. Alors, il dit quoi [le groupe européen]?*

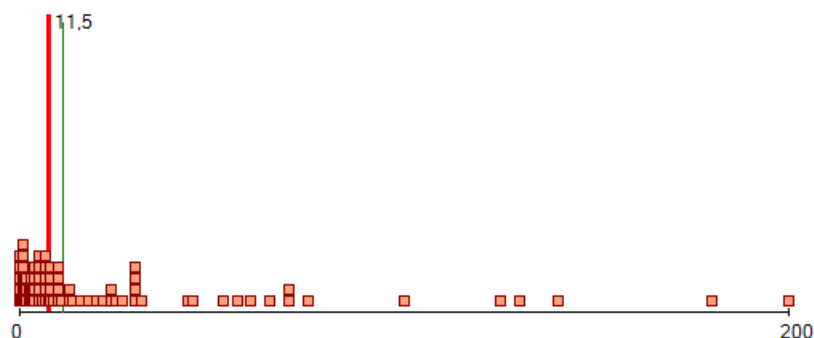
organisations which have few resources have less opportunity to systematically define national positions on each subject on which European groups work on. Due to this absence of ‘systematic position definition’, NIG will be more inclined to perceive their EIGs’ positions as congruent with their own. An interviewee explains clearly this situation:

There are some issues where we are really perfectly aligned, but on other issues, and this became more precise since we formalise our positions, we disagree. But in fact, we could not express the disagreement as long as we had not formalised it. [...] since we started this, since we have almost all positions formalised, we realise that we have disagreements. (Interview 30)¹⁵²

On the contrary, organisations with more staff could easier formalise their position and identify the incongruence between their own and the EIGs’ positions.

The figure 5.2 provides the distribution of cases as regards to the number of staff members NIGs have. The red line (bold) shows the median and the black one (11.5) shows the threshold used to dichotomise the condition. The threshold is particularly difficult to set for this condition. The decision has been taken to set it at 11.5 because it represents a clear ‘leap’ in the data and differentiates clearly two groups as shown in the figure.

Figure 5.2 Number of staff members: distribution of cases



Source: figure retrieved from TOSMANA (version 1.54)

¹⁵² Original quote in French: *C'est-à-dire que, alors il y'a certains points ou on est vraiment parfaitement aligné, mais certains points, et là ça se précise parce que comme maintenant on formalise bien nos prises de position ou on est en désaccord, mais en fait on ne pouvait pas exprimer le désaccord tant que nous on l'avait pas formalisé. [...] quand on commence nous maintenant, puisque on a pratiquement tout formalisé, on se rend compte qu'on a des points de désaccord.*

Table 5.18 Distribution of cases for condition 5 (dichotomised)

<i>small_staff</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
Number of cases	31	51	82

Source: author's own elaboration

5.4.6. Condition 6: [no_direct_mem] Having no direct members

Table 5.19 Summary table: condition 6

Label	no_direct_mem
Definition	The NIG have no direct 'individual' members. Its membership is composed of association of 'direct members'.
Data	Collected via interviews.
Dichotomisation	[more than 11 staff members]=0 ; [0 to 11 staff members]=1
Proposition of expected direction	Having no 'individual units' as direct members is a necessary condition that leads to high perceived congruence

NIGs are classified in four categories. The issue here is who the 'official' members of NIGs are, who the 'first' interlocutor of NIGs are:

- Direct members (DM): the members of the NIG are individuals (private persons, as supporters) or companies
- Mixed membership (MX): the members of the NIG are individuals (private persons, as supporters) or companies as well as associations of individuals or companies (sectoral or territorial organisations).
- Umbrella organisation (UO): the members of the NIG are associations of individuals or companies (sectoral or territorial organisations).
- No members (NM): the NIG has no member. These NIGs are foundations or charities.

The cases are distributed as following:

Table 5.20 Distribution of cases for condition 6 (details about NIGs' membership composition)

<i>Type of membership</i>	<i>DM</i>	<i>MX</i>	<i>UO</i>	<i>NM</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
Number of cases	48	6	23	5	82

Source: author's own elaboration

The assumption founding this condition is that NIGs having no direct contacts with individual members (including private persons or companies) will enjoy more autonomy to align their positions with EIGs' positions. Being less tied to their grassroots memberships' demands, their positions are already inclusive, negotiated and more consensual, which allows a higher congruence with similarly 'inclusive, negotiated and consensual' EIGs' positions. This autonomy is even greater for NIGs having no members. The condition is thus dichotomised as

regards of the presence (DM and MX) or not (UO or NM) of ‘individual units’ amongst the ‘official’ membership.

Table 5.21 Distribution of cases for condition 6 (dichotomised)

<i>no_direct_mem</i>	0	1	<i>TOTAL</i>
Number of cases	54	28	82

Source: author’s own elaboration

5.4.7. Condition 7: [non_eu_sal] EU affairs not salient

Table 5.22 Summary table: condition 7

Label	non_eu_sal
Definition	EU affairs are considered as not salient for the NIG
Data	Collected via interviews: scale question.
Dichotomisation	On the basis of replies to the scale question: [0-7]=0 ; [8-10]=1
Proposition of expected direction	Considering EU issues as not salient is a necessary condition that leads to high perceived congruence

The rationale behind this condition is that interest groups that consider EU issues as not salient perceive their EIGs positions as aligned with their own because they are not interested in the details of these positions. These NIGs will have a propensity to ‘blindly’ follow the positions of their European counterparts. If those NIGs would be not aligned with EIGs’ positions, an easy solution would be the exit option and leave the EIG.

On the opposite, NIGs for which EU issues are salient, will have a closer look at EIGs’ positions and highlight some divergences. Usually, EU affairs are perceived as salient because European legislation has an important impact on their member activities or the cause they advocate. Consequently, these NIGs will have to justify their position, the position of their European group and the potential effectiveness of their actions towards institutions, to their members or supporters. This situation will lead to perceive the positions of their EIGs as not congruent with their own.

As regards to the dichotomisation, the measurement of saliency of EU issues is based on the answers of interviewee at the following question (see also the figure 5.3):

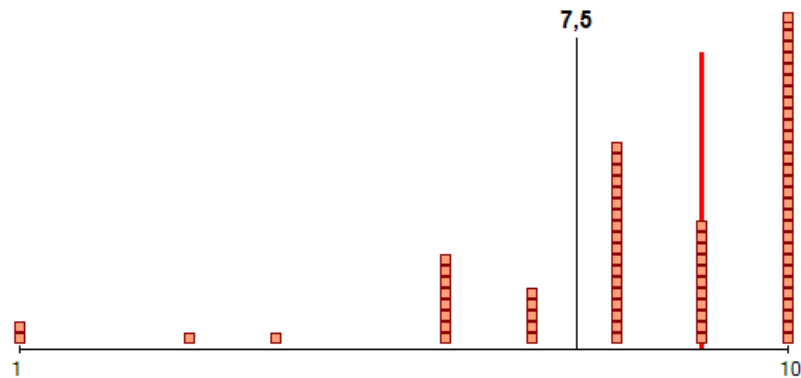
Table 5.23 Scale question about saliency of EU affairs in NIGs’ perspective

1. How important is being present at the EU-level to achieve your organizational goals?									
Not important 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Very important 10

Source: author’s own elaboration (interview grid, see Chapter 3, point 3.4.1)

On the figure hereafter, the red line (bold) shows the median (9) and the black line (7.5) shows the threshold used to dichotomise the condition.

Figure 5.3 Replies to the ‘EU saliency’ scale question: distribution of cases



<i>Saliency of EU issues</i>	1	3	4	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL
Number of cases	2	1	1	8	5	18	11	36	82

Source: figure retrieved from TOSMANA (version 1.54)

On the basis of replies to the scale question, the dichotomisation is thus processed as follows: [8-10]=0 ; [0-7]=1 (for the calculation in TOSMANA, the answers to the scale question have been reversed to get ‘non_eu_sal’). The distribution of cases is provided by the following table.

Table 5.24 Distribution of cases for condition 7 (dichotomised)

<i>non_eu_sal</i>	0	1	TOTAL
Number of cases	65	17	82

Source: author’s own elaboration

5.4.8. Condition 8: [non_eu_lob] No direct lobbying of EU institutions

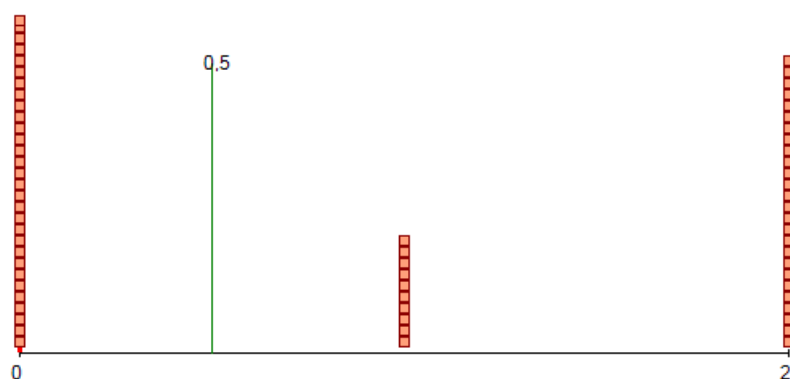
Table 5.25 Summary table: condition 8

Label	non_eu_lob
Definition	The NIG does not lobby directly the EU institutions.
Data	Collected via interviews.
Dichotomisation	[0:lobby the EU]=0 ; [1:lobby about EU issues but only through national actors: national MEPs or national government + 2:no lobby about EU issues at all]=1
Proposition of expected direction	Not lobbying directly EU institutions is a necessary condition that leads to high perceived congruence

The rationale behind this condition is that interest groups that do not lobby directly EU institutions count primarily on their EIG to do so. Consequently, they will consider the alignment between their own positions and their EIGs’ positions as important. They will be

more involved within the EIGs and success in align both positions. On the opposite, EIGs lobbying directly EU institutions are free to dissociate themselves from a EIGs positions with which they do not agree. Incongruence with EIGs' positions becomes thus a less important issue.

Figure 5.4 Condition 8 [*non_eu_lob*]: distribution of cases



<i>Non EU lobbying activities</i>	0	1	2	<i>TOTAL</i>
Number of cases	46	10	26	82

Source: figure retrieved from TOSMANA (version 1.54)

The figure 5.4 provides the distribution of cases as regards to the EU lobbying activities of NIGs. “0” means that NIGs lobby directly EU institutions (in the tables 6.3 and 6.4 in the following section, labelled as “Direct EU”). “1” means that NIGs do lobbying activities about EU issues, but only toward national actors, namely its governments or via their own national MEPs (in the tables 6.3 and 6.4, labelled as “National~EU”). “2” means that EIGs do not lobby any decision makers about EU issues (in the tables 6.3 and 6.4, labelled as “No EU”). The black line (0.5) shows the threshold used to dichotomise the condition.

Table 5.26 Distribution of cases for condition 8 (dichotomised)

<i>non_eu_lob</i>	0	1	<i>TOTAL</i>
Number of cases	46	36	82

Source: author's own elaboration

5.4.9. Condition 9: [no_oth_eig] No membership to other EIG

Table 5.27 Summary table: condition 9

Label	no_oth_eig
Definition	The NIG does not adhere to any other EIG
Data	Collected via interviews.
Dichotomisation	[member of at least one other EIG]=0 ; [not member of any other EIG]=1
Proposition of expected direction	Being member of only one EIG is a necessary condition that leads to high perceived congruence

Interest groups that are member of a single EIG have only one way to participate to a ‘collective voice’ at the EU level. As the previous Chapter showed, NIGs value the collective lobbying actions through EIGs at the EU level. Indeed, EIGs are considered as legitimate because they represent broad constituencies (in terms of territorial coverage or more importantly because they gather together many NIGs) which is considered as relevant by NIGs in order to lobby EU institutions. Consequently, a NIG which is member of a single European umbrella will consider the alignment between its own positions and its EIG’s positions as crucial. In default of other European arenas to be active in, this EIG will be more involved within its umbrella. On the opposite, NIGs member of several EIGs may disperse their efforts between different EIGs but may also take advantage of different opportunity structures offered by each European group. Incongruence with an EIG’s position becomes thus a less important issue which can be compensated in another arena.

Table 5.28 Distribution of cases for condition 9 (details about NIGs’ adhesion to EIGs)

<i>Number of membership to EIG</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
Number of cases	54	13	11	3	1	82

Source: author’s own elaboration

Table 5.29 Distribution of cases for condition 9 (dichotomised)

<i>no_oth_eig</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
Number of cases	28	54	82

Source: author’s own elaboration

5.4.10. Condition 10: [freq_contact] Having frequent contact with the EIG

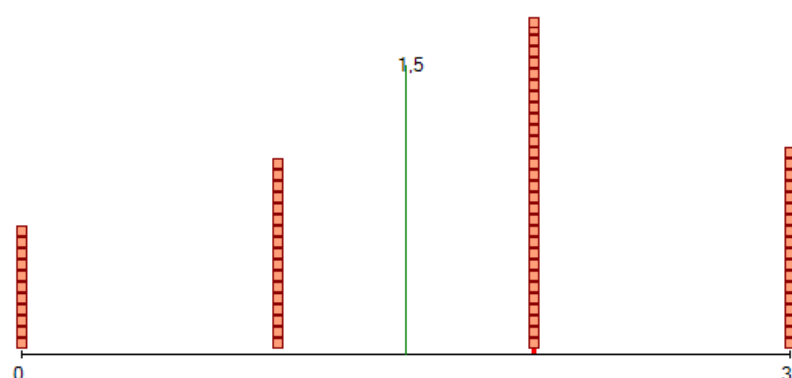
Table 5.30 Summary table: condition 10

Label	freq_contact
Definition	The NIG has frequent contact with the EIG.
Data	Collected via interviews.
Dichotomisation	[Less than monthly or monthly]=0 ; [weekly or daily]=1
Proposition of expected direction	Having frequent contact with the EIG is a necessary condition that leads to high perceived congruence

NIGs that have frequent contact with their EIGs — on a daily or weekly basis — are expected to perceive their EIGs' and their own position as congruent, and this for two reasons (which have not the same conceptual roots but go in the same direction). First, following the socialisation literature (Checkel, 2007; Fligstein, 2008), exposure and interactions between actors is expected to induce a socialisation process: *“The overall effect of these interactions is to change the identity of organizations and individuals. People who travel and work across borders do not have just national identities, but come to see themselves as Europeans”* (Fligstein, 2008, p. 2). NIGs that have frequent contact with EIGs are consequently more inclined to align themselves with their European counterparts. Contact with Europe (through EIGs) will lead to the emergence of a supranational or more precisely ‘European roles’ for NIGs. The density of contact will increase the perceived congruence of positions: *“Information from sources that are “liked” is more convincing than that from sources that are disliked. Liking will increase with more exposure, contact, and familiarity”* (Johnston, 2001, p. 497). Second, the frequency of contact may also induce more opportunities for a NIG to influence its EIG's position. This point is also highlighted by interviewees explaining that having an office in Brussels for instance, makes you much more influential towards your EIG (which leads to a higher perceived congruence).

The data were collected via interviews (question stated as: “How many contacts do you have with the European organization? [Daily? Weekly? Monthly? Less?]”). During the interviews, the interviewer highlighted the fact that the number of contacts includes the ‘exchange of information’ and not only the reception of information (since the vast majority of EIGs send newsletters or e-mails on a daily basis). On that basis, NIGs are classified in four groups, as showed by the figure 5.5.

Figure 5.5 Frequency of contacts between the NIG and the EIG: distribution of cases



Frequency of contacts	0= less than monthly	1= monthly	2= weekly	3= daily	TOTAL
Number of cases	11	17	36	18	82

Source: figure retrieved from TOSMANA (version 1.54)

The condition is dichotomised between group that have a frequent contact with their EIGs and those who have not. Frequent contact include contact on a daily or weekly basis, which means that the interaction with the EIG is *continuous* and does not happen only for punctual events or issues. Daily or weekly contacts indicate a European dimension of day-to-day activities of NIGs and an important involvement of NIGs in EIGs activities.

Table 5.31 Distribution of cases for condition 10 (dichotomised)

freq_contact	0	1	TOTAL
Number of cases	28	54	82

Source: author's own elaboration

5.4.11. Condition 11: [few_mem_eig] The EIG having few members

Table 5.32 Summary table: condition 11

Label	few_mem_eig
Definition	The EIG has few members.
Data	Collected on website of EIGs
Dichotomisation	[more than 40 organisations composing EIG's membership]=0 ; [40 or less organisations composing EIG's membership]=1
Proposition of expected direction	The EIG having few members is a necessary condition that leads to high perceived congruence.

This condition, related to the number of members of EIGs, concerns a 'classic' collective action issue. The rationale is that the positions of an EIG with a limited number of members will be perceived as more congruent by these members because positions are less 'diluted' (because fewer members lowers the chance to have divergent positions). The assumption is that the more

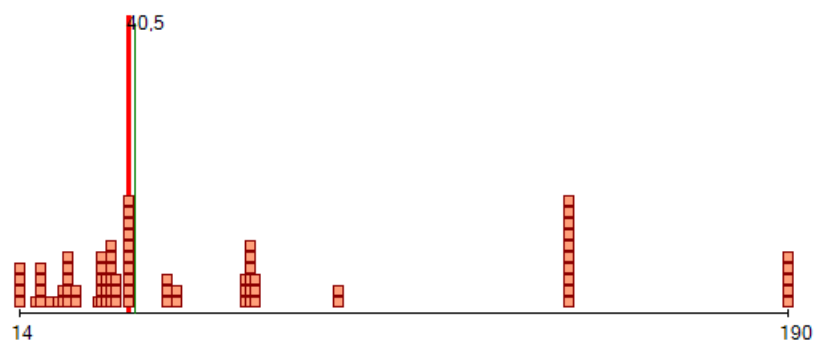
EIG' members are numerous, the more oppositions may appear. For instance, at the level of EIGs, if there are more than one member per member states, it may happen that these NIGs are competitors in their own countries and may transfer their 'domestic opposition' at the level of the EIG. This situation was observed for instance in an EIG where three French NIGs under scrutiny are member. Oppositions exist between these groups, notably because they try to attract the same (type of) members: "[...] *because our friends [from others French sectional groups] did not look favourably upon the arrival of a third actor. Which is normal, huh ... When you have a cake, it is divided in two. Suddenly, there is a third who comes in. Abnegation is not part of this world*" (interview 24)¹⁵³. And these oppositions at the domestic level are 'uploaded' at the European level. The previous example is an illustration about potential oppositions between groups from the same country; but oppositions may also appear between NIGs representing similar or competing industrial sectors ...

These situations are also observed amongst cause groups trying to attract the same supporters. It can also concern cause groups trying to put the focus, at the EIG level, on the issue they're working on to the detriment of other issues tackled by other cause groups within the same EIG. Previous research have also highlighted the problematic situation of large EIGs (here in the humanitarian sector): "*When a peak association is very large, individual members have very little opportunity to make their voices heard. Since it is not very likely that their voices will have impact, CSOs tend to not spend their time and resources taking positions on European topics, which as general rule are complex and technical [...]. They [(member groups)] often complain of EU based peak associations' lack of responsiveness and they tend not to be satisfied with their performance*" (Sanchez Salgado, 2014a, pp. 185-186). Given these points, being member of an EIG with few members is identified as a necessary condition that leads to high perceived congruence in the perspective of NIGs.

¹⁵³ Original quote in French: *parce que nos amis [from the others French sectional groups] ils n'ont pas vu d'un bon œil l'arrivée du troisième larron. Ce qui est normal, hein... Quand vous avez un gâteau, il est partagé en deux. Subitement, il y a un troisième qui se présente. L'abnégation n'est pas de ce monde.*

The figure 5.6 shows the distribution of cases as regards to the number of members composing EIGs' membership. The red line (in bold = 39) shows the median and the black one (40.5) shows the threshold used to dichotomise the condition. The decision has been taken to set it at 40.5 because it represents two particular groups of EIGs. EIGs with 40 members or less have usually one member per member states. One may ask why thus not choose 28? In some EIGs there is an exception to the formal or informal rule “one state, one NIG” for some member states. In these (federal) member states (as Belgium), there are two (or more) NIGs which are not competing on the same territory because they are active in two different sub-state levels. Moreover, many EIGs count also amongst their membership NIGs from candidate states for future membership to the EU or member states of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Consequently, the threshold ‘more than 40’ separate very large EIGs from the others.

Figure 5.6 Number of member organisations of EIGs: distribution of cases



Source: figure retrieved from TOSMANA (version 1.54)

Table 5.33 Distribution of cases for condition 11 (dichotomised)

<i>few_mem_eig</i>	0	1	TOTAL
Number of cases	34	48	82

Source: author's own elaboration

5.5. Descriptive analysis

The tables 5.34 and 5.35 in the next pages provide an overview of the cases under scrutiny and for each, the related information about conditions and outcome. These tables offer a “bird’s eye view” on the data. The first table 5.34 provides the ‘raw data’ — on which the dichotomisations are based — as described in the previous pages. The second table 5.35 provides an overview of the dichotomised conditions and outcome. In both tables, the coloured cells represent ‘scores’ 1, which mean ‘presence’ (as regards to conditions and dichotomisations presented in the previous section)

The first column presents the id (number) attributed to each case. The last column presents the outcome (see details above). In between, the other columns provides the ‘score’ of cases for each condition (the numbers above columns are the numbers attributed to conditions, as ordered in the previous section). It is important to know that the tables show the cases ordered as regards the outcome (the higher the perceived congruence, the higher the position in the table). In appendixes, the same table ordered by cases id is presented (see appendixes, table a.5.1).

In the pages following the tables, the conditions are presented one by one. Each condition is presented with two tables (one for the outcome 1 and one for the outcome 0). Brief observations or notes accompany these tables. The purpose of these brief presentations is not to quantify the coverage of condition on the outcome but to identify whether or not there is a strong necessity relationship between each condition and the outcome. Each condition is not unpacked at this stage of the analysis but succinct observations are provided when relevant.

Table 5.34 Cases, conditions and outcome for QCA: raw data (ordered by outcome)

#condition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	OUTCOME
Related condition	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverage]	[ms_corporatism]	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	[per_congruence]
Cases id ↓	Adhesion year	Number of votes in the Council	Index of interest group pluralism	Nature of interest	Staff members	Type of membership	Saliency of EU issues	EU lobbying	Other EIG	Contact EIG	EIG's member	
4	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	2	MX	8	No EU	0	Less	66	10
19	2004	3	3	Cause	0	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Daily	190	10
25	2004	3	3	Sectional	7	UO	10	Direct EU	2	Monthly	33	10
37	1957	29	2,9	Cause	4	DM	10	No EU	2	Daily	140	10
42	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	14	DM	10	No EU	0	Monthly	39	10
47	2004	4	~0,5	Cause	4	NM	1	No EU	0	Less	140	10
61	1995	10	0,35	Cause	2	UO	4	No EU	1	Monthly	140	10
73	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	1,5	UO	8	Direct EU	1	Less	68	10
5	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	7	UO	9	National~EU	0	Weekly	19	9
11	1957	29	2,9	Cause	10	MX	7	No EU	1	Weekly	140	9
21	2004	3	3	Cause	32	DM	10	No EU	0	Monthly	48	9
33	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	24	DM	9	No EU	0	Daily	27	9
36	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	2,5	MX	10	No EU	0	Weekly	18	9
39	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	4	UO	8	No EU	0	Weekly	14	9
40	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	0	UO	7	No EU	1	Less	25	9
44	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	7	UO	6	Direct EU	0	Weekly	36	9
46	2004	4	~0,5	Cause	7	DM	9	Direct EU	2	Weekly	35	9
49	2004	4	~0,5	Cause	0	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Monthly	140	9
51	2004	4	~0,5	Cause	22	DM	6	Direct EU	0	Weekly	48	9
54	2004	4	~0,5	Cause	5	NM	8	Direct EU	2	Weekly	190	9
55	2004	4	~0,5	Cause	5	NM	8	Direct EU	2	Weekly	140	9
58	1995	10	0,35	Cause	3,5	UO	10	Direct EU	2	Weekly	140	9
62	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	60	DM	10	Direct EU	1	Weekly	33	9
65	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	0	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Monthly	68	9
72	1995	10	0,35	Cause	10	DM	6	No EU	0	Weekly	48	9
81	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	200	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Daily	39	9
3	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	7,5	DM	8	Direct EU	0	Weekly	87	8
18	2004	3	3	Sectional	3	DM	10	Direct EU	3	Weekly	67	8
22	2004	3	3	Cause	2,5	DM	8	National~EU	0	Weekly	35	8
24	2004	3	3	Sectional	7	UO	10	Direct EU	2	Weekly	39	8
26	2004	3	3	Cause	1	DM	10	No EU	0	Weekly	140	8
27	2004	3	3	Sectional	1,5	DM	9	National~EU	1	Weekly	36	8
32	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	24	UO	10	Direct EU	0	Weekly	33	8
43	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	1	DM	8	Direct EU	0	Monthly	27	8
53	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	57	DM	8	National~EU	0	Monthly	39	8
66	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	6	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Daily	32	8
67	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	125	DM	8	Direct EU	0	Daily	67	8
71	1995	10	0,35	Cause	8	DM	7	Direct EU	0	Weekly	35	8
76	1995	10	0,35	Cause	140	DM	10	National~EU	3	Daily	140	8
78	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	30	DM	8	No EU	1	Weekly	33	8
83	1957	29	2,9	Cause	27	NM	8	No EU	0	Monthly	50	8

#condition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	OUTCOME
Related condition	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverage]	[ms_corporatism]	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	[per_congruence]
Cases id ↓	Adhesion	Votes Council	Index of interest group pluralism	Nature of interest	Staff members	Type membership	Saliency of EU issues	EU lobbying	Other EIG	Contact EIG	EIG's member	
2	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	180	UO	10	Direct EU	0	Daily	39	7
7	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	30	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Weekly	25	7
8	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	2	DM	9	No EU	0	Monthly	66	7
9	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	11	MX	6	No EU	1	Monthly	66	7
12	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	5	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Daily	24	7
13	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	4	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Weekly	14	7
14	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	70	UO	10	Direct EU	2	Weekly	68	7
15	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	70	UO	10	Direct EU	2	Daily	67	7
16	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	30	UO	10	Direct EU	0	Daily	39	7
20	2004	3	3	Sectional	8	DM	10	Direct EU	1	Weekly	39	7
23	2004	3	3	Sectional	1	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Less	25	7
34	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	10	DM	10	Direct EU	1	Daily	50	7
35	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	10	DM	10	Direct EU	1	Monthly	67	7
41	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	5	DM	9	No EU	0	Less	33	7
45	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	3	DM	7	No EU	0	Monthly	34	7
50	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	13	DM	8	Direct EU	0	Monthly	67	7
57	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	45	DM	9	Direct EU	0	Weekly	14	7
59	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	9	DM	9	National~EU	0	Weekly	21	7
63	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	65	DM	10	Direct EU	1	Daily	34	7
69	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	75	MX	9	Direct EU	0	Daily	39	7
70	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	1	DM	8	No EU	0	Monthly	87	7
74	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	5	UO	10	Direct EU	2	Daily	19	7
75	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	3,5	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Weekly	190	7
79	1995	10	0,35	Cause	100	NM	10	National~EU	0	Daily	23	7
80	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	130	UO	8	Direct EU	0	Weekly	39	7
82	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	1	DM	10	National~EU	0	Weekly	19	7
84	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	1,5	UO	10	No EU	0	Weekly	25	7
6	1957	29	2,9	Cause	44	UO	8	Direct EU	4	Daily	140	6
17	2004	3	3	Sectional	3	DM	10	Direct EU	3	Less	14	6
28	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	18	DM	8	Direct EU	0	Daily	34	6
60	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	30	MX	7	Direct EU	1	Weekly	190	6
68	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	0,5	DM	8	No EU	0	Monthly	25	6
10	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	25	UO	9	Direct EU	0	Weekly	36	5
29	1957	29	2,9	Cause	8	UO	6	National~EU	0	Weekly	35	5
38	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	13	UO	9	Direct EU	0	Weekly	190	5
48	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	1	DM	6	No EU	0	Less	35	5
56	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	0	DM	6	No EU	0	Less	19	5
64	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	8	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Monthly	24	5
52	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	53	DM	3	National~EU	2	Weekly	67	4
1	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	16	UO	6	No EU	0	Less	39	3
31	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	20	UO	1	No EU	0	Less	35	3

Table 5.35 Cases, conditions and outcome for QCA: conditions and outcome dichotomised

#condition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	OUTCOME
Condition →	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverage]	[ms_corporatism]	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	[per_congruence]
Cases id ↓												
4	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
19	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
25	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
37	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
42	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
47	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
61	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
73	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
5	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
11	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1
21	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
33	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
36	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
39	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
40	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1
44	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
46	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
49	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
51	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
54	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
55	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
58	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
62	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
65	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
72	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1
81	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
3	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
18	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
22	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
24	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
26	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1
27	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1
32	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1
43	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
53	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
66	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
67	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
71	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1
76	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
78	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1
83	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1

#condition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	OUTCOME
Related condition	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverage]	[ms_corporatism]	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	[per_congruence]
cases	Adhesion	Votes Council	Index of interest group pluralism	Nature of interest	Staff members	Type membership	Saliency of EU issues	EU lobbying	Other EIG	Contact EIG	EIG's member	
2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1
7	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
8	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
9	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
12	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
13	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
14	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
15	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
16	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1
20	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
23	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
34	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
35	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
41	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
45	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1
50	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
57	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
59	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
63	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
69	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
70	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
74	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
75	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
79	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
80	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1
82	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
84	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
6	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
17	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
28	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
60	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
68	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0
10	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0
29	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
38	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
48	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0
56	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0
64	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
52	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0
1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0
31	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0

5.5.1. Condition 1: [ms_old] Being from a “old” member state

Tables 5.36 and 5.37 Overview of condition 1: cases with outcome 1(left) and cases with outcome 0 (right) – Cases are ordered by outcome

cases	[ms_old]	Outcome 1	cases	[ms_old]	Outcome 0
4	1957	10	28	1957	6
37	1957	10	6	1957	6
73	1995	10	68	1995	6
61	1995	10	60	1995	6
25	2004	10	17	2004	6
42	2004	10	29	1957	5
47	2004	10	10	1957	5
19	2004	10	38	1957	5
36	1957	9	64	1995	5
5	1957	9	56	2004	5
33	1957	9	48	2004	5
11	1957	9	52	2004	4
62	1995	9	31	1957	3
81	1995	9	1	1957	3
72	1995	9			
65	1995	9			
58	1995	9			
39	2004	9			
40	2004	9			
46	2004	9			
44	2004	9			
21	2004	9			
51	2004	9			
49	2004	9			
55	2004	9			
54	2004	9			
32	1957	8			
78	1957	8			
83	1957	8			
3	1957	8			
66	1995	8			
71	1995	8			
67	1995	8			
76	1995	8			
43	2004	8			
22	2004	8			
27	2004	8			
24	2004	8			
53	2004	8			
18	2004	8			
26	2004	8			
13	1957	7			
82	1957	7			
12	1957	7			
7	1957	7			
84	1957	7			
2	1957	7			
16	1957	7			
80	1957	7			
34	1957	7			
8	1957	7			
9	1957	7			
15	1957	7			
35	1957	7			
14	1957	7			
57	1995	7			
74	1995	7			
59	1995	7			
79	1995	7			
63	1995	7			
69	1995	7			
70	1995	7			
75	1995	7			
23	2004	7			
41	2004	7			
45	2004	7			
20	2004	7			
50	2004	7			

Observing both tables, one sees that there is no strong necessity relationship between this condition and the outcome. At first glance, the fact that a NIG is based in a state which is member of the EU for a couple of decades is not a necessary condition for this NIG to perceive its EIG’s positions as congruent with its own.

5.5.2. Condition 2: [ms_eu_leverage] Being from a member state which has an important institutional leverage at the EU level

Tables 5.38 and 5.39 Overview of condition 2: cases with outcome 1(left) and cases with outcome 0 (right) – Cases are ordered by outcome

cases	[ms_eu_leverage]	Outcome 1
4	29	10
37	29	10
73	10	10
61	10	10
25	3	10
42	4	10
47	4	10
19	3	10
36	29	9
5	29	9
33	29	9
11	29	9
62	10	9
81	10	9
72	10	9
65	10	9
58	10	9
39	4	9
40	4	9
46	4	9
44	4	9
21	3	9
51	4	9
49	4	9
55	4	9
54	4	9
32	29	8
78	29	8
83	29	8
3	29	8
66	10	8
71	10	8
67	10	8
76	10	8
43	4	8
22	3	8
27	3	8
24	3	8
53	4	8
18	3	8
26	3	8
13	29	7
82	29	7
12	29	7
7	29	7
84	29	7
2	29	7
16	29	7
80	29	7
34	29	7
8	29	7
9	29	7
15	29	7
35	29	7
14	29	7
57	10	7
74	10	7
59	10	7
79	10	7
63	10	7
69	10	7
70	10	7
75	10	7
23	3	7
41	4	7
45	4	7
20	3	7
50	4	7

cases	[ms_eu_leverage]	Outcome 0
28	29	6
6	29	6
68	10	6
60	10	6
17	3	6
29	29	5
10	29	5
38	29	5
64	10	5
56	4	5
48	4	5
52	4	4
31	29	3
1	29	3

There is no strong necessity relationship between the condition *ms_eu_leverage* and the outcome as shown in both tables. For instance, there are 7 organisations from France — a member state with an undeniable institutional leverage at the EU level — amongst the 14 NIGs perceiving their positions as not congruent with their EIGs' positions.

5.5.3. Condition 3: [ms_corporatism] Being from a corporatist member state

Tables 5.40 and 5.41 Overview of condition 3: cases with outcome 1(left) and cases with outcome 0 (right) – Cases are ordered by outcome

cases	[ms_corporatism]	Outcome 1	cases	[ms_corporatism]	Outcome 0
4	2,9	10	28	2,9	6
37	2,9	10	6	2,9	6
73	0,35	10	68	0,35	6
61	0,35	10	60	0,35	6
25	3	10	17	3	6
42	~0,5	10	29	2,9	5
47	~0,5	10	10	2,9	5
19	3	10	38	2,9	5
36	2,9	9	64	0,35	5
5	2,9	9	56	~0,5	5
33	2,9	9	48	~0,5	5
11	2,9	9	52	~0,5	4
62	0,35	9	31	2,9	3
81	0,35	9	1	2,9	3
72	0,35	9			
65	0,35	9			
58	0,35	9			
39	~0,5	9			
40	~0,5	9			
46	~0,5	9			
44	~0,5	9			
21	3	9			
51	~0,5	9			
49	~0,5	9			
55	~0,5	9			
54	~0,5	9			
32	2,9	8			
78	2,9	8			
83	2,9	8			
3	2,9	8			
66	0,35	8			
71	0,35	8			
67	0,35	8			
76	0,35	8			
43	~0,5	8			
22	3	8			
27	3	8			
24	3	8			
53	~0,5	8			
18	3	8			
26	3	8			
13	2,9	7			
82	2,9	7			
12	2,9	7			
7	2,9	7			
84	2,9	7			
2	2,9	7			
16	2,9	7			
80	2,9	7			
34	2,9	7			
8	2,9	7			
9	2,9	7			
15	2,9	7			
35	2,9	7			
14	2,9	7			
57	0,35	7			
74	0,35	7			
59	0,35	7			
79	0,35	7			
63	0,35	7			
69	0,35	7			
70	0,35	7			
75	0,35	7			
23	3	7			
41	~0,5	7			
45	~0,5	7			
20	3	7			
50	~0,5	7			

The tables 5.40 and 5.41 show no strong necessity relationship between this condition and the outcome. A corporatist domestic system of interest intermediation does not constitute a necessary condition for NIGs to perceive their EIGs' positions as congruent with their own.

5.5.4. Condition 4: [cause] Advocating a cause

Tables 5.42 and 5.43 Overview of condition 4: cases with outcome 1(left) and cases with outcome 0 (right) – Cases are ordered by outcome

cases	[cause]	Outcome 1	cases	[cause]	Outcome 0
4	Sectional	10	28	Sectional	6
37	Cause	10	6	Cause	6
73	Sectional	10	68	Sectional	6
61	Cause	10	60	Sectional	6
25	Sectional	10	17	Sectional	6
42	Sectional	10	29	Cause	5
47	Cause	10	10	Sectional	5
19	Cause	10	38	Sectional	5
36	Sectional	9	64	Sectional	5
5	Sectional	9	56	Sectional	5
33	Sectional	9	48	Sectional	5
11	Cause	9	52	Sectional	4
62	Sectional	9	31	Sectional	3
81	Sectional	9	1	Sectional	3
72	Cause	9			
65	Sectional	9			
58	Cause	9			
39	Sectional	9			
40	Sectional	9			
46	Cause	9			
44	Sectional	9			
21	Cause	9			
51	Cause	9			
49	Cause	9			
55	Cause	9			
54	Cause	9			
32	Sectional	8			
78	Sectional	8			
83	Cause	8			
3	Sectional	8			
66	Sectional	8			
71	Cause	8			
67	Sectional	8			
76	Cause	8			
43	Sectional	8			
22	Cause	8			
27	Sectional	8			
24	Sectional	8			
53	Sectional	8			
18	Sectional	8			
26	Cause	8			
13	Sectional	7			
82	Sectional	7			
12	Sectional	7			
7	Sectional	7			
84	Sectional	7			
2	Sectional	7			
16	Sectional	7			
80	Sectional	7			
34	Sectional	7			
8	Sectional	7			
9	Sectional	7			
15	Sectional	7			
35	Sectional	7			
14	Sectional	7			
57	Sectional	7			
74	Sectional	7			
59	Sectional	7			
79	Cause	7			
63	Sectional	7			
69	Sectional	7			
70	Sectional	7			
75	Sectional	7			
23	Sectional	7			
41	Sectional	7			
45	Sectional	7			
20	Sectional	7			
50	Sectional	7			

While these tables offer still a complex distribution of data, an interesting observation can be made. The tables suggest that cause groups seems to perceive their positions as more congruent with their EIGs than sectional group (even if this condition is not necessary as such). This result is in line with the expected effect of nature of interest on the perceived congruence explained above. However, it goes against previous research highlighting the “*lack of consensus within the CSO community*” (Sanchez Salgado, 2014a, p. 185). According to these studies, whenever cause EIGs take positions that privilege particular member organisations agendas or ideologies, problems arise amongst the membership (Cullen, 2010). This discrepancy may be explain by the issue at stake. While these previous research analysed humanitarian (Sanchez Salgado, 2014a) or social CSOs (Cullen, 2005, 2009, 2010), cause NIGs under scrutiny here tackle environmental issues. This policy field is less ideologically controversial (compared to social issues, see Cullen, 2010), and is the object of less contestations between NIGs (at least when it comes to speak to EU institutions). This is also explained by the ‘Eurocratisation’ of environmental policies for which technical expertise are much more valuable than ‘political’ debate (Hallstrom, 2004).

5.5.5. Condition 5: [small_staff] Having a limited staff

Tables 5.44 and 5.45 Overview of condition 5: cases with outcome 1(left) and cases with outcome 0 (right) – Cases are ordered by outcome

cases	[small_staff]	Outcome 1	cases	[small_staff]	Outcome 0
4	2	10	28	18	6
37	4	10	6	44	6
73	1,5	10	68	0,5	6
61	2	10	60	30	6
25	7	10	17	3	6
42	14	10	29	8	5
47	4	10	10	25	5
19	0	10	38	13	5
36	2,5	9	64	8	5
5	7	9	56	0	5
33	24	9	48	1	5
11	10	9	52	53	4
62	60	9	31	20	3
81	200	9	1	16	3
72	10	9			
65	0	9			
58	3,5	9			
39	4	9			
40	0	9			
46	7	9			
44	7	9			
21	32	9			
51	22	9			
49	0	9			
55	5	9			
54	5	9			
32	24	8			
78	30	8			
83	27	8			
3	7,5	8			
66	6	8			
71	8	8			
67	125	8			
76	140	8			
43	1	8			
22	2,5	8			
27	1,5	8			
24	7	8			
53	57	8			
18	3	8			
26	1	8			
13	4	7			
82	1	7			
12	5	7			
7	30	7			
84	1,5	7			
2	180	7			
16	30	7			
80	130	7			
34	10	7			
8	2	7			
9	11	7			
15	70	7			
35	10	7			
14	70	7			
57	45	7			
74	5	7			
59	9	7			
79	100	7			
63	65	7			
69	75	7			
70	1	7			
75	3,5	7			
23	1	7			
41	5	7			
45	3	7			
20	8	7			
50	13	7			

There are well resourced NIGs, in terms of staff, in both tables. No strong necessity relationship appears between this condition and the outcome.

5.5.6. Condition 6: [no_direct_mem] Having no direct members

Tables 5.46 and 5.47 Overview of condition 6: cases with outcome 1(left) and cases with outcome 0 (right) – Cases are ordered by outcome

cases	[no_direct_mem]	Outcome 1	cases	[no_direct_mem]	Outcome 0
4	MX	10	28	DM	6
37	DM	10	6	UO	6
73	UO	10	68	DM	6
61	UO	10	60	MX	6
25	UO	10	17	DM	6
42	DM	10	29	UO	5
47	NM	10	10	UO	5
19	DM	10	38	UO	5
36	MX	9	64	DM	5
5	UO	9	56	DM	5
33	DM	9	48	DM	5
11	MX	9	52	DM	4
62	DM	9	31	UO	3
81	DM	9	1	UO	3
72	DM	9			
65	DM	9			
58	UO	9			
39	UO	9			
40	UO	9			
46	DM	9			
44	UO	9			
21	DM	9			
51	DM	9			
49	DM	9			
55	NM	9			
54	NM	9			
32	UO	8			
78	DM	8			
83	NM	8			
3	DM	8			
66	DM	8			
71	DM	8			
67	DM	8			
76	DM	8			
43	DM	8			
22	DM	8			
27	DM	8			
24	UO	8			
53	DM	8			
18	DM	8			
26	DM	8			
13	DM	7			
82	DM	7			
12	DM	7			
7	DM	7			
84	UO	7			
2	UO	7			
16	UO	7			
80	UO	7			
34	DM	7			
8	DM	7			
9	MX	7			
15	UO	7			
35	DM	7			
14	UO	7			
57	DM	7			
74	UO	7			
59	DM	7			
79	NM	7			
63	DM	7			
69	MX	7			
70	DM	7			
75	DM	7			
23	DM	7			
41	DM	7			
45	DM	7			
20	DM	7			
50	DM	7			

After the scrutiny of the tables 5.46 and 5.47, no strong necessity relationships between the condition and the outcome can be pointed out. All NIGs perceiving their positions as congruent with their EIGs' positions do not have all no direct contacts with individual members (private persons or companies).

5.5.7. Condition 7: [non_eu_sal] EU issues not salient

Tables 5.48 and 5.49 Overview of condition 7: cases with outcome 1(left) and cases with outcome 0 (right) – Cases are ordered by outcome

cases	[non_eu_sal]	Outcome 1
4	8	10
37	10	10
73	8	10
61	4	10
25	10	10
42	10	10
47	1	10
19	10	10
36	10	9
5	9	9
33	9	9
11	7	9
62	10	9
81	10	9
72	6	9
65	10	9
58	10	9
39	8	9
40	7	9
46	9	9
44	6	9
21	10	9
51	6	9
49	10	9
55	8	9
54	8	9
32	10	8
78	8	8
83	8	8
3	8	8
66	10	8
71	7	8
67	8	8
76	10	8
43	8	8
22	8	8
27	9	8
24	10	8
53	8	8
18	10	8
26	10	8
13	10	7
82	10	7
12	10	7
7	10	7
84	10	7
2	10	7
16	10	7
80	8	7
34	10	7
8	9	7
9	6	7
15	10	7
35	10	7
14	10	7
57	9	7
74	10	7
59	9	7
79	10	7
63	10	7
69	9	7
70	8	7
75	10	7
23	10	7
41	9	7
45	7	7
20	10	7
50	8	7

cases	[non_eu_sal]	Outcome 0
28	8	6
6	8	6
68	8	6
60	7	6
17	10	6
29	6	5
10	9	5
38	9	5
64	10	5
56	6	5
48	6	5
52	3	4
31	1	3
1	6	3

The tables suggest that there is no strong necessity relationship between the condition *non_eu_sal* and the outcome. It seems, on the contrary, that the non-saliency of EU issues has to some extent the opposite effect to the one expected. NIGs perceiving their EIGs' positions as not congruent with their own (outcome = 3 or 4 and some 5), identify EU issues as not salient for achieving their organisational goals (table 5.49). The information retrieved from interviews with the extreme cases illustrate a sort of 'vicious circle'. The NIGs is less interested by EU issues because of disagreement with the EIG (for instance, because of EU enlargement and new comers' diverging ideas – interview 24). Then because of its lack of interest, the NIG stops 'fighting' for its positions within the EIG, which leads to a situation where the NIG is even less aligned (or perceived to be so) with the EIG's positions.

5.5.8. Condition 8: [non_eu_lob] No direct lobbying of EU institutions

Tables 5.50 and 5.51 Overview of condition 8: cases with outcome 1(left) and cases with outcome 0 (right) – Cases are ordered by outcome

cases	[non_eu_lob]	Outcome 1	cases	[non_eu_lob]	Outcome 0
4	No EU	10	28	Direct EU	6
37	No EU	10	6	Direct EU	6
73	Direct EU	10	68	No EU	6
61	No EU	10	60	Direct EU	6
25	Direct EU	10	17	Direct EU	6
42	No EU	10	29	National~EU	5
47	No EU	10	10	Direct EU	5
19	Direct EU	10	38	Direct EU	5
36	No EU	9	64	Direct EU	5
5	National~EU	9	56	No EU	5
33	No EU	9	48	No EU	5
11	No EU	9	52	National~EU	4
62	Direct EU	9	31	No EU	3
81	Direct EU	9	1	No EU	3
72	No EU	9			
65	Direct EU	9			
58	Direct EU	9			
39	No EU	9			
40	No EU	9			
46	Direct EU	9			
44	Direct EU	9			
21	No EU	9			
51	Direct EU	9			
49	Direct EU	9			
55	Direct EU	9			
54	Direct EU	9			
32	Direct EU	8			
78	No EU	8			
83	No EU	8			
3	Direct EU	8			
66	Direct EU	8			
71	Direct EU	8			
67	Direct EU	8			
76	National~EU	8			
43	Direct EU	8			
22	National~EU	8			
27	National~EU	8			
24	Direct EU	8			
53	National~EU	8			
18	Direct EU	8			
26	No EU	8			
13	Direct EU	7			
82	National~EU	7			
12	Direct EU	7			
7	Direct EU	7			
84	No EU	7			
2	Direct EU	7			
16	Direct EU	7			
80	Direct EU	7			
34	Direct EU	7			
8	No EU	7			
9	No EU	7			
15	Direct EU	7			
35	Direct EU	7			
14	Direct EU	7			
57	Direct EU	7			
74	Direct EU	7			
59	National~EU	7			
79	National~EU	7			
63	Direct EU	7			
69	Direct EU	7			
70	No EU	7			
75	Direct EU	7			
23	Direct EU	7			
41	No EU	7			
45	No EU	7			
20	Direct EU	7			
50	Direct EU	7			

No strong necessity relationship between this condition and the outcome appears in these tables: ‘not lobbying directly EU institutions’ is not a necessary condition for NIGs to perceive a high congruence between EIGs’ positions and their own. As regards to the relation of this condition and the previous one (condition 7, [non_eu_sal]), not surprisingly, NIGs for which EU issues are not salient do not lobby directly EU institutions (with the notable exception of two cases: 44 & 51). However, the opposite is not true, the majority of NIGs which do not lobby directly EU institutions perceives EU issues as salient.

5.5.9. Condition 9: [no_oth_eig] No membership to other EIG

Tables 5.52 and 5.53 Overview of condition 9: cases with outcome 1(left) and cases with outcome 0 (right) – Cases are ordered by outcome

cases	[no_oth_eig]	Outcome 1	cases	[no_oth_eig]	Outcome 0
4	0	10	28	0	6
37	2	10	6	4	6
73	1	10	68	0	6
61	1	10	60	1	6
25	2	10	17	3	6
42	0	10	29	0	5
47	0	10	10	0	5
19	0	10	38	0	5
36	0	9	64	0	5
5	0	9	56	0	5
33	0	9	48	0	5
11	1	9	52	2	4
62	1	9	31	0	3
81	0	9	1	0	3
72	0	9			
65	0	9			
58	2	9			
39	0	9			
40	1	9			
46	2	9			
44	0	9			
21	0	9			
51	0	9			
49	0	9			
55	2	9			
54	2	9			
32	0	8			
78	1	8			
83	0	8			
3	0	8			
66	0	8			
71	0	8			
67	0	8			
76	3	8			
43	0	8			
22	0	8			
27	1	8			
24	2	8			
53	0	8			
18	3	8			
26	0	8			
13	0	7			
82	0	7			
12	0	7			
7	0	7			
84	0	7			
2	0	7			
16	0	7			
80	0	7			
34	1	7			
8	0	7			
9	1	7			
15	2	7			
35	1	7			
14	2	7			
57	0	7			
74	2	7			
59	0	7			
79	0	7			
63	1	7			
69	0	7			
70	0	7			
75	0	7			
23	0	7			
41	0	7			
45	0	7			
20	1	7			
50	0	7			

After the scrutiny of tables 5.52 and 5.53, no strong necessity relationships between the condition *no_oth_eig* and the outcome can be pointed out. The rationale explains above seems to not substantiate a necessary condition of perceived congruence.

5.5.10. Condition 10: [freq_contact] Having frequent contact with the EIG

Tables 5.54 and 5.55 Overview of condition 10: cases with outcome 1(left) and cases with outcome 0 (right) – Cases are ordered by outcome

cases	[freq_contact]	Outcome 1	cases	[freq_contact]	Outcome 0
4	Less	10	28	Daily	6
37	Daily	10	6	Daily	6
73	Less	10	68	Monthly	6
61	Monthly	10	60	Weekly	6
25	Monthly	10	17	Less	6
42	Monthly	10	29	Weekly	5
47	Less	10	10	Weekly	5
19	Daily	10	38	Weekly	5
36	Weekly	9	64	Monthly	5
5	Weekly	9	56	Less	5
33	Daily	9	48	Less	5
11	Weekly	9	52	Weekly	4
62	Weekly	9	31	Less	3
81	Daily	9	1	Less	3
72	Weekly	9			
65	Monthly	9			
58	Weekly	9			
39	Weekly	9			
40	Less	9			
46	Weekly	9			
44	Weekly	9			
21	Monthly	9			
51	Weekly	9			
49	Monthly	9			
55	Weekly	9			
54	Weekly	9			
32	Weekly	8			
78	Weekly	8			
83	Monthly	8			
3	Weekly	8			
66	Daily	8			
71	Weekly	8			
67	Daily	8			
76	Daily	8			
43	Monthly	8			
22	Weekly	8			
27	Weekly	8			
24	Weekly	8			
53	Monthly	8			
18	Weekly	8			
26	Weekly	8			
13	Weekly	7			
82	Weekly	7			
12	Daily	7			
7	Weekly	7			
84	Weekly	7			
2	Daily	7			
16	Daily	7			
80	Weekly	7			
34	Daily	7			
8	Monthly	7			
9	Monthly	7			
15	Daily	7			
35	Monthly	7			
14	Weekly	7			
57	Weekly	7			
74	Daily	7			
59	Weekly	7			
79	Daily	7			
63	Daily	7			
69	Daily	7			
70	Monthly	7			
75	Weekly	7			
23	Less	7			
41	Less	7			
45	Monthly	7			
20	Weekly	7			
50	Monthly	7			

There is no strong necessity relationships between the condition *freq_contact* and the outcome. But one observations is interesting to highlight. On the overall, ‘extreme’ cases (outcome 10 and 3) have less frequent contact with their EIG than other cases. This may be explained by information retrieved from interviews: “*You know, in an organization, you get involved when you feel it's worth getting involved...*” (interview of case 1; original quote in French: “*vous savez, dans une organisation vous vous impliquez quand vous estimez que ça vaut le coup de s’impliquer...*”). The interviewee expresses the fact that its NIG perceives that its implication will have no impact on the EIG’s position. On the contrary, EIGs perceiving their EIGs’ positions as perfectly similar to theirs have less contact with their EIGs. This shows that these NIGs consent a high level of autonomy to their EIGs. It seems that these NIGs do not outsource their European political activities to EIGs. Rather NIGs consider their EIGs as doing European political activities that would not otherwise have been managed by these NIGs.

5.5.11. Condition 11: [few_mem_eig] The EIG having few members

Tables 5.56 and 5.57 Overview of condition 11: cases with outcome 1(left) and cases with outcome 0 (right) – Cases are ordered by outcome

cases	[few_mem_eig]	Outcome 1	cases	[few_mem_eig]	Outcome 0
4	66	10	28	34	6
37	140	10	6	140	6
73	68	10	68	25	6
61	140	10	60	190	6
25	33	10	17	14	6
42	39	10	29	35	5
47	140	10	10	36	5
19	190	10	38	190	5
36	18	9	64	24	5
5	19	9	56	19	5
33	27	9	48	35	5
11	140	9	52	67	4
62	33	9	31	35	3
81	39	9	1	39	3
72	48	9			
65	68	9			
58	140	9			
39	14	9			
40	25	9			
46	35	9			
44	36	9			
21	48	9			
51	48	9			
49	140	9			
55	140	9			
54	190	9			
32	33	8			
78	33	8			
83	50	8			
3	87	8			
66	32	8			
71	35	8			
67	67	8			
76	140	8			
43	27	8			
22	35	8			
27	36	8			
24	39	8			
53	39	8			
18	67	8			
26	140	8			
13	14	7			
82	19	7			
12	24	7			
7	25	7			
84	25	7			
2	39	7			
16	39	7			
80	39	7			
34	50	7			
8	66	7			
9	66	7			
15	67	7			
35	67	7			
14	68	7			
57	14	7			
74	19	7			
59	21	7			
79	23	7			
63	34	7			
69	39	7			
70	87	7			
75	190	7			
23	25	7			
41	33	7			
45	34	7			
20	39	7			
50	67	7			

There is no strong necessity relationship between this condition and the outcome. The rationale behind this condition is that within very large EIGs, NIGs have very little opportunity to make their voices heard and thus are more inclined to complain about lack of EIGs' responsiveness and tend to be less satisfied with their performance. This rationale seems to be challenged here. This condition taken separately, the table 5.56 show that many NIGs member of very large EIGs perceive their positions as congruent with the EIGs' ones.

5.6. Intermediate conclusion

A first overview of the tables (tables 5.34 and 5.35 and the tables related to each condition) allows to make some observations. The successive examinations of conditions provide also some insights.

The data related to condition 7 *non_eu_sal* suggest that groups perceiving EU issues as not salient perceive their positions as less congruent with their EIGs' positions. This result goes against the expected effect of EU saliency. Indeed, the condition non-saliency of EU issues seems have the opposite effect to the one expected. The identification by NIGs of EU issues as salient (= absence of condition *non_eu_sal*) may thus participate to the explanation of NIGs perceived congruence. This needs to be confirmed by the analysis.

As regards to condition 4 *cause*, the data suggest that cause groups seem to perceive their positions as more congruent with their EIGs than sectional group. This result is in line with the expected effect of nature of interest on the perceived congruence explained above. However, this single condition, scrutinised separately, cannot be qualified as necessary (as regards the outcome).

No strong necessity relationship between any condition and the outcome has been identified at this stage. Moreover, with the exception of conditions 4 and 7, no condition shows significant trend that may explain perceived congruence. The overview of tables 5.34 and 5.35 leads to the same observation: no clear trend seem to explain perceived congruence. These tables show that the issue under scrutiny is overall rather complex. Indeed, no obvious or evident link between combinations of conditions and the outcome can be highlighted at this stage.

The absence of identification of strong necessity relationships between conditions, scrutinised separately, and the outcome is the main conclusion of this descriptive section. It appears that there is 'noise' in the data. This confirms the complexity of the explanatory scheme of NIG's perceived congruence. The assumption that perceived congruence has to be explained by combinations of conditions is thus proved. Cases for which (absence of) perceived congruence is observed show very diverse situations as regards to the conditions under scrutiny. The relevance of QCA is also confirmed. The mobilisation of QCA as a "complexity-oriented" method makes thus perfectly sense. The following section present a summary of the test of the different partial models which include different conditions (see section 5.3.2).

5.7. QCA step 1: partial models

This section provides the results of preliminary analyses in which the four partial models are tested. The following paragraphs provide a brief summary of the tests of these partial models. The purpose of testing different models is to find the shortest possible explanations of perceived congruence. Therefore, models with few conditions (corresponding to different dimensions) are first tested and the summary of these tests constitutes the object of this section. As explained in point 5.3.2, the clusters of conditions tested successively go from the more ‘remote’ ones to the more ‘proximate’ ones (Mannewitz, 2011).

As a reminder, only the model without contradiction (or more precisely with the fewest contradictions) will be minimised (section 5.9). Incidentally, none of the partial models presented in this section turn out to be ‘minimisable’. This is the reason why the details about the test of each model (including the truth tables and Venn diagrams)¹⁵⁴ can be found in appendixes and not in the following pages. These appendixes aim to present all the steps of the exploratory QCA conducted for the purpose of this dissertation and thus participate in the transparency of the analysis by providing details about each sequence.

The test of model 1, detailed in appendixes (point 7.3.1), reveals configurations which are all contradictory (see Venn diagram, figure a.5.1 and truth table, table a.5.2, in appendixes). This means that model 1 is not sufficient to explain the outcome under scrutiny. The deficiency of model 1 may be explained by the contextual character of the conditions under scrutiny. Indeed, this first model includes three conditions (conditions 1, 2 and 3: *ms_old*, *ms_eu_leverage* and *ms_corporatism*) related to the domestic environment in which NIGs work (see point 5.3.2 and section 5.4). These conditions are contextual and are thus relatively distant from cases. The next models will thus look at more proximate factors.

¹⁵⁴ The box 5.3 provides indication on how to read truth tables and Venn diagrams.

Box 5.3 Truth tables and Venn diagrams

For crisp-set QCA, data are arranged as a ‘truth table’. A truth table summarises the conditional configurations of examined cases. Each configuration (combination of conditions) is represented in one row together with the associated value of the outcome. Truth table rows are statements of sufficiency. 0 represents the absence of a given condition (or the outcome), while 1 represents the presence of a given condition (or the outcome). In the column “Outcome”, “C” means that the values of the outcome are contradictory for that configurations. For a same configuration, some cases have an outcome 1, while others have an outcome 0. In truth tables presented in this Chapter, the first column provides the overall number of cases concerned by the configuration. The last column provides details about the cases concerned (the id of cases and their respective outcome when there are contradictory).

Venn diagrams are also provided for each model including up to five conditions (number of conditions supported by TOSMANA for the creation of such diagrams). These diagrams are “graphical representation of sets and their relations, using overlapping circles” (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, p. 335). Venn diagrams shows visually that each condition cuts the universe of cases in two. Venn diagram also contains information about where each case is located. For more clarity, some Venn diagrams hereafter provide only the number of cases (and not the id of each case) in each set. Venn diagram are another visual representation of the content of truth tables. All Venn diagrams of this dissertation are produced by the ‘visualizer’ tool of TOSMANA software, version 1.54 (Cronqvist, 2017). The number of cases included in each space were added afterwards.

Model 2 also includes three conditions (conditions 4, 5 and 6) but related this time to national groups' organisational features (cause, small_staff, no_direct_mem, see section 5.4). These conditions are proximate factors and concern structural characteristics of national groups. In brief, the model 2 offers more diversity amongst cases than model 1 (see details in appendixes, point 7.3.2). A first local regularity has been identified (6 cases with a configuration 111→1). However, many conditional configurations still produce contradictory results. Model 2 is thus not sufficient to explain the outcome under scrutiny. Moreover, some of the configurations produce unexpected outcome. A look at other proximate factors and the enlargement of the model are necessary.

Model 3 includes four conditions (conditions 7, 8, 9 and 10: non_eu_sal, non_eu_lob, no_oth_eig and freq_contact) related to national groups' EU-related activities (see point 5.3.2). These conditions are proximate factors and concern directly the relations between NIGs and their EIGs. Compared to both previous models, model 3 offers much more diversity amongst cases (see details in appendixes, point 7.3.3). A conditional configuration appeared to be interesting (10 cases with 0111→1) but many others produce contradictory results. Model 3 is consequently neither sufficient to explain the outcome under scrutiny. This model 3 is thus enriched with a fifth condition concerning directly EIGs. Adding a condition to the truth table is a possible strategy to tackle contradictory configurations: *“If those cases in the contradictory row that display qualitatively different outcome membership scores also show qualitatively different membership scores in the new condition, then the contradiction is resolved”* (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, p. 120). While models 1, 2 and 3 include different conditions (to observe different sets of analogous conditions), the model 4 is actually the model 3 enriched by an additional condition. The strategy of adding a condition belongs to the standards of QCA good practice (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, pp. 48-49; Schneider & Wagemann, 2012) and represents what is meant by *“going back and forth between ideas and evidence”* (C. Ragin, 2000).

Model 4 includes thus five conditions (conditions 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11) related to EU lobbying (see point 5.3.2). This last partial model includes all conditions of model 3 plus the condition 11 (few_mem_eig). On the whole, model 4 is the partial model 'explaining' the greater number of cases (51% of them, corresponding to 42 cases with non-contradictory configurations; see details in appendixes, point 7.3.4). The table 5.58 compares the four models. The closer the factors are (factor related directly to NIG-EIG relations) the better the model (in terms of number of non-contradictory configurations). This is also due to a greater empirical diversity

and variations between cases observed in models 2, 3 and 4 compared to model 1. The strategy of adding a condition to dissolve contradictions (from model 3 to model 4) proved to be effective. However, because of the presence of contradictory configurations, even model 4 is not sufficient to explain the outcome under scrutiny. The next section presents thus inclusive models that combines conditions included in model 1 to 4 (with the objective of dissolving previous models' logically contradictory truth table rows).

Table 5.58 Comparison of partial models

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
% of 'explained' cases	0%	24%	26%	51%
Number of 'explained' cases ($n=82$)	0	20	21	42
Observed configurations / potential configurations	4/8	8/8	13/16	24/32
Non-contradictory configurations / Observed configurations	0/4	3/8	5/13	17/24
Configurations explaining outcome 1	0	3	4	14
Configurations explaining outcome 0	0	0	1	3
Contradictory configurations / Observed configurations	4/4	5/8	8/13	7/24

Source: author's own elaboration

5.8. QCA step 2: inclusive models

This section presents two inclusive models that combines clusters of conditions already tested in the previous section. The purpose of these inclusive models is to obtain truth tables without contradictions. As explained above, adding conditions into the models is a strategy to tackle contradictory configurations (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, p. 120). While 'new' conditions will not be added in models 5 and 6, these last will combine different clusters of conditions already included in models 1 to 4. As a reminder, the strategy of adding a condition belongs to the standards of good QCA practice. While this methodological strategy allows to address contradictions, the addition of conditions is a trade-off between attempts to remove contradictions and adding more complexity into the explanation (the results potentially becoming less and less parsimonious).

5.8.1. Model 5: All-non MS conditions

This model includes all conditions but conditions concerning the domestic environment in which NIGs work (see point 5.3.2). This model is actually an addition of models 2 and 4 (and includes conditions 4 to 11). The conditions included in this model all concern proximate

factors about structural characteristics of national groups and NIG-EIGs relations. The Table 5.59 provides the truth table resulting from the QCA with this first inclusive model.

Table 5.59 Model 5: Truth table

<i>n</i> (82)	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	Outcome	Details: cases id(outcome if C)
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	62, 63
1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	50
1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	67
5	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	C	7(1), 28(0), 57(1), 69(1), 81(1)
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	78
2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	42, 53
1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	33
1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	60
1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	52
2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	14, 15
1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	38
5	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	C	2(1), 10(0), 16(1), 32(1), 80(1)
2	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1, 31
1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	35
1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	17
2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	18, 34
1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	20
1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	65
3	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	C	23(1), 43(1), 64(0)
2	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	3, 75
3	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	12, 13, 66
1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	27
3	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	4, 8, 70
2	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	C	41(1), 68(0)
3	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	36, 59, 82
1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	9
3	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	C	45(1), 48(0), 56(0)
2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	25, 73
1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	74
3	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	5, 39, 84
1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	44
1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	40
1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	76
1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	21
1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	51
1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	6
1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	83

1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	79
1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	46
1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	49
1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	19
1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	37
1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	26
1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	22
1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	71
1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	11
1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	72
3	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	54, 55, 58
1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	24
1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	61
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	47
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	29
<i>n</i> (82)	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	Outcome	Details: cases id(outcome if C)

Source: Retrieved from TOSMANA Version 1.54

With 82 cases and 8 conditions, all configurations cannot be observed empirically. With 8 conditions, 256 logical configurations are possible (De Meur & Rihoux, 2002). 52 configurations are actually observed. Amongst them, 5 configurations are contradictory. This model provides 40 conditional configurations explaining perceived congruence (outcome=1) and 7 conditional configurations explaining absence of congruence (outcome=0). Model 5 ‘explains’ 78% of cases (corresponding to 64 cases with non-contradictory configurations). Some results deviate a lot from the expectations draw a priori. For instance, the case 50 shows a completely unexpected outcome given its configuration (00000100→1) as well as the case 29 (11111111→0, see more details in the previous section). Overall, even if model 5 explains 78% of cases, 5 contradictory configurations are still there. No minimisation is thus possible to process on such a truth table. Consequently, the model 6 includes all the conditions available.

5.8.2. Model 6: Full model

This sixth model includes all 11 conditions¹⁵⁵. As a reminder three sets of conditions are thus included in this encompassing model: conditions related to the domestic environment in which

¹⁵⁵ One should note that this model does not meet a “QCA good practice” related to the “Contradictions Benchmark” proposed by Marx and Dusa (2011) regarding the ratio cases – conditions (82 cases and 11 conditions → contradictions ratio 0.56, which is lower than the advised benchmark of 0.90; according to the benchmark table,

NIGs work, conditions related to the organisational features of NIGs, and conditions related to NIGs' EU-related activities and number of EIGs' members. The table 5.60 provides the truth table resulting from the QCA with model 6.

Table 5.60 Model 6: Truth table

<i>n</i> (82)	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverage]	[ms_corporatism]	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	Outcome	Details: cases id(outcome if C)
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	17
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	18
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	20
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	23
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	27
1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	25
1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	21
1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	19
1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	26
1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	22
1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	24
1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	50
2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	42, 53
1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	52
1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	43
1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	41
3	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	C	45(1), 48(0), 56(0)
1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	39
1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	44
1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	40
1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	51
1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	46
1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	49
2	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	54, 55
1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	47
2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	62, 63
1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	67
3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	57, 69, 81
1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	60
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	65
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	64
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	75
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	66

82 conditions could 'safely' fit with a model up to 9 conditions). However, given the exploratory purpose of this QCA, this advice from Marx and Dusa can be outstepped.

1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	70
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	68
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	59
1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	73
1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	74
1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	76
1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	79
1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	71
1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	72
1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	58
1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	61
2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	C	7(1), 28(0)
1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	78
1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	33
2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	14, 15
1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	38
5	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	C	2(1), 10(0), 16(1), 32(1), 80(1)
2	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1, 31
1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	35
1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	34
1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	3
2	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	12, 13
2	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	4, 8
2	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	36, 82
1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	9
2	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	5, 84
1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	6
1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	83
1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	37
1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	11
1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	29
<i>n</i> (82)	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverage]	[ms_corporatism]	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	Outcome	Details: cases id(outcome if C)

Source: Retrieved from TOSMANA Version 1.54

As for model 5, with 82 cases and 11 conditions, all configurations cannot be observed (2048 logical configurations being possible). 64 configurations are actually observed (see the table 5.61 which compares models 5 and 6). Amongst them, 3 configurations are still contradictory. This model provides 52 conditional configurations explaining perceived congruence (outcome=1) and 9 conditional configurations explaining absence of congruence (outcome=0). Model 6 ‘explains’ 88% of cases (corresponding to 72 cases with non-contradictory

configurations). Some results deviate a lot from the expectations draw a priori. For instance, case 18 shows a completely unexpected outcome given its configuration (00001000010→1) as well as the case 29 (11011111111→0). Overall, even if this full model explains 88% of cases, 3 contradictory configurations still appears (covering 10 cases). It is thus not pertinent to process minimisation on this truth table¹⁵⁶.

Table 5.61 Comparison of inclusive models

	Model 5	Model 6
% of 'explained' cases	78%	88%
Number of 'explained' cases (n=82)	64	72
Observed configurations / potential configurations	52/256	64/2048
Non-contradictory configurations / Observed configurations	47/52	61/64
Configurations explaining outcome 1	40	52
Configurations explaining outcome 0	7	9
Contradictory configurations / Observed configurations	5/52	3/64

Source: author's own elaboration

The issue here is that the inclusive model still presents contradictory configurations. To put it differently, within model 6's truth table, three rows lead to both the occurrence and the non-occurrence of the outcome. As a reminder, truth table rows are statements of sufficiency. Consequently, such empirical situations suggest logical contradictions: the very same combinations of conditions produce both occurrence and the non-occurrence of the outcome. The first step of the minimisation process (next section) is thus to find a strategy to tackle these contradictory configurations.

5.9. QCA step 3: minimisation of model 6 (full model)

In this section, the truth table corresponding to the full model (model 6) is analysed and reduced with procedures of combinatorial logic (C. Ragin, 1987, pp. 86-102) to arrive at different solutions specifying:

- Conservative combination of sufficient conditions for the presence of the outcome to be explained. (5.9.1)
- Parsimonious combination of sufficient conditions for the presence of the outcome to be explained. (5.9.2)

¹⁵⁶ While being 'technically possible', minimisation of contradictory truth tables are 'logically irrelevant'. Any minimisation software would evacuate 'C cases' without any 'conscious' choice made by the researcher.

- Conservative combination of sufficient conditions for the absence of the outcome to be explained. (5.9.3)
- Parsimonious combination of sufficient conditions for the absence of the outcome to be explained. (5.9.4)

The aim of logical minimisation is to provide a summary of the information contained in the truth table by applying the rules of Boolean algebra (De Meur & Rihoux, 2002). Logical minimisation leads to solution formulas for sufficiency, but not necessity (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, p. 329). Logical minimisation is based on the Quine–McCluskey algorithm for the logical minimisation of truth tables: *“It consists of first logically minimizing those conjunctions that are sufficient for the outcome and similar to each other and then of excluding logically redundant prime implicants”* (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, p. 332). Logical minimisation may or may not take into account logical remainders to arrive respectively at parsimonious or conservative solution terms. Logical remainders correspond to possible configurations but for which no case was empirically observed (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, p. 60).

A conservative solution term (or “complex solution term”)¹⁵⁷ is a *“solution that rests on no assumption about logical remainders. It is based solely on truth table rows that are deemed sufficient for the outcome based on empirical evidence. It is the subset of all other possible solutions”* (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, p. 324). Conservative solutions are thus based only on rows present in the truth table provided hereafter (see table 5.63). These rows correspond to empirically observed situation (61 configurations were observed empirically out of 2048 possibilities). Thus, no empirical observations exist for 1987 possible logical combinations of conditions.

Logical minimisation may also take into account logical remainders. This logical minimisation produces ‘superset solution term’ which is *“the result of a logical minimization that includes all logical remainders. This formula is the superset of all logically possible solution terms that can be derived from a truth table without violating its truth value”* (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, p. 333). These minimisations with logical remainders are processed to obtain the parsimonious combination of sufficient conditions. Parsimony is applied to obtain parsimonious solution terms. When applied to set-theoretic solution terms, *“parsimony refers to the number of conditions and logical AND [*] and OR [+] operators. The fewer conditions*

¹⁵⁷ As noted by Schneider and Wagemann (2012, p. 323), if “complex solution term” is a synonym of “conservative solution term”, the word “complex” might be misleading, *“because the complex solution is not the most complex term, but the subset of all other possible solutions”*.

and operators, the more parsimonious the solution term” (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, p. 330). Consequently, the most parsimonious solution term is a “*solution formula among all logically possible solution terms that uses the lowest number of conditions and of the two operators logical AND and logical OR. In the presence of logically redundant prime implicants*^[158], *two or more formulas can be equally most parsimonious*” (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, p. 329)

As explained in the final point of the previous section, before processing the minimisation, a strategy needs to be chosen to tackle the contradictory configurations. In front of such a situation, different strategies are possible (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, pp. 48-49, 132-135). Let’s focus on two of these strategies that may be applied here, a conservative one and a more debatable one¹⁵⁹. The more debatable would be to only suppress the “difficult” cases or the “less compliant” cases in the contradictory configurations. This means that for each contradictory configuration, the cases with outcome 1 or cases with outcome 0 would be removed. For instance, if a contradictory configuration concerning 10 cases is actually contradictory because of one case shows a different outcome than the other nine, the researcher may choose to remove this single ‘less compliant’ case. Of course, such a strategy is debatable as the arguments put forward to suppress one or the others cases are always questionable. The conservative strategy would be to remove all cases that are concerned by contradictory configurations. This strategy is more ‘safe’ as no choice has to be motivated in favour of one or the other cases. The advantage of the first strategy is that less information is lost (because less cases are removed). The advantage of the conservative strategy is that it is ‘secured’ as regards to the removal of cases existing empirically (where in the other solution, the researcher keeps the cases that ‘suits’ its objective).

At this stage of this dissertation’s QCA, the conservative strategy is chosen and this for two reasons. First, many cases are analysed in this application of QCA. 82 cases is a great N in qualitative comparative research (Rihoux & Lobe, 2009, 2015)¹⁶⁰. Consequently, the removal

¹⁵⁸ Logically redundant prime implicant are “*prime implicant which can be omitted from the solution formula without leaving any primitive expression uncovered, i.e., without violating the truth value contained in the truth table*”(Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, p. 329).

¹⁵⁹ Other strategies exist but are not discussed here. For instance, Roscigno and Hodson (2004) propose a probabilistic approach to treat contradictions. This is also debatable as the outcome of some cases creating contradictions are changed on the basis of statistical tests. For a discussion of this strategy and the others, see Rihoux and Ragin (2009, pp. 132-135).

¹⁶⁰ It should be remind here that while the focus on ‘intermediate-N designs’ remains the predominant designs using QCA (Rihoux & Marx, 2013; Rihoux, Rezsöházy, & Bol, 2011) because of the need to maintain sufficient case-based knowledge (Rihoux & Lobe, 2009), Schneider and Wagemann (2012, p. 12) point that QCA is also suited for larger-N designs. Rihoux, Alamos-Concha, Bol, Marx, and Rezsöházy (2013) note that the proportion

of 10 cases (number of cases concerned by contradictory configurations, see the table 5.62) does not imply a loss of information which is not manageable given the great number of cases still included in the analysis. However, it should be kept in mind that solutions of the minimisation process will only explain a part of all observed cases. Second, and more importantly, the purpose of this QCA is exploratory. This means that the objective is not to get a fine grained explanation of few empirical cases but to provide directions and research paths to further explore, on the basis of many cases reflecting a great empirical diversity. Consequently, the conservative solution which is more ‘safe’ suits better for the exploratory purpose of this part of the research. Concerning more general considerations, Schneider and Wagemann (2012, p. 122) note: *“In sum, strategies that aim at dissolving contradictions directly stem from the anchoring of set-theoretic approaches in qualitative methods. They remind us of the important fact that set-theoretic methods, in general, and QCA, in particular, are not only data analysis techniques but also research approaches with specific requirements for the research process before and after the actual data analysis. They reflect, in other words, the double nature of QCA as both a research approach and a data analysis technique”*.

Table 5.62 Cases concerned by contradictory configuration in model 6 (full model)

n (82)	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10	C11	O	Details: cases id(outcome)
3	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	C	45(1), 48(0), 56(0)
2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	C	7(1), 28(0)
5	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	C	2(1), 10(0), 16(1), 32(1), 80(1)

As the strategy of excluding all contradictory rows from the logical minimisation process is chosen, cases included in the table 5.68 are removed from the dataset from this stage on. The ‘new’ truth table, without contradictory configurations and their related cases is presented hereafter (table 5.63). Amongst the 72 remaining cases, 10 show an outcome 0 and 62 an outcome 1. 61 configurations are provided in the table (52 conditional configurations explaining perceived congruence (outcome=1) and 9 conditional configurations explaining absence of congruence (outcome=0)).

of larger-N QCA applications has grown over the last decade. Examples of such a large N application of QCA may be found here: Ishida, Yonetani, and Kosaka (2006), or more recently, C. C. Ragin and Fiss (2017).

Table 5.63 Model 6 (n=72): Truth table

<i>n</i> (72)	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverage]	[ms_corporatism]	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	Outcome	Details: cases id
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	17
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	18
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	20
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	23
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	27
1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	25
1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	21
1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	19
1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	26
1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	22
1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	24
1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	50
2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	42, 53
1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	52
1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	43
1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	41
1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	39
1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	44
1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	40
1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	51
1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	46
1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	49
2	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	54, 55
1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	47
2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	62, 63
1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	67
3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	57, 69, 81
1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	60
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	65
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	64
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	75
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	66
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	70
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	68
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	59
1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	73
1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	74
1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	76
1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	79
1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	71

1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	72
1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	58
1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	61
1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	78
1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	33
2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	14, 15
1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	38
2	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1, 31
1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	35
1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	34
1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	3
2	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	12, 13
2	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	4, 8
2	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	36, 82
1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	9
2	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	5, 84
1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	6
1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	83
1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	37
1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	11
1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	29
<i>n</i> (72)	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverage]	[ms_corporatism]	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	Outcome	Details: cases id

Source: Retrieved TOSMANA Version 1.54

This ‘final’ truth table (without contradictory rows) is analysed and reduced with procedures of combinatorial logic to reach different solutions. This minimisation process is computed with the R package QCA (Duşa, 2018, forthcoming)¹⁶¹. Minimisation can normally be done with TOSMANA (for models with “up to 15 conditions”, according to Lasse Cronqvist, the designer of the software). However, with the data set of this research, TOSMANA got hung up. After exchanging e-mails with Cronqvist¹⁶², it appears that the complexity of the dataset is the source of the impossibility for TOSMANA to process minimisation. In order to deal with this computation problem, the solution chosen was to process minimisation with the R package QCA, as the R software environment has a greater ‘computation capacity’ than TOSMANA. The outcome of the minimisation process with the R package QCA can be found in appendixes

¹⁶¹ The minimisation process was done by Eva Thomann (University of Exeter, United Kingdom). The author warmly thanks Eva for her invaluable help and availability. For one of her recent publication about QCA, see for instance: Thomann and Maggetti (2017).

¹⁶² The author would like to also warmly thank Lasse Cronqvist (Universität Trier) for his availability and his replies to questions sent by e-mails.

(see document a.5.1). The tables in the next pages (tables 5.64 to 5.67) are simplified representations of the data available in appendixes which aims to make the results more intelligible. The objective of the tables is to give meaning to the very long solutions resulting from the minimisation process.

Beyond this ‘computation issue’, the impossibility to process the minimisation with TOSMANA is already a crucial result¹⁶³. Indeed, it indicates an important model ambiguity. Despite the relative great number of cases empirically observed (82), the full model applied to the dataset creates an issue of “limited diversity” (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, p. 27). This limited diversity tends to an “individualisation” of explanation of each particular case. This means that QCA did not succeed in reaching some degree of parsimony (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, p. 48). However, given the exploratory purpose of this analysis, original representations of solutions are designed in order to extract some elements that are more significant amongst the substantial set of results obtained (see tables in next points). The purpose of the analysis of the tables is to reveal the (combination) of conditions that may be more significant and that would deserve particular attention in further research.

5.9.1. Conservative combination of sufficient conditions for the presence of the outcome to be explained

The table 5.64 hereafter provides the (conservative) solution explaining the presence of the outcome to be explained which is the ‘presence’ of NIG’s perceived congruence (outcome=1, see the penultimate column). The first column provides the id of each solution’s term (id attributed by the software package). The last column provides the number of cases explained by each solution’s term. The columns in-between show the combination of conditions included in each term (conditions that are present = 1; conditions that are absent = 0; conditions not needed = blank cell). As an illustration, the first row means that: “the presence of the outcome of 6 cases is explained by the combination of the following condition: concerned cases’ NIGs are established in an old member state (ms_old = 1), a member state which has no institutional leverage (ms_eu_leverage = 0) and which is corporatist (ms_corporatism = 1). Concerned cases’ NIGs are not cause groups (cause = 0), have no “no-direct members”

¹⁶³ As a reminder, with an outcome dichotomised at 7.5, the issue was also observed. Moreover, with such a dataset (dichotomisation at 7.5), even R was not able to process the entire minimisation. As noted by Eva Thomann: “*Even R got a bit hung up. For the 7.5 dataset it was not possible to calculate parsimonious solutions sometimes, since the solution object would occupy 1.9 gigabytes*” (e-mails exchange with Eva Thomann). Indeed, the 7.5 dataset (and full model) denotes an even more extreme model ambiguity for the parsimonious solutions (than the ‘6.5 dataset’).

(no_direct_mem = 0), do not show “non-saliency of EU issues” (non_eu_sal = 0) and do not do ‘no EU lobbying activities’ (non_eu_lob = 0). Concerned cases’ NIGs do adhere to only one EIG (no_oth_eig = 1) and have frequent contact with the EIG. The size of NIGs’ staff and number of EIGs’ member are not needed to explain the outcome of these 6 cases (cells of small_staff and few_mem_eig are blank)”. Such detailed (and laborious) explanations will not be provided for each row neither for the table about (conservative) solution explaining the absence of the outcome (table 5.66), but it provides here an illustration helping to understand how to read the tables.

Table 5.64 Solution for the presence of the outcome (conservative)

id solution's terms	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverag e]	[ms_corporatis m]	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	Outcome	n cases ¹⁶⁴
1	1	0	1	0		0	0	0	1	1		1	6
2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1		1	2
3	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0		1	1	2
4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0		0	1	1	1	2
5	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1		1	2
6	0	0	0	1	1	0	0		1	1	0	1	2
7	0	0	1	0		0	0	1	1	0	1	1	3
8	0	0		0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	2
9	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0		1	1	1	5
10	1	0	1	0	1	0	0		1	0	0	1	2
11	1	0	1	0	1	0	0		1	1	1	1	2
12	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0		0	1	2
13	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1		1	3
14	1	1	0	0	1		0	1	1	1	1	1	4
15	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1		1	1	1	2
16	1	1	0	1	1	0		1	0	1	0	1	2
17		0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	3
18	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
19	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
20	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
21	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
22	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
23	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
24	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
25	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1

¹⁶⁴ The number of cases concerned by a solution is determined with the raw coverage (covS, see document in appendixes a.5.1). The raw coverage provides the “percentage of all cases’ set membership in the outcome covered by a single sufficient path of an equifinal solution term” (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, p. 332).

26	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1
27	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
28	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
29	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1
30	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
31	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
32	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
33	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
34	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
35	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	2
36	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
37	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
id solution's terms	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverage]	[ms_corporatism]	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	Outcome	n cases
Total 1	20	9	21	15	26	12	8	16	21	21	14		
Total 0	16	28	15	22	9	24	28	17	14	14	19		
Total non-empty	36	37	36	37	35	36	36	33	35	35	33		

As explained above, given the exploratory purpose of this analysis, the objective of scrutinising this table is to highlight some ‘hints’ about the elements that are more significant to explain NIGs’ perceived congruence. An indication is the number of conditions that are present (“1” in the table) in all solutions terms explaining the presence of NIGs’ perceived congruence (see the antepenultimate row, “Total 1”). Five conditions emerge: MS_OLD, MS_CORPORATISM, SMALL_STAFF, NO_OTH_EIG and FREQ_CONTACT. More importantly, some combinations of present conditions are more present in solution’s terms (covering the greater number of cases). These combinations are the following:

- Combination SMALL_STAFF*FREQ_CONTACT is present in 14 terms (covering 27 cases)¹⁶⁵
- Combination SMALL_STAFF*NO_OTH_EIG is present in 14 terms (covering 25 cases)

¹⁶⁵ As a reminder, “*” corresponds to logical AND (=intersection\conjunction: it creates the intersection between two or more sets).

- Combination NO_OTH_EIG*FREQ_CONTACT is present in 12 terms (covering 25 cases)¹⁶⁶

Firstly, combination SMALL_STAFF*FREQ_CONTACT suggests the fact that “NIGs with limited staff frequently exchanging with their EIGs” participates in the explanation of NIG’s perceived congruence. First, let’s come back to the assumption behind condition SMALL_STAFF. This assumption is that NIGs with a limited number of staff members will have a tendency to focus more on national issues than on EU affairs and thus will extensively outsource their European involvement to EIGs. Given this ‘remoteness’ of EU issues, NIGs trust their EIGs and perceive their positions as congruent with their own. However, combined with the condition FREQ_CONTACT this reasoning must be challenged. Indeed, the small number of staff members of concerned NIGs may reinforce the ‘socialisation’ assumption behind the condition FREQ_CONTACT. The limited number of NIGs’ staff members will increase the *density* of contacts with EIGs (which are frequent). Frequency and density of contacts with EIGs lead to the emergence of ‘European roles’ for NIGs (socialisation process). The following example of a French sectional groups is a concrete illustration of the significance of the combination SMALL_STAFF*FREQ_CONTACT to explain perceived congruence. On the one hand, as noted by their European Affairs Advisor, the size of their staff limits the influence they can have on their EIG’s positions:

They issue papers etc. There is nothing wrong. I would say, they are quite good. What we observe is that, since they are bigger than us, and they have more resources to work with, we would like, sometimes, we find that they should earlier make us aware about what they are going to do. And eventually, invite us to some meetings to allow us to explain our vision which is complementary to the one of the others. (Interview 27, French sectional group)¹⁶⁷

At the same time, this French industrial organisation manages to get its staff involved and appreciated in EIG’s meeting:

Well, I cope with that. My young colleague, [name of the colleague], is making efforts, and he often slips into meetings. But it's not completely official. He’s a free rider. [...] Since [name of the colleague] has been

¹⁶⁶ The combination SMALL_STAFF*NO_OTH_EIG*FREQ_CONTACT is present in 9 terms (covering 17 cases).

¹⁶⁷ Original quote in French: *Ils font, ils font des papers etc. il n’y a rien à dire, hein. Je vais dire, ils sont assez bons. Ce qu’on trouve. Ce qu’on trouve, c’est que comme ils sont plus gros que nous, et qu’ils ont plus de moyens de travailler, on aimerait, parfois, on trouve qu’ils devraient nous annoncer plus en amont ce qu’ils font. Éventuellement, nous inviter à certaines réunions pour qu’on donne notre vision qui complète celles d’autres.*

recognised as competent and reliable, finally, they're happy he's there.
(Interview 27, French sectional group)¹⁶⁸

Moreover, the European Affairs Advisor of this organisation is well connected with the CEO of the EIG and has frequent contact with him. At the end of the day, even if the organisation has (often) divergent positions with other NIGs (and particularly with its German counterpart, being the other leading country in the sector in question), it is satisfied with EIG's positions. The frequent contacts and the 'personal relations' between the French and European staffs, allow everybody to speak openly and frankly, and finally reach agreements. The interviewee acknowledges this situation and summarises:

Their aim is not to advocate the French position. They working for the medium term. The European compromise. That's why we have minor divergences. (Interview 27, French sectional group)¹⁶⁹

All things considered, the significance of this combination of conditions suggests that it would be interesting to explore the individuals' interactions between NIGs and EIGs and better identify *who* are the 'contact persons' between the national level and the European level in order to understand the congruence between NIGs and EIGs.

Secondly, combination SMALL_STAFF*NO_OTH_EIG suggests the fact that "NIGs with limited staff adhering to a single European umbrella organisation" participates in the explanation of NIG's perceived congruence. As reminded in the previous paragraphs, the assumption behind SMALL_STAFF is that NIGs will extensively outsource their European involvement to EIGs given the scarcity of their human resources (leading to the 'remoteness' of EU issues). Here condition NO_OTH_EIG reinforces NIGs' trust towards EIGs. No other EIG may serve as benchmark to compare the first. Moreover, no other EIG may offer an alternative opportunity structure for the outsourcing of European affairs. In addition, the adhesion of NIGs to only one EIG can be the consequence of a 'monopoly of European representation' held by some EIGs at the EU-level. The following quote from a Slovenian interviewee speaking about its EIG provides an illustration of such a situation: "*First of all, that's the only federation of associations at the European level. It is definitely the only lobbying organisation for, or in the name of the [sector]. If you compare something, with nothing else,*

¹⁶⁸ Original quote in French: *Bon, moi je me débrouille. Mon jeune collègue, [name of the colleague], il fait des efforts, et il se glisse souvent dans la place. Mais ce n'est pas complètement officiel, quoi. C'est un peu passager clandestin. [...] Comme [name of the colleague] s'est fait reconnaître comme compétent et fiable. Alors, finalement, ils sont contents qu'il soit là.*

¹⁶⁹ Original quote in French: *Ils ne sont pas là pour défendre la position française. Ils sont là pour défendre le moyen terme. Le compromis européen. C'est en ça qu'on a des petits écarts.*

it's very legitimate [Laugh]" (Interview 71, Slovenian sectional group). The outsourcing of EU affairs by 'poorly staffed' NIGs to EIGs in 'monopolistic' position may induce a high perceived congruence of national actors resulting from the absence of interest or the absence of comparison possibilities. Overall, the significance of this combination of conditions suggests that it would be interesting to explore the effect of 'situation of monopoly' of some EIGs on the perceptions of their members that have a limited staff (*a fortiori* limited staff for the management of EU affairs).

The last combination identified (NO_OTH_EIG*FREQ_CONTACT) amongst the most significant follows a similar logic. Both conditions reinforce each other. The frequent contacts between NIGs and EIGs combined with the usage of a single 'European networking venue' by NIGs lead to a higher density of NIGs' socialisation process. NIGs having frequent contacts with a single EIG are more inclined to align themselves with their European counterparts which leads to NIGs' perceived congruence. The International Director of a Swedish sectional group explains the importance of having frequent contacts within an EIG's structure:

At meetings, when we meet, not always, but many times, all members are sitting around the table, giving their perspectives, try to find common solutions to a European problem. [...] And, I think, it's very important, before we take position to actually discuss with others and how different proposals affect them as well, and the thing is that you come there with a position. Everybody tries to find their own position and then we meet. And then, of course, we try to find a common one, and we actually do, because it's working. It's a working process, but most of the time we have a strong message, because we listen to each other and have good opinion in important issues. (Interview 110, Swedish sectional group)

The combination of NO_OTH_EIG and FREQ_CONTACT increases the exposure and familiarity of a NIG towards its EIG. NIGs' perceived congruence will result from this combination. This combination of conditions strengthens the suggestion stemming from the analysis of the first combination presented in this point. It would be interesting to explore the interactions between NIGs and EIGs and closer scrutinise the junctures or points-of-contact between the national level and the European level to understand the congruence between NIGs' and EIGs' positions.

The combinations of conditions related to NIG's domestic environment were not identified as the most significant (compared to the combinations corresponding to NIGs' organisational features or EU-related activities). However, as combination MS_OLD*MS_CORPORATISM

is still present in 11 terms (covering 22 cases)¹⁷⁰, some observations about it are interesting to raise. Combination MS_OLD*MS_CORPORATISM suggests that the establishment of NIGs in corporatist member states, member of the EU for years, participates in the explanation of NIG's perceived congruence. NIGs working in corporatist domestic environment are more inclined to negotiate between groups and reach inclusive compromises which are then accepted by the partners of negotiation. Consequently, NIGs who are used to work towards consensus formation will have a positive perception of aggregated EIGs' positions. Moreover, NIGs from corporatist member states are expected to be more involved in negotiations with their partners in Brussels which leads to a higher perceived congruence. This condition supports in a way the 'persistence hypothesis' (Klüver, 2010, p. 176) according to which NIGs from corporatist member states are more likely to be active at the EU level. The (long) years spent in contact with the EU (MS_OLD) reinforce this habit of negotiating with partners (from other EU member states). Indeed, NIGs from old member states tend to use more EU access opportunities – amongst which involvement within EIGs. NIGs' perceived congruence is not only a matter of domestic embeddedness in a corporatist setting but also of a longer contact with European partners.

After all, the examination of the conservative combination of sufficient conditions for the presence of 'NIGs' perceived congruence' allows to draw some conclusions about this exploratory analysis. First, the relationship between domestic environments (modes of interest intermediation or years of EU adhesion) and the presence of the outcome is less pronounced than the relationship between NIGs' organisational features or EU-related activities and perceived congruence. This results joins previous research identifying the limited relationship between national modes of interest intermediation and NIG's EU access patterns (Eising, 2007). NIGs' organisational characteristics and EU-related activities seem to outweigh the impact of domestic environment on NIGs' perceived congruence. More importantly, concerning avenue for further research, juncture points between NIGs and EIGs constitute important elements to scrutinise to better understand the positions congruence between NIGs and EIGs. Indeed, combinations between elements such as frequent contact between NIGs and EIGs, NIGs' limited staff and NIGs' usage of single 'European networking venue' were identified as significant to explain perceived congruence. For instance, further research might closer analyse

¹⁷⁰ Combination MS_OLD*MS_EU_LEVERAGE is present in 9 terms, covering 19 cases. Combination MS_OLD*MS_CORPORATISM*NO_OTH_EIG*FREQ_CONTACT is present in 5 terms, covering 11 cases.

who are NIGs’ representative delegates and how and for how long these national actors are ‘socialised to Europe’ (Favell & Guiraudon, 2011).

5.9.2. Parsimonious combination of sufficient conditions for the presence of the outcome to be explained

The table 5.65 provides the (parsimonious) solution explaining the presence of the outcome to be explained; in other words, the ‘presence’ of NIGs’ perceived congruence. As a reminder, this solution is the result of a minimisation process which includes logical remainders in order to obtain the parsimonious combination of sufficient conditions. The first column provides the id of each solution’s term (id are attributed by the software). The second column provides all parsimonious solution’s terms. In order to read them, note that conditions written with uppercases are present and conditions written with lowercases are absent. The last column provides the raw coverage, which express the percentage of cases (with outcome=1) explained by each solution’s term. The columns in-between provides a ‘visual’ representation of conditions included in each term (conditions that are present = 1; conditions that are absent = 0; conditions not included = blank cell). As an illustration, the first row means that: “the presence of the outcome of 24,2% of potential cases is explained (notably) by the combination of presence of condition NO_OTH_EIG and the absence of ms_old”. Such a detailed explanations provides here an illustration helping to understand how to read the table.

Table 5.65 Solution for the presence of the outcome (parsimonious)

Terms id	Terms of parsimonious solution	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverage]	[ms_corporatism]	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	Raw coverage (covS)
1	ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG	0								1			0.242
2	cause*no_oth_eig*NO_DIRECT_MEM				0		1			0			0.113
3	ms_eu_leverage *CAUSE		0		1								0.258
4	CAUSE*no_direct_mem				1		0						0.194
5	SMALL_STAFF*few_mem_eig					1						0	0.355
6	freq_contact*few_mem_eig										0	0	0.210
7	MS_OLD*NON_EU_LOB*few_mem_eig	1							1			0	0.161
8	ms_eu_leverage*non_eu_sal*small_staff		0			0		0					0.194
9	ms_eu_leverage*non_eu_sal*FREQ_CONTACT		0					0			1		0.387
10	ms_eu_leverage*non_eu_sal*few_mem_eig		0					0				0	0.242
11	ms_eu_leverage*NON_EU_SAL*NO_OTH_EIG		0					1		1			0.081

12	ms_eu_power*NON_EU_SAL* SMALL_STAFF		0					1		1			0.097
13	ms_eu_leverage*NO_OTH_EIG* FREQ_CONTACT		0							1	1		0.258
14	ms_eu_leverage*SMALL_STAFF* FREQ_CONTACT		0			1					1		0.306
15	ms_eu_leverage*FREQ_CONTACT* FEW_MEM_EIG		0								1	1	0.274
16	ms_corporatism*non_eu_sal* NON_EU_LOB			0				0	1				0.226
17	ms_corporatism*NON_EU_LOB* few_mem_eig			0					1			0	0.129
18	MS_CORPORATISM*NON_EU_SAL* NO_OTH_EIG			1				1		1			0.081
19	MS_CORPORATISM*NON_EU_SAL* SMALL_STAFF			1		1		1					0.097
20	cause*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG				0						1	1	0.339
21	CAUSE*non_eu_sal*NON_EU_LOB				1			0	1				0.113
22	CAUSE*NON_EU_LOB*few_mem_eig				1				1			0	0.145
23	non_eu_sal*NON_EU_LOB*small_staff					0		0	1				0.129
24	non_eu_sal*NON_EU_LOB* NO_DIRECT_MEM						1	0	1				0.081
25	non_eu_sal*NON_EU_LOB* FREQ_CONTACT							0	1		1		0.226
26	non_eu_sal*NON_EU_LOB*few_mem_eig							0	1			0	0.129
27	non_eu_sal*small_staff*no_direct_mem					0	0	0					0.210
28	non_eu_sal*no_direct_mem* FREQ_CONTACT						0	0			1		0.419
29	non_eu_sal*no_direct_mem*few_mem_eig						0	0				0	0.274
30	non_eu_sal*FREQ_CONTACT* FEW_MEM_EIG							0			1	1	0.371
31	NON_EU_SAL*SMALL_STAFF* no_direct_mem					1	0	1					0.065
32	non_eu_lob*SMALL_STAFF* FREQ_CONTACT					1			0		1		0.274
33	non_eu_lob*FREQ_CONTACT* FEW_MEM_EIG								0		1	1	0.226
34	NO_OTH_EIG*no_direct_mem* FREQ_CONTACT						0			1	1		0.306
35	SMALL_STAFF*no_direct_mem* FREQ_CONTACT					1	0				1		0.323
36	no_direct_mem*FREQ_CONTACT* FEW_MEM_EIG						0				1	1	0.290
Terms id	Terms of parsimonious solution	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverage]	[ms_corporatism]	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	Raw coverage (covS)
	Total 1	1	0	2	4	6	2	5	9	6	12	4	
	Total 0	1	9	2	2	3	7	13	2	1	1	8	
	Total non-empty	2	9	4	6	9	10	18	11	7	14	13	

This table 5.65 provides information about combinations of conditions explaining NIGs' perceived congruence. A first overview of the table confirms the limited diversity obtained by

the QCA with the full model. As noted above, the analysis of the dataset tends to lead to “individualisation” of explanations of the outcome of each case (or restrained groups of cases). This is reflected by the important breadth of the “parsimonious” solution (36 terms) denoting a low degree of parsimony (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, p. 48). Given this low degree of parsimony, it makes no sense to comment and analyse each term of the parsimonious solution. However, to fulfil the exploratory purpose of this analysis, some elements can be highlighted.

Five solution’s terms cover the explanation of at least one third of the cases with an outcome 1. These terms are the following:

- non_eu_sal*no_direct_mem*FREQ_CONTACT (covS = 0.419)
- ms_eu_leverage*non_eu_sal*FREQ_CONTACT (covS = 0.387)
- non_eu_sal*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG (covS = 0.371)
- SMALL_STAFF*few_mem_eig (covS = 0.355)
- cause*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG (covS = 0.339)

The significance of the condition FREQ_CONTACT appears clearly. In the table, FREQ_CONTACT appears also five times combined with FEW_MEM_EIG. This suggests that the frequent interactions between NIGs and EIGs may be part of the explanation of NIG’s perceived congruence. Coming back to the rationale behind this condition, frequent contacts were expected to lead to perceived congruence and this for two reasons. First, frequent contacts participate to a socialisation process which makes NIGs more inclined to align themselves with their European counterparts. The density of contacts leads to perceived congruence of positions. For instance, the socialisation process can be induced by a ‘European role’ attributed to NIGs’ staff members or representatives. This situation is illustrated by the following interviewee:

We know our counter boards [within the EIG]. [...] So, for example, I represent [the EIG], I don't represent Malta, I represent [the EIG] on the working-group by the European Commission on the modernisation of higher education, myself. (Interview 49, Maltese sectional group)

These ‘European duties’ that national staff members carry out contribute also to the socialisation process that brings perceived congruence, through familiarisation with European policy making. Second, frequent contacts generate also more chances for NIGs to influence their EIGs’ positions (which thus lead to perceived congruence). The vice-president of a French cause group acknowledges this situation and describes how its organisation managed to have more contacts between the staff of each ‘thematic unit’ (or ‘theme’, meaning a particular team within the organisation which is focused on a specific issue) and their ‘corresponding EIG’:

We realised that what works the best is the relationship between each theme, and the corresponding theme at the European level. [...] Therefore, we are reinforcing, for each theme, the contacts, we can say almost on a daily basis, between the theme and its correspondent at the European level. So, we are strengthening the political relationship, supporting it, assisting it, in terms of projects, in terms of time allotment, so that each theme has its permanent link with its corresponding European organisation. (Interview 30, French cause group)¹⁷¹

The importance of frequent contacts makes even more sense when considered as combined with the condition FEW_MEM_EIG. Indeed, when an EIG has few members, each member organisation has more opportunities to make its voice heard. It is therefore likely that each member’s voice will have impact. Consequently, NIGs will tend to be satisfied with EIGs’ positions. Moreover, few members amongst an EIG may also have a positive impact on the socialisation process, as familiarity may be higher amongst few members (compared to broad membership of large EIG)¹⁷².

Another point to highlight is the significance of (the absence of) condition non_eu_sal in many solution’s terms. This joins the observation made in the descriptive analysis of this condition in point 5.5.7. The condition non-saliency of EU issues has the opposite effect to the one expected.

¹⁷¹ Original quote in French: *Puisqu'en fait on s'est rendu compte que ce qui marchait mieux c'est des relations entre chaque thématique avec la thématique correspondante au niveau européen. Donc on est en train, (incompréhensible), on est en train de se rendre compte qu'en fait le, le problème n'est pas institutionnelle, le problème il est pour nous beaucoup plus thématique, et donc en fait nous renforçons au sein de chaque thématique le lien, on peut le dire quasiment quotidien, entre la thématique et son correspondant au niveau européen. Donc en fait on est en train d'enrichir la relation politique, de la soutenir, d'assister, en terme de projets, en terme de temps disponible, pour que chaque thématique ait son lien permanent avec les organisations européennes correspondantes.*

¹⁷² In the same vein, the fact that some EIGs have a ‘limited membership’ might induce more perceived congruence. For instance, one of the EIGs under scrutiny only allows the membership of one NIG per member states, while some countries count more than one NIG in that sector. This situation leads to the mitigation of conflict within the EIG, because each NIG want to keep its position of ‘THE national interlocutor’ for its country (interview 98, Swedish sectional group not member of the EIG). It is also interesting to note that these EIGs’ ‘limited membership’ might also be considered as a strategy of European groups to build their legitimacy (towards their members). Incidentally, studying the strategies used by EIGs to ‘secure’ the support of their members is an interesting avenue for further research (see section 6.4, in the General Conclusions).

The identification by NIGs of EU issues as salient (= absence of condition `non_eu_sal`) seems to participate considerably in the explanation of NIGs perceived congruence. The combination of `non_eu_sal` with `FREQ_CONTACT` (in the three solution's terms with the highest raw coverage) is not surprising as both conditions can be linked. The saliency of EU issues from the perspective of NIGs can induce more contacts with their EIGs, while frequent contacts can 'convince' NIGs of the importance of European issues (contacts raising the awareness of NIGs about the 'European roles' they can play).

Moreover, from a more general point of view, the table suggests that parsimonious solution's terms combines more conditions related to EU activities of national groups. This means that further research on the issue should focus more on EU related activities of NIGs than on their domestic environment or their organisational features. This conclusion confirms the reflections based on the analysis of the conservative combination of sufficient conditions for the presence of the outcome (previous point). Again, NIGs' organisational characteristics but more importantly NIGs' EU-related activities seem to outweigh the impact of domestic environment on NIGs' perceived congruence.

5.9.3. Conservative combination of sufficient conditions for the absence of the outcome to be explained

The table 5.66 provides the (conservative) solution explaining the absence of the outcome to be explained, which is the 'absence' of NIG's perceived congruence (here, outcome 0, see the penultimate column).

Table 5.66 Solution for the absence of the outcome (conservative)

Solutions id	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverag e]	[ms_corporatis m]	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem _]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	Outcome	n cases
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0		1	0	1	0	2
2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
3	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
4	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
5	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	2
6	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
7	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
8	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1
Total 1	6	4	3	2	3	4	4	3	4	5	4		
Total 0	2	4	5	6	5	4	4	4	4	3	4		
Total non- empty	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	7	8	8	8		

Given the exploratory purpose of this analysis, the objective of scrutinising this table is to highlight some elements that might be more significant to explain the absence of NIGs' perceived congruence. An indication might be offered by numbers of conditions that are present or absent in all solutions terms (see penultimate and antepenultimate rows). No condition clearly emerges (even if two of them are more present than the others: MS_OLD and FREQ_CONTACT). More importantly, one combination of present conditions is more present amongst all solution's terms: the combination MS_OLD*MS_EU_LEVERAGE*NO_DIRECT_MEM is present in four terms (covering 5 cases). This suggests that combination of these conditions may be significant to explain (at least partially) the absence of NIGs' perceived congruence. In the dataset, this combination correspond to French umbrella organisations. However, when coming back to cases via a closer look at the interviews with the concerned NIGs, it seems difficult to explain the logic of this configuration. Indeed, these groups seem to share a point. They all show ideological divergences with their European groups. This seems difficult to link with the fact that they do not have direct members or that they come from a state which has been a member of the EU for several years. Albeit, the institutional leverage France enjoys within the EU (and thus indirectly

NIGs from this state within EIGs structures) may explain why French groups voice ‘openly’ their divergences within their EIGs and manifest their disagreement. Indeed, in the event of discord, French groups can clearly express their disagreement by considering that their voice should be heard (or heard more than that of groups from smaller or newer member states). This situation has been observed in interviews with different French NIGs who consider that the 2004 enlargement has led to a situation where French voices are no longer heard within European arenas:

Le passage à 28 a été une catastrophe. C’est à dire, jusqu’à 15 tout allait bien, et quand on a eu les derniers élargissements [...] il y a un phénomène, il y a eu un phénomène de dilution. (Interview 24)

Ce que je veux souligner, c’est que les conditions de, du lobbying, ont totalement changées. Alors, du fait de l’élargissement évidemment, parce qu’il y a bien plus d’acteurs. Depuis 2004, il y a une rupture parce que, il y a tous les autres pays qui sont présents, c’est plein d’autres nouveaux acteurs, plein d’autres paramètres, donc c’est beaucoup plus compliqué qu’avant. Il y a beaucoup plus d’intervenants. (Interview 26)

Avec l’élargissement, l’influence française a diminué. (Interview 28)

All things considered, the examination of the conservative combinations of sufficient conditions for the absence of ‘NIGs’ perceived congruence’ does not allow to draw clear conclusions. However, it is interesting to note that explanations of absence of perceived congruence might include elements related to NIGs’ domestic environment, contrary to the explanation of presence of perceived congruence where these ‘contextual national conditions’ are not significant. This contrast is an illustration of what can be highlighted by QCA. Indeed, QCA identifies explanations of the absence of the outcome as ‘independent’ from explanations of the presence of the outcome. Explanations of absence of the outcome are not the inverse explanations of the presence of the outcome.

5.9.4. Parsimonious combination of sufficient conditions for the absence of the outcome to be explained

The table 5.67 hereafter provides the (parsimonious) solution explaining the absence of the outcome to be explained; (‘absence’ of NIGs’ perceived congruence). As a reminder, the solution provided in the table is the result of a minimisation process which includes logical remainders to obtain the parsimonious combination of sufficient conditions to explain absence of the outcome.

Table 5.67 Solution for the absence of the outcome (parsimonious)

Terms id	Terms of parsimonious solution	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverage]	[ms_corporatism]	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_job]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	Raw coverage (covS)
1	MS_OLD*freq_contact*FEW_MEM_EIG	1								0	1		0.400
2	cause*NON_EU_SAL*small_staff				0	0		1					0.400
3	cause*NO_OTH_EIG*small_staff*NO_DIRECT_MEM				0	0	1			1			0.300
4	ms_old*no_oth_eig*no_direct_mem*freq_contact	0					0			0	0		0.100
5	ms_eu_leverage*no_oth_eig*no_direct_mem*freq_contact		0				0			0	0		0.100
6	MS_EU_LEVERAGE*CAUSE*NO_DIRECT_MEM*FREQ_CONTACT		1		1		1				1		0.200
7	ms_corporatism*CAUSE*NO_DIRECT_MEM*FREQ_CONTACT			0	1		1				1		0.200
8	no_oth_eig*no_direct_mem*freq_contact*FEW_MEM_EIG						0			0	0	1	0.100
Total 1		1	1	0	2	0	3	1	0	1	2	2	
Total 0		1	1	1	2	2	3	0	0	3	4	0	
Total non-empty		2	2	1	4	2	6	1	0	4	6	2	

Two solution's terms have a raw coverage of 0.4. These terms are the following: MS_OLD*freq_contact*FEW_MEM_EIG and cause*NON_EU_SAL*small_staff. One combination of conditions is present in two solution's terms: CAUSE*NO_DIRECT_MEM*FREQ_CONTACT. These results indicate a complex situation where significant conditions or combinations of conditions appear to be difficult to identify. Again, the table confirms the limited diversity obtained by the QCA. The analysis of the dataset lead to the "individualisation" of the explanations of the absence of the outcome. Consequently, it makes no sense to comment and analyse each term of the parsimonious solution because this would lead to describing precisely 'relatively unique' cases.

5.10. Conclusion of the second empirical analysis

This chapter has presented the Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) which aimed to replying at the second research question: under which conditions do national interest groups perceive their policy positions as congruent (or not congruent) with the policy positions of their European interest groups? As a preamble to this conclusion, one point must be reminded about

the case selection (Chapter 3, section 3.3) and its impact on the generalisability of the results. Indeed, one should keep in mind that the results of this QCA are *transferable* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Morgan, 2007) even if they are based on the analysis of some types of interest groups¹⁷³. The following conclusion is organised in two parts. First, some limitations of this exploratory QCA are exposed. Then, the results of the analysis are summarised.

The QCA presented in the previous pages did not produce cohesive and parsimonious results explaining NIGs' perceptions about the congruence of their positions with the ones of their EIGs. The tested models appeared to be ambiguous. Two reasons explaining this might be pointed out. On the one hand, several issues surrounded measurement and selection of some conditions. The back-and-forth movement between *ideas* and *evidence* (C. Ragin, 2000) allows to put some conditions in perspective. Two examples illustrate conditions' measurement and selection issues. For instance, condition 6 (no direct members) appeared not to be relevant to take into account without information about the *interest* of NIGs' members about EU issues (or in other words, the *saliency* of EU issues for NIGs' members). The actual *involvement* of members in NIGs' internal consultations about EU issues would also be relevant to take into consideration. Moreover, the measurement (and the related dichotomisation) of condition 5 (small staff) appeared to be complex and empirically problematic. Some NIGs might have a small staff (for instance, fewer than 10 members) but have a full-time employee only dedicated to EU issues, while others NIGs might have 20 staff members without any officer specifically in charge of EU affairs. Moreover, some NIGs' employees have nothing to do with lobbying and advocacy or other tasks related to the purpose of interest groups (even in 'poorly staffed' NIGs). For instance, some NIGs under scrutiny employ cooks or a country guards. These divergent situations make the comparison of 'number of staff members' complex.

On the other hand, there were no certainties about the orientation of many propositions or conjectures on the basis of conditions. For some conditions, the same reasoning could be applied conversely. But of course, this is due to the exploratory purpose of this QCA. From a cumulative perspective, the objective of this analysis is precisely to test some conditions, which is useful for further theory-building. Given these points, even if the model tested appeared to be ambiguous, the analysis participates in the understanding of the relationships between NIGs

¹⁷³ Some types of interest groups are not covered by the empirical cases of this research. The main type of groups which is not included in the sample is cause groups working in other fields than environment (e.g. organisations working on social issues or human rights). However, the sample is quite diverse and includes many groups, different in many ways, and that engage in interest representation across a broad variety of issues. This diversity allows the transferability of this analysis's results.

and their EIGs by identifying some conditions that seem to be more significant to explain NIGs' perceptions about the congruence of their positions with the ones of their EIGs.

The main challenging point of the QCA presented in this dissertation is an important model ambiguity that appeared during the analysis. This model ambiguity has been revealed by the computation problem of TOSMANA. The software package never managed to process the minimisation. Despite the relative great number of cases empirically observed (82), the application of the full model to the dataset created an issue of "limited diversity" (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, p. 27). This limited diversity tends to the "individualisation" of explanation of each particular case. QCA did not succeed in reaching some degree of parsimony (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, p. 48). To overcome the computation issue, the minimisation was processed with the R package QCA (Duşa, 2018, forthcoming). Moreover, in order to give meaning to the very long solutions resulting from the minimisation process, it has been decided to provide original representations of solutions' terms with four tables. These tables are simplified representations of solutions computed by the R package QCA ('raw solutions' are provided in appendixes, document a.5.1) which aims to make the results more intelligible. The purpose of the analyses of tables was to reveal the combinations of conditions that would deserve particular attention in further research. Given the exploratory purpose of this QCA, the analyses of the tables were directed towards the identification of the most significant elements amongst the substantial set of results obtained. The following paragraphs summarise these significant elements, first about the explanation of the presence of NIGs' perceived congruence (outcome=1) and then about the absence of NIGs' perceived congruence (outcome=0).

The examination of the conservative solution explaining the presence of NIGs' perceived congruence allows to draw some interesting conclusions. First, the relationship between NIGs' domestic environments and presence of the outcome is less pronounced than the relationship between NIGs' organisational features or NIGs' EU-related activities and the outcome. Indeed, combinations between elements such as *frequent contacts* between NIGs and EIGs, *NIGs' limited staff* and *NIGs' usage of single 'European networking venue'* (membership to only one EIG) were identified as significant to explain perceived congruence. More importantly, the significance of these elements suggests that NIGs' representative delegates who make juncture between NIGs and EIGs constitute important elements to scrutinise to better understand NIGs' perceived congruence. Indeed, a closer look at these delegates would allow to deepen understanding of the three conditions identified as important and their combinations. NIGs' representative delegates and how and for how long these national actors are 'socialised to

Europe' might thus deserve special attention in the future. Overall, as similarly suggested by analyses of conservative and parsimonious solution's terms, NIGs' organisational characteristics but more importantly NIGs' EU-related activities seem to outweigh the impact of domestic environment on NIGs' perceived congruence.

Concerning the absence of 'NIGs' perceived congruence', the parsimonious solution indicates a complex situation where significant conditions or combinations of conditions cannot be identified. Consequently, no meaningful results can be retrieved from this part of the analysis. On the contrary, even if the examination of the conservative combinations of sufficient conditions also does not allow to draw clear conclusions, one emerge from the analysis of the solution. Indeed, it is interesting to note that explanations of absence of perceived congruence seem to include elements related to NIGs' domestic environment, contrary to significant elements participating in the explanation of the presence of perceived congruence summarised above. This contrast is an illustration of the added value of QCA as a method. Indeed, QCA allows to identify explanations of the absence of the outcome as 'independent' from explanations of the presence of the outcome.

Ultimately, linking results of this analysis of NIGs perceived congruence and findings of the previous empirical analysis on NIGs' perceptions about their EIGs' legitimacy allows to draw crucial conclusions about interest representation in the EU. If the second empirical analysis presented in this chapter is not a direct follow up of the findings of the first empirical analysis presented in the previous chapter, the examinations of results of both analyses together is enlightening. Two complementary elements are here highlighted. On the one hand, one should note that the analysis of NIGs' perceived congruence is based on a norm-guided approach of EIGs' internal legitimacy. This refers to the analysis of legitimacy regarding a predefined criterion: in order to consider an EIG as legitimate, its members have to perceive European positions as congruent with their own national positions. This conception rests on the assumption that EIGs have to be 'representative' of their NIGs (in the sense of reflecting their positions). Indirectly, this conception is also based on EIGs' claims. As shown above, EIGs put the focus on the fact that they represent their NIGs ("we speak for" or "representing the interest of" NIGs, see the box 5.1 above). Following this, one should note that the vast majority of NIGs perceive their EIGs' positions as congruent with their own positions (68 out of 82). This means that they perceive their EIGs' positioning as aligned with their own which must be assessed positively regarding the criterion under scrutiny.

On the other hand, this result must be put in perspective following the result of the qualitative analysis presented in Chapter 4. As a reminder, the choice to study positions congruence is based on the assumption that the legitimacy of EIGs is anchored in their function to represent NIGs. In order to be considered as legitimate organisations, European groups must represent faithfully their member organisations' positions or at least act in accordance with national groups' will. Consequently, the norm-guided analysis of organisational legitimacy of EIGs presented in this chapter is based on a conception of legitimacy depending on national groups' perceptions that their EIGs' positions are congruent with their own positions. However, the inductive thematic analysis revealed that congruence of European and national positions is not the most important preoccupation of NIGs (see Chapter 4, section 4.5, for details). While one may argue that an efficient EU policy making process, EIGs' positions must be congruent with NIGs' positions, the congruence of positions is not the primary preoccupation of national groups themselves. All in all, this result shows that the criterion used to assess the legitimacy of EIGs – selected on the basis of a normative expectation which is that the function of EIG is to transmit the positions of their members to EU institutions – is not considered as crucial by NIGs themselves.

As a concluding remark, it is interesting to add a historical perspective to the analysis of the 'delegation' of EU representation functions by national actors to their European umbrellas. In a recent history dissertation about the europeanisation of German and Belgian trade unions between 1972 and 1985, Jouan (2017) notes that national organisations relied heavily on their European representative organisation (ETUC). They had 'delegated' representation tasks to the European umbrella which was autonomously in charge of EU issues. They did not 'upload' their positions to their European organisations but only take notice periodically (and ex-post) of the activity of their European umbrella organisation¹⁷⁴. Consequently, the importance of perceived congruence should not be overestimated (at least when taking into account NIGs' viewpoint, and this even in a longer perspective). NIGs 'assess' EIGs legitimacy against standards grounded in a 'partnership' conception of EU-Society relations, where EIGs act as

¹⁷⁴ An interesting original quote (in French) from Jouan (2017, p. 548) is the following: "*Institutionnellement, [les syndicats nationaux] se reposent fortement sur leur agent européen – la Confédération européenne des syndicats – à qui ils ont délégué leur représentation européenne. Les discussions de fond sont rares dans les bureaux des organisations syndicales. Quand y on évoque l'Europe c'est le plus souvent pour y évoquer la CES, sa constitution, son fonctionnement et ses membres. Comme si la tâche européenne des bureaux consistait surtout à organiser – dans son administration et ses modalités – la délégation de pouvoir du niveau national vers un acteur supranational, chargé pour sa part de traiter les questions européennes en profondeur. Dans le cadre de cette délégation, ceux qui siègent au sein de l'organe supranational font périodiquement et ex post rapport au bureau sur le travail de leur agent européen.*"

central players and more importantly as trustees (and not as delegates). In such an arrangement of division of labour between NIGs and EIGs, congruence of positions becomes less crucial. That being said, EU institutions' consultation instruments should thus acknowledge such a situation. And, EIGs' claims should thus be taken with caution.

General Conclusions

6.1. Wrapping up

This dissertation begins with a recent illustration of the puzzling gap that may appear between national interest groups and European interest groups, which are supposed to represent the former at the EU level. From a democratic perspective, this disconnection between NIGs and EIGs might be considered as problematic. Incidentally, it has been considered as such by scholarly literature on interest groups in the EU with a focus on EIGs' democratic legitimacy (Johansson & Lee, 2014; Rodekamp, 2013; Wiercx, 2011). These previous studies evaluated EIGs' internal democracy quite negatively. At the same, given the neglect of member organisations' perceptions, little was known about the viewpoint of national groups themselves, and how they perceive the role of their European representative organisations. This dissertation aimed at filling this gap by 'unpacking' relations between NIGs and EIGs through the prism of organisational legitimacy. More precisely, the research concerns EIGs' *internal* legitimacy, i.e. legitimacy from the perspective of NIGs. Legitimacy was analysed with regard to dyadic relations between national member organisations and EIGs, with a focus on NIGs' perceptions.

This research particularly makes sense in the context of an evolving EU interest representation system. From a broader perspective, with regard to this system, a participatory turn has been observed. As a response to the EU legitimacy crisis, EU institutions have opted for a model of interest representation in which civil society, broadly understood, is intended to participate in the European decision-making process. Choices about which actors to be included in EU consultations, as well as consultation instruments to put in place, have evolved over the years. From the mid-80s–90s, EU institutions, and particularly the Commission, implemented a partnership model – corresponding to a 'supranational neo-corporatist system of interest intermediation' – where EIGs were considered as central players. The Commission developed a 'European preference' concerning stakeholders it consults and favoured exchanges with EIGs. The delegation of EU lobbying activities to peak associations has grown over the years, reflecting the importance of EIGs in the EU interest representation system. This evolution went

hand in hand with the development, by the Commission, of a ‘European preference’ (corresponding to EU’s neo-corporatist tendencies, till the early 2000s).

Subsequently, the Commission shifted its agenda from the previous neo-corporatist approach promoting strong EIGs to a pluralist model where citizens and organisations from different levels of the European polity are encouraged to participate in the EU decision-making process. Nowadays, the European Union considers its participation model as promoting citizens’ and national organisations’ inclusion in the EU policy making process. This should foster the legitimacy of the EU by allowing different (national and citizens’) voices to be heard in Brussels. At the same time, expertise from stakeholders is still transmitted to the EU institutions through consultations of EIGs. This participatory turn – accompanied by new practices as the usage of open online consultations or the European Citizens Initiative – may constitute a challenge for the central position of EIGs (Oleart & Bouza, 2017). Consequently, has the participatory turn challenged the EIGs’ role as central players and gatekeepers vis-à-vis NIGs in terms of gaining access to EU institutions? In this context, how do NIGs conceive their EIGs’ role? Are EIGs still considered as legitimate representatives by NIGs? How do NIGs consider their EIGs’ legitimacy?

Below, the core findings are outlined, with particular attention to the understanding of the EU interest representation system and including these findings’ implications for interest groups studies and interest groups politics (6.2). Next, dissertation’s limitations are discussed, with a main emphasis laid on methodology and case selection (6.3). In section 6.4, potential avenues for further research are exposed. Finally, three takeaways are highlighted from this research about relations between NIGs and EIGs and the European interest representation system (6.5).

6.2. Discussion of the main findings

Two empirical analyses addressed the issue of NIGs’ perceptions about EIGs’ legitimacy. On the one hand, the first empirical analysis — based on a subjective approach of EIGs’ internal legitimacy — addressed NIGs’ viewpoint about EIGs’ legitimacy. The purpose of the thematic analysis (developed in Chapter 4) was to identify *elements of discourse structuring NIGs’ perceptions about EIGs’ legitimacy* (discussion of the results in point 6.2.1). On the other hand, a Qualitative Comparative Analysis — following a norm-guided approach of EIGs’ internal

legitimacy — addressed the conditions under which NIGs perceive (or do not perceive) their positions as congruent with the positions of their EIGs (discussion of the results in point 6.2.2).

6.2.1. The thematic analysis results and answers to the first research question

What are the perceptions of « EIGs legitimacy » by national interest groups?

The empirical analyses related to this research question addressed the assessment of legitimacy of EIGs in the perspective of their member organisations (NIGs), without theoretical *a priori* about criteria to take into account to ‘speak about legitimacy’. The outcome of the thematic analysis — categorising and conceptualising the content of interviews with NIGs — answers the first research question. This analysis also allows filling the academic gaps identified in Chapter 1 (section 1.3) as it provides a subjective analysis of EIGs legitimacy and brings national interest groups into the picture.

On the whole, NIGs do not challenge their EIGs legitimacy. This runs against – but is not contradictory with – results of previous research about legitimacy of European interest groups pointing that EIGs perform badly regarding *democratic* standards: aggregation of members’ interests is imperfect (Rodekamp, 2013), participation arenas (when existing) are not used (Kröger, 2016) or internal accountability channels are not functioning (Johansson & Lee, 2014). At the same time, this situation does not seem to affect the ‘trust’ of member organisations towards their EU-level representative organisations (Wiercx, 2011). The results of our qualitative analysis sheds light on this gap between the normative expectations discussed by scholars and the actual confidence of EIGs’ members (the NIGs). The legitimacy of EIGs is first and foremost conceived by scholars as an issue about *democratic* standards. Our thematic analysis, by contrast, suggests that the perceptions of NIGs about EIGs legitimacy are mainly related to *other issues* than democratic standards. Obtaining these results was possible thanks to the subjective approach of organisational legitimacy which neither analyses what organisations are, nor what they should be, but aims to understand what makes them exist within relationships with their audiences (here, their members). Indeed, the sociological institutionalist framework of the dissertation allowed to study *interactions* between organisations (and not only study organisations in either a top-down or a bottom-up perspective) and analyse their motives (Sanchez Salgado & Demidov, 2018). This study of interactions led to the identification of what do actors perceive to be the right and the wrong way of pursuing their goals, or in other words, which ideas do actors hold about what their interests are (Jenson & Mérand, 2010). Concerning precisely the answers to the research question, figures 4.3 and 4.4 (Chapter 4, section 4.3)

provide an overview of the findings. NIGs use more elements of discourse related to input legitimacy than output legitimacy when speaking about EIGs' legitimacy. Input legitimacy refers here to the conditions of procedures by which EIGs' decisions are made but more significantly on the foundations on which EIGs' positions rest. The EIGs' output legitimacy is based on the actions and achievements of EIGs that, in turn, lead to the support of their membership.

This distinction (based on the seminal distinction of types of legitimacy defined by Scharpf, 1999) can also be related to the seminal conceptualisation of support by Easton (1975). NIGs' perceptions of "European interest groups legitimacy" are predominantly structured around standards related to diffuse support which concerns, in Easton's words, evaluations of what EIGs are or represent and not of what they actually do. In this respect, our analysis has revealed that the EIGs have a consequent '*reservoir of favorable attitudes or good will*' vis-à-vis their members. This reservoir "*helps members to accept or tolerate outputs to which they are opposed or the effects of which they see as damaging to their wants*" (Easton, 1975, p. 444).

The significance of elements of discourse that can be related to diffuse support towards EIGs has important implications in terms of the role to attribute to EIGs in the EU interest representation system. Indeed, the significance of diffuse support means that EIGs are supported by their members for what they *are*, or represent in a 'symbolic sense', because they are 'champions of encompassing European constituencies'. Specific support of EIGs is less present in NIGs discourses, as elements related to 'effectiveness of lobbying' or 'substantive representation' were less observed. Even more interestingly, we have discovered that the latter elements were partly used in a negative way. The 'representativeness' of EIGs, understood here in a 'substantive sense', is partly assessed negatively by NIGs. But, as Easton (1975, p. 444) notes, "*outputs and beneficial performance may rise and fall while [diffuse] support, in the form of a generalized attachment, continues*"¹⁷⁵. This explains why some 'representational gaps' between NIGs and EIGs do not hinder the support of member organisations towards their EU-level representative organisations, as observed in this research and in previous one (Wiercx, 2011).

All things considered, if EIGs have to be treated as representatives of NIGs at the EU level, the analysis of NIGs' perceptions suggests that they must be considered first and foremost as acting

¹⁷⁵ Easton also notes that the reverse is equally true: when diffuse support is low, it represents a reserve of ill-will that may not easily be increased by outputs or performance.

as trustees of their constituencies in Brussels (and not as delegate). This has normative implications for the European democracy with regard to the role assigned to EIGs in the EU decision-making process. Though one may consider that EIGs are ‘super-conducting transmitters’ between NIGs and European officials, it appears that it is not the role assigned to EIGs by their members (Defacqz, 2018). EIGs are thus not legitimised by their members as accurate transmitters of aggregated national positions to European decision-makers, but rather as symbolic champions of encompassing constituencies. Referring again to Easton's conceptualisation, EIGs are legitimised by their member organisations for what they *are* and less for what they *do*.

6.2.2. The QCA results and answers to the second research question

Under which conditions do national interest groups perceive their policy positions as congruent (or not congruent) with the policy positions of their European interest groups?

One should note that the vast majority of cases' NIGs under scrutiny perceive their EIGs' positions as congruent with their own positions (68 out of 82). This means that they perceive their EIGs' positioning as aligned with their own and might have only minor divergences concerning policy positions details or prioritisation of policy issues to tackle first. However, this also means that there is a gap between the claim of EIGs to ‘represent NIGs’ and the actual perception of some of these NIGs (14 out of 82). This gap is important to highlight as it reveals an overall dissatisfaction of at least some NIGs regarding the ‘representativeness’ of their EIGs. It is also interesting to note that there are much more NIGs perceiving their positions as not congruent with their EIGs' positions, than those overtly challenging the legitimacy of their EIGs. Surprisingly, these two groups of national organisations do not overlap much. Only two organisations perceive their EIGs' positions as incongruent with their own positions *and* overtly challenge their EIG's legitimacy. This is in line with the results of the thematic analysis revealing that NIGs consider their EIGs as legitimate because they formally represent their constituencies more than because they act as delegates aggregating and transmitting NIGs' substantive positions at the EU level (see previous point).

The findings about NIGs' perceived congruence vis-à-vis their respective EIGs sheds further light on previous research that had unveiled representational gaps between EIGs and national organisations (Johansson & Lee, 2014). For instance, within EIGs, NIGs from large countries dominate over those from small, remote and new member states (Rodekamp, 2013). Although this may be true, it appears that this situation is not perceived as such by the ‘first concerned’,

namely NIGs themselves. A majority of them are satisfied by their EIGs' positioning. More surprisingly, half of NIGs perceiving EIGs' positions as not congruent with their own comes from France, a country that can be described without any doubt as a 'large member state'. If EIGs are "*the voice of some of their members more than others*" (Rodekamp, 2013, p. 262), the vast majority of NIGs under scrutiny in this dissertation does not perceive this situation as problematic. Additionally, one of the academic gaps identified in Chapter 1 (section 1.3) concerns the fact that EIGs legitimacy was mainly studied as regards to cause groups (also labelled as CSOs or NGOs). By bringing both sectional NIGs (and thus business groups) and cause NIGs in the analysis, this dissertation points out the similarity of both types of groups concerning their relations with their European representative organisations. Nevertheless, one should note that on the average, cause NIGs perceive their positions as more congruent with their EIGs' ones, than sectional groups.

Moreover, the main challenging point of the QCA presented in Chapter 5 also constitutes an important result of this exploratory analysis: the model tested appeared to be extremely ambiguous. This reveals an issue of "limited diversity" (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, p. 27) which means that the comparative analysis tended to an "individualisation" of the explanations of each particular case. This means that, through QCA, we did not succeed in producing much parsimony (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, p. 48). It reveals that the explanation of the (absence of) NIGs' perception of congruence goes beyond the combinations of conditions scrutinised in this research. Nevertheless, a closer look at the substantial set of results obtained from the QCA minimisations allows us to identify significant elements that might be useful for further research.

Concerning conditions under which NIGs perceive their positions as congruent with those of their EIGs, one should note that conditions related to NIGs' organisational features and NIGs' EU-related activities are more significant¹⁷⁶ than conditions about NIGs' domestic environments. More precisely, combinations between *frequent contacts* between NIGs and EIGs, *NIGs' limited staff* and *NIGs' membership to a single EIG* were identified as significant. In light of our field-based knowledge, the significance of these elements can be interpreted as an indication of the importance of NIGs' representative delegates for the understanding of NIGs' perceived congruence. Indeed, the identification of combinations of frequent contacts, limited staff and 'single European networking venue' leads us to believe that scrutinising actors directly

¹⁷⁶ Not in the statistical sense, rather in terms of being identified more frequently, through the QCA, as sufficient conditions.

concerned by these three conditions might be interesting. A single officer (or a small team) being regularly in contact with European colleagues within one EU-level organisation can constitute a combination of conditions explaining perceived congruence.

Further, looking at ‘junctures’ between NIGs and EIGs makes sense when it comes to scrutinising elements that may enable us to reach a better understanding of NIGs' perceived congruence. This being said, it must not be forgotten that the three above-mentioned conditions must always be associated with others in order to explain the presence of the outcome. Indeed, the highlighting of these three conditions is only due to a *regularity* of appearance in QCA solution terms. Overall, NIGs' organisational characteristics but more importantly NIGs' EU-related activities seem to outweigh conditions related to domestic environment when it comes to explaining NIGs' perceived congruence.

Conversely, conditions under which NIGs do not perceive their positions as congruent with the ones of their EIGs seem to concern especially NIGs' domestic environment (particularly the ‘long’ adhesion combined with the important institutional leverage of NIGs’ member state of origin). This contrast is an illustration of the added value of QCA as a method. Indeed, QCA allows to identify explanations of the absence of the outcome as ‘independent’ from explanations of the presence of the outcome (i.e. causal asymmetry). However, this result must be considered with caution since we could not draw clear conclusions when performing the QCA minimisations for the ‘absence of perceived congruence’ outcome.

Nevertheless, insights from this QCA contribute to a better understanding of NIGs' actions in the EU multilevel-polity. Indeed, this exploratory analysis' results provide food for thought, on the one hand, about research on national actors in the EU, and on the other hand, about the nature of interactions between NIGs and EIGs.

All things considered, the analysis presented in Chapter 5 is an additional illustration of the difficulty to establish a single general pattern concerning the effect of the EU multi-level system on national actors. In recent literature review of research on national CSOs, Sanchez Salgado and Demidov (2018, p. 62) note: *“while it is tempting to analyse the influence of potential explanatory factors leading to generalisations, this task seems difficult to accomplish when national and local levels are the primary focus of the analysis. A few European general trends can still be established, but these trends have very different manifestations in different member states since there are several national factors that lead to different outcomes”*. Indeed, studies

on national interest groups reveal that the effects of EU opportunities do not seem to be consistently positively related to capabilities in terms of resources or favourable (domestic) institutional environments. While some previous research lead to the conclusion that extensive resources (Eising, 2007) or well-developed interactions with national policymakers (Beyers, 2002; Beyers & Kerremans, 2012; Rumbul, 2013) explain national organisations' benefits from EU opportunities, other studies point out that 'closed' domestic opportunities (Poloni-Staudinger, 2008; Sanchez Salgado, 2017) lead to more European activities. These studies also highlight contradictions. For instance, contrary to Eising (2007), Beyers and Kerremans (2012) demonstrate that NIGs' resources (as well as the policy sector) generate little explanatory power when examining the 'europeanisation' of NIGs' activities.

The apparent deadlock in which this comparative analysis of NIGs' perception about positions congruence with their EIGs can be explained by the contradictory causal pathways explaining European activities of national actors and their consequences. The antagonist demonstrations highlighted by the literature on 'Europeanisation of national actors' finds a further illustration in the content of the tables presented all along the QCA reported in Chapter 5 (and in appendixes). This shows the difficulty of identifying not only single patterns but also combinations of key variables that could explain why NIGs perceive or do not perceive their positions as congruent with the ones of their EIGs.

Ultimately, one should note that the analysis of NIGs' perceived congruence is based on a norm-guided approach of EIGs' internal legitimacy which rests on the assumption that EIGs have to be perceived as 'representative' of their NIGs (in the sense of reflecting their positions). Indirectly, this conception is also based on EIGs' 'representative claim'. As noted above, the vast majority of NIGs (68 out of 82) indeed perceive EIGs' positions as aligned with their own, which must be assessed positively. However, this observation must be put in perspective following the results of the qualitative analysis presented in Chapter 4. This constitutes precisely the object of the following point.

6.2.3. Linking both empirical analyses

First, it must be reminded that the second empirical analysis (the QCA presented in Chapter 5) does not stem directly from the findings of the first empirical analysis presented in Chapter 4. Nevertheless, the examination of results of both analyses together is enlightening. Indeed, as revealed by the thematic analysis, the congruence between European and national positions is not the most important preoccupation of NIGs (see point 6.2.1). Consequently, when

considering NIGs' perspective, the importance of perceived congruence – which is the core of the second empirical analysis – should not be overestimated. If NIGs consider EIGs as trustees (and not as delegates), congruence of positions becomes less crucial. At the same time, one may argue that for the sake of an efficient EU policy making process, EIGs' positions must be congruent with NIGs' positions. Indeed, EIGs contribute to the input legitimacy of the EU policy making process by transmitting to institutions the opinions and requests of interest groups across the EU. An absence of perceived congruence would denote representational gaps between EIGs and NIGs (Johansson & Lee, 2014). By the same token, in order to contribute actively to the input legitimacy of the EU policy making process, EIGs should be considered by their members as acting as (national) interests aggregators (Rodekamp, 2013). A default in perceived congruence would thus reveal an imperfect aggregation of interest and would prevent EIGs to actively contribute to the enhancing of the EU legitimacy. In brief, the criterion of perceived congruence was selected on the basis of a normative expectation: the function of EIG is to *transmit* the positions of their members to EU institutions, participating thus to the legitimacy building of the European order. Indeed, civil society participation in European governance, through the establishment of 'supportive networks' allowing interest groups to take part in policy-shaping, is a response to the EU legitimacy crisis (Rhodes & Héritier, 2011; Smismans, 2006). This is why perceived congruence between NIGs and EIGs was identified as crucial. However, as a matter of fact, the results of the qualitative analysis show that this criterion, used to assess the legitimacy of EIGs with QCA, is not considered as crucial by NIGs themselves. That being said, EU institutions should acknowledge such a situation when consulting interest groups and when designing further consultation instruments. Furthermore, the results of this research highlight that EIGs' representative claim should always be considered with caution.

6.3. Caveats and limitations of the research

With regard to methodology, the subjective (and inductive) approach adopted in Chapter 4 (first empirical analysis) revealed relevant aspects of EIGs' internal legitimacy that would have remained unknown with another approach. However, the method used also displays disadvantages. First, no theory building with safe generalisation of results was possible. For instance, the effect of organisational features on discourse of NIGs remain unclear. This drawback would however only be considered as unacceptable by those who believe in the

possibility of universal generalisations in the first place. As “*there is neither a united research interest nor a unified theoretical perspective on interest groups, nor an established methodological canon*” (Eising, 2017, p. 293), contingent generalisations are then more adequate than law-like statements. Moreover, by adopting pragmatism as research epistemology (Creswell, 2009; Morgan, 2007), this dissertation acknowledges that the results are neither context-bound nor generalisable. Instead, the results are considered as *transferable* and thus can participate to a better understanding of other cases of NIGs-EIGs relations, particularly concerning sectional groups.

Another limitation concerns the research design of this dissertation. Practically, the two empirical analyses composing the research were conducted simultaneously. This simultaneity of the analyses induces some drawbacks, since the results of one analyses cannot feed the conduction of the other. Another interesting research design would have been to conduct first a thematic analysis and then a QCA, designed on the basis of the qualitative results. This was not the direction adopted. From the beginning, the choice was to use two approaches (the nom-guided and the subjective approaches) to study, in parallel, the same research object. Moreover, it must be stressed that the analysis based on ideal-types is less developed than the others and might deserve further improvement and refinement. However, one should remind that the initial purpose of that analysis was to put the outcome of the thematic analysis into perspective, in a more systematic way than a usual discussion.

Additionally, deeper descriptive analyses would have enabled us to reach a more fine-grained understanding of the phenomenon under scrutiny. For this purpose, the usage of the principal-agent model for instance, would have been particularly relevant to systematically describing situations of delegated representation tasks between NIGs and EIGs. This point is supported by the ideal of a scientific discipline “*envisioned as a pyramid, built on a firm basis of description, with a smaller amount of reevaluation, and even less theorization*” (Besbris & Khan, 2017, p. 35). Furthermore, a lot of information and data collected about the NIGs under scrutiny were overlooked or at least not fully exploited. For instance, we could have exploited these materials to set the scene and describe national groups in a more detailed way. In fact, a huge amount of data collected for the purpose of this research (via interviews but also via document collection) were actually not exploited in this dissertation. It is particularly the case for data about the fitness check of the EU Nature Legislation. This ‘all-round’ collection of data stems from the overall inductive approach adopted at the beginning of the research. Nonetheless, it opens avenues for further ‘policy-focused’ projects.

Moreover, the framing of the research – focusing on NIGs' perception about EIGs' legitimacy – might be considered at some point as too 'narrow'. Nevertheless, even if this research's perspective could be considered by some as narrow, the results emerging from the analyses do enable us to draw interesting overarching conclusions about the EU's interest representation system.

Regarding case selection, the choice to use the stakeholder consultation of the fitness check of the EU Nature Legislation as a 'gateway' for case selection also has some downsides. The main limitation is that it did not enable us to scrutinise interest groups concerned 'exclusively' by other policy issues. Even though our sample is quite diverse and includes many groups that engage in interest representation across a broad variety of topics (e.g. employers associations, a broad range environmental CSOs, industrial branch associations...), some groups concerned by other (precise) policy issues are not covered by our empirical cases. The main type of interest groups which is not included in the sample is cause groups working in other fields than environment (e.g. organisations working on social issues or human rights). This is also a rejoinder to the above-mentioned point about the impossibility of building a consistent and inclusive theory based on this research's results. However, as mentioned above, these results are not considered as either context-bound or generalisable but as *transferable*. Moreover, our strategy of contacting all member organisations of a given sample of EIGs, and more importantly the choice to conduct interviews 'on the ground' in some member states, enabled us to reach NIGs that are usually not considered by research on interest groups in Europe (Eising, 2017). This data collection process thus allowed this research to participate to knowledge building concerning the relations between NIGs and EIGs.

6.4. Potential avenues for future research

The above-mentioned limitations open up several avenues for further research. First, about further cases to scrutinise, it would be interesting to include some NIGs and EIGs that were absent from our case selection. Organisations such as national trade unions (and ETUC) or social NGOs (Wolff, 2013) could constitute interesting cases to analyse through the same lenses as the ones used in this research. Findings from such an analysis, being complementary to this dissertation, could constitute a step towards the generalisation of results. In the same vein, studying NIGs that are not member of any EIG and the reasons behind this situation would also contribute to a better understanding of NIGs-EIGs relations.

As just mentioned, studying additional cases is a way to complement the results. In-depth case studies are another means to expand our knowledge of a given phenomenon (Byrne & Ragin, 2009). As regards to this research, it can be done in two different and complementary ways. On the one hand, a case study digging deep in the understanding of one particular case might complete the results of this research. A detailed study can be conducted on one EIG and its relations with different NIGs. Such a case can be selected amongst the EIGs under scrutiny in this research. For instance, one EIG turns to be particularly interesting because it shows a particular settings as regards to its relations with its different members. Moreover, interviews have been conducted with all the members of the European umbrella in question, in the four different member states visited (concerning six NIGs: 3 French, one Maltese, one Slovenian and one Swedish). This case would be particularly instructive as three NIGs perceive their EIG as a very legitimate organisation and three others do not (incidentally, one NIG has today left the European organisation). On the other hand, a similar case study might be conducted, but with a multilevel approach. Instead of focusing only on the perspective of national organisations, an in-depth case study could analyse the perspective of one particular national organisation, as well as the perspective of regional organisations and local organisations (member of this national organisation) and even single members (companies or individual supporters). In terms of feasibility, the first option (one EIG, few NIGs) should be preferred to the second (one EIG, one NIG and its members) since the data are already collected and available for analysis.

Concerning the QCA, an interesting avenue to prolong the analysis would be to design a multi-value QCA on the basis of the results of the exploratory csQCA of this dissertation and to conduct it in a two-step approach. Two-step QCA differentiates the analysis of ‘remote’ and ‘proximate’ conditions in order to reduce the number of logical remainders (Schneider, 2009; Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, pp. 253-255). Such a procedure provides a potential solution to solve the issue of limited diversity which appeared in this dissertation's analysis (Mannewitz, 2011). In this perspective, sufficient conditions would be reassessed (with regards to their remote and proximate character) and used in a two-step approach that would allow for a significant reduction in the number logical remainders, by analysing sufficient conditions in two separate steps. The first step examines remote variables only, with the inclusion of simplifying assumptions on logical remainders. It constitutes an analysis of different ‘contexts’. The second step *“consists of multiple QCAs for different data sets because it aims at identifying combinations of proximate factors that lead to the observed outcome within the contexts found*

in step one” (Mannewitz, 2011). This approach constitutes a promising further step that would enable us to build upon the exploratory QCA conducted in this dissertation.

Further, the significance of some conditions highlighted by the exploratory QCA calls for a closer scrutiny at ‘juncture points’ between NIGs and EIGs. Rather than only looking at relations between organisations, further research could explore the relationships between *individuals* that act as contact persons between EIGs and NIGs. Such an analysis (for instance about the background, motives and working practices of NIGs’ representatives) would contribute to a better understanding of the role of those individuals operating within the NIGs and who have ‘Europe’ as part of their job description (Sbaraglia, 2017). A closer (sociological) look at these individuals would enable us to get a better or more concrete grasp of interest intermediation as it operates ‘on the ground’, at all levels of the EU-multilevel polity (Defacqz & Koutroubas, 2016). More generally, such an approach also allows to shift the research focus and scrutinise how the legitimisation of the European political order work and how the EU is promoted outside or far from Brussels (Aldrin & Dakowska, 2011). Such a research would therefore constitute a direct continuation of this dissertation by studying EU related issues, from outside the Brussels bubble.

Finally, we chose to focus on the perspective of national interest groups. Confronting the conceptions of national organisations to the ones of their European counterparts would be an obvious next step. What do EIGs do in order to foster their legitimacy vis-à-vis their members? How do EIGs tackle the issue of the unsatisfied members? Studying the strategies used by EIGs to secure the support of their members is an interesting avenue for further research. It could be potentially very enlightening to compare findings of such an analysis with the findings of this dissertation. A focus on EIGs’ ‘legitimising’ actions towards their member organisations also seems particularly relevant given the participatory turn of the EU representation system (see also above).

6.5. Three takeaways on relations between NIGs and EIGs and the EU interest representation system

- 1) Socialisation mechanisms seem to be significant when it comes to explaining positions alignment between NIGs and EIGs.

Fligstein (2008) likens EU studies to the study of an iceberg. If it is tempting to study what is visible, the foundations of what is apparent is often overlooked (Favell & Guiraudon, 2011). The exploratory QCA allowed us to identify conditions that participate in the understanding of the visible alignment between NIGs and EIGs. While the vast majority of NIGs perceive their EIGs' positions as congruent with their own, this might be explained by interactions and familiarity between national and European actors. A small staff having frequent contacts within a single 'European networking venue', constitutes a configuration that better explains perceived congruence of positions than the environment within which NIGs work. This indicates the importance of socialisation. It also highlights that alignment depends on variables upon which actors can act. More importantly, it means that alignment is not a matter of factors in which national groups are *de facto* and *ad infinitum* embedded in. This is a promising conclusion when considering the emergence of an effective and vivid European civil society, beyond Brussels. However, nowadays:

- 2) EIGs are legitimised by their members for what they *are* and less for what they *do*.

European interest groups are not legitimised by national groups as their *substitutes* at the EU level, nor as *transmitters* of an aggregated version of their positions. EIGs are rather legitimised as trusted champions of broad political objectives, to which NIGs generally adhere. EIGs are not considered by NIGs as faithful representatives of multiple national positions, but rather as EU-level organisations advocating positions that meet the same overall objectives as their members. In other words, if EIGs should be treated as representatives of NIGs at the EU level, the analysis of NIGs' perceptions suggests that they must be considered first and foremost as acting as trustees of their constituencies and not as delegates. The great diffuse support enjoyed by EIGs from their members is the consequence of NIGs' beliefs that their EIGs fulfil EU institutions' requirements to be considered as a relevant stakeholders in consultations on EU issues. This conclusion of our research supports the necessity of a shift in the EU-society relation model as embodied by the participatory turn that was initiated at the turn of this century. This point directly echoes the last one:

- 3) NIGs have not (yet) taken advantage of the participatory turn observed in the EU interest representation system in order to “enter the game” of EU interest representation.

Participatory norms have not been integrated by national interest groups. If some EIGs (and particularly, amongst them, cause groups) have participated in the construction and diffusion of the norm of participatory democracy at the EU level, it seems that European groups eventually managed to keep their privileges intact and still occupy the central position in the EU interest representation system. This situation is not seen as problematic by NIGs which acknowledge a division of labour between European and national actors. The scarcity of resources and the need to prioritise (the level of) advocacy actions may explain the satisfaction of national groups with an arrangement corresponding to the previous partnership model. Conversely, this result may seem grim for the proponents of participative democracy. However, the construction and internalisation (by different actors, and NIGs in particular) of participatory democracy at the EU level is not a linear process. Indeed, if the European Commission's will remains to get NIGs more directly involved with the EU-level – as a solution to enhance the legitimacy of the EU – it needs to acknowledge the situation exposed above and work further to implement consultation practices favouring national actors. Following this, the current non-integration by national interest groups of norms and practices related to the participatory model has not to be considered as the end of the story.

Appendixes

7.1. Appendixes of Chapter 3

The table hereafter (table a.3.1) presents the list of interviews conducted during the research. The interviews are sorted by date. The column *Itw* shows the status of each interview (Explo = exploratory interview; case = interview used for analysing a case; info = informational interview). In the column *Position of the interviewee*, if the position is followed by an asterisk, it means that the interviewee occupies an elected mandate within the organisation. The column *MS*, *City* and *Place* provide details about where the interviews were conducted (place of the interviewer). The column *Type* explains how the interview was conducted (F2F = face to face, Tel = by phone, Skype = via Skype conversation). The last column provides the length of the recordings. When cells are blank it does not mean that there is no recordings but it means that the time is not reported (*N.A.* means that no recording was made but it concern only two meetings — which were not interviews — but which are reported in the table because they constitute an informational collection of data).

Table a.3.1 List of interviews conducted

Date	Name of the organisation	Itw	Position of the interviewee	MS	City	Type	Place	Time REC
5/01/2016	Union Royal des Armateurs de Belgique	Explo	Administrateur délégué	BE	Antwerpen	F2F	Office	
6/01/2016	FEDIEX	Explo	Administrateur délégué + Conseiller environnement	BE	Mont-St-Guibert	F2F	Office	
8/01/2016	Natagora	Explo	Responsable aménagement territoire - Département Politique Générale	BE	LLN	Tel	Office	
11/01/2016	Bruxelles Nature	Explo	Président*	BE	Ixelles	F2F	Bar	
13/01/2016	Les Amis de la Terre – Belgique	Explo	Permanent - Animation & mobilisation (Simplicité Volontaire) + Projets de communication + Lien avec locales, projet jeune et réseau européen (FoEE)	BE	Namur	F2F	Office	
14/01/2016	Fédération des Jeunes Agriculteurs	Explo	Chargé de missions - suivi des politiques agricoles + représentant de la FJA au sein du CEJA	BE	Gembloux	F2F	Office	
14/01/2016	Accueil Champêtre en Wallonie	Explo	Chargée de mission - Hébergements	BE	Gembloux	F2F	Office	
15/01/2016	Fédération Belge des Entreprises Electriques et Gazières	Explo	General Manager	BE	Bruxelles	F2F	Office	
15/01/2016	Fédération de l'Industrie Cimentière Belge	Explo	Directeur	BE	Watermael-Boitsfort	F2F	Office	
19/01/2016	Biowallonie	Explo	Directeur	BE	Namur	F2F	Office	
20/01/2016	Nature & Progrès Belgique	Explo	Secrétaire Général	BE	Jambes	F2F	Office	

21/01/2016	Agoria	Explo	EU Affairs Coordinator + Chargé du secteur ferroviaire, chargé des liens avec UNIFE	BE	Schaerbeek	F2F	Office	
22/01/2016	Entente Nationale pour la Protection de la Nature	Explo	Co-Président*	BE	Gottechain	F2F	Private House	
25/01/2016	Collège des Producteurs - Secteur Aquacole (Conseil de filière wallonne piscicole)	Explo	Chargé de mission - Secteur Aquacole	BE	Namur	F2F	Office	
25/01/2016	Fédération des Gîtes de Wallonie	Explo	Présidente*	BE	Jambes	F2F	Office	
26/01/2016	WWF - Belgique	Explo	Biodiversity Policy Officer	BE	Bruxelles	F2F	Office	
26/01/2016	Fédération du Dragage Belge	Explo	Administrateur - Directeur	BE	Woluwe- Saint- Pierre	F2F	Office	
27/01/2016	Fédération Inter-Environnement Wallonie	Explo	Chargé de mission "Milieu rural"	BE	Namur	F2F	Office	
28/01/2016	Cercle des guides-nature du brabant	Explo	Président*	BE	Ixelles	F2F	Bar	
1/02/2016	Fédération wallonne de l'Agriculture	Explo	Conseiller au Service d'Etudes	BE	Gembloux	F2F	Office	
2/02/2016	Road Federation Belgium	Explo	Secrétaire Général + Ancien Secrétaire Général	BE	LLN	F2F	University	
2/02/2016	Les Propriétaires ruraux de la Wallonie	Explo	Secrétaire Général	BE	Namur	F2F	Office	
4/02/2016	Fédération Inter-Environnement Bruxelles	Explo	Chargé de mission "Environnement" + Juriste	BE	Anderlecht	F2F	Office	
2/11/2016	Union professionnelle artisanale	Case	Secretary General	FR	Paris	F2F	Office	00:59:54
3/11/2016	<i>Union française de l'électricité</i>	<i>Info</i>	<i>Colloque de l'UFE</i>	<i>FR</i>	<i>Paris</i>	<i>F2F</i>	<i>Conference Center</i>	<i>N.A.</i>
4/11/2016	Mouvement des Entreprises de France	Case	European Affairs Director	FR	Paris	F2F	Bar	00:51:33
4/11/2016	Fédération des Industries Ferroviaires	Case	European Affairs Advisor	FR	Levallois- Perret	F2F	Office	01:17:54

7/11/2016	Union routière de France	Case	Director	FR	Paris	F2F	Office	01:15:45
7/11/2016	Fransylva - Forestiers Privés de France	Case	Director General	FR	Paris	F2F	Office	00:46:33
8/11/2016	France Nature Environnement	Case	Vice-President*	FR	Paris	F2F	Office	01:01:49
9/11/2016	Jeunes Agriculteurs	Case	Manager of the International and Economic Departement	FR	Paris	F2F	Office	00:54:51
10/11/2016	Syndicat des Équipements de la Route	Case	CEO	FR	Paris	F2F	Office	00:35:40
10/11/2016	Union des Syndicats de l'Industrie Routière Française	Case	CEO	FR	Paris	F2F	Office	01:12:11
14/11/2016	Fédération nationale des Chasseurs	Case	Director General	FR	Issy-les-Moulineaux	F2F	Office	01:40:25
16/11/2016	Zero Waste France	Case	Legal Advisor	FR	Paris	F2F	Office	01:06:24
16/11/2016	Union des Ports de France	Case	CEO	FR	Paris	F2F	Office	01:02:14
17/11/2016	Union des Armateurs à la Pêche de France	Case	CEO	FR	Paris	F2F	Office	01:45:46
18/11/2016	Fédération nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles	Case	Manager of the International and Agricultural Policies Departement	FR	Paris	F2F	Office	00:55:21
25/11/2016	Confédération générale des petites et moyennes entreprises	Case	Policy Advisor	BE	Bruxelles	F2F	Office	00:54:40
29/11/2016	Koperattivi Malta	Case	Secretary General	MT	Qormi	F2F	Office	01:19:38
4/12/2016	Malta Organic Agriculture Movement	Case	President*	MT	Wardija	F2F	Car/School	00:42:28
5/12/2016	Malta Chamber of SMEs	Case	CEO	MT	Valletta	F2F	Office	00:40:41
6/12/2016	BirdLife Malta	Case	CEO	MT	Xemxija	F2F	Office	00:54:46
7/12/2016	Friends of the Earth - Malta	Case	Director	MT	Valletta	F2F	Bar	00:52:02
8/12/2016	Malta Federation of Professional Associations + Malta Council for Economical and Social Development	Info	President*	MT	Valletta	F2F	Bar	

12/12/2016	Federation of Maltese Aquaculture Producers	Case	Executive Secretary	MT	Valletta	F2F	Law Firm	01:14:13
12/12/2016	<i>Malta Council for Economical and Social Development</i>	<i>Info</i>	<i>Civil Society Committee Meeting</i>	<i>MT</i>	<i>Valletta</i>	<i>F2F</i>	<i>Office</i>	<i>N.A.</i>
12/12/2016	Anti-Poverty Forum Malta	Info	Treasurer*	MT	Valletta	F2F	Bar	
14/12/2016	Malta Business Bureau (Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry - MCCEI + Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association)	Case	CEO	MT	Birkirkara	F2F	Office	01:15:34
14/12/2016	Nature Trust Malta	Case	International Officer & Treasurer*	MT	Valletta	F2F	Bar	00:38:31
14/12/2016	Federazzjoni Kaccaturi Nassaba Konservazzjonisti	Case	CEO	MT	Msida	F2F	Office	00:48:16
15/12/2016	Matla-EU Steering & Action Committee	Info	Communication Manager	MT	Valletta	F2F	Office	
16/01/2017	Union française de l'électricité	Case	European Affairs Advisor	BE	Bruxelles	F2F	Office	01:01:14
31/01/2017	Les Amis de la Terre - France	Case	Campaigner	BE	LLN	Skype	University	00:42:11
31/01/2017	Confédération Nationale de la Mutualité, de la Coopération et du Crédit Agricoles	Case	Director	BE	LLN	Tel	University	00:33:02
10/02/2017	Fédération des Gîtes de France	Case	Deputy director	BE	LLN	Tel	University	00:39:58
13/02/2017	Union des Métiers et des Industries de l'Hôtellerie	Case	Director of Law department and European Affairs	BE	LLN	Tel	University	00:48:44
13/02/2017	Fédération des Gîtes de France	Info	Director of the Departemental Section - Isère	BE	LLN	Tel	University	
16/02/2017	Syndicat Français de l'Industrie Cimentière	Case	CEO	BE	LLN	Tel	University	00:51:29
22/02/2017	Association Générale des Producteurs de Blé et autres céréales	Case	Head of Economics and International Affairs	BE	LLN	Skype	University	01:17:50

2/03/2017	Association française des industries des produits de construction	Case	CEO	BE	LLN	Tel	University	01:00:15
3/03/2017	Générations Futures	Case	Coordinator	BE	LLN	Skype	University	00:48:54
9/03/2017	Fédération Nationale d'Agriculture Biologique	Case	European Affairs Manager	BE	LLN	Skype	University	00:55:14
14/03/2017	Ribiska Zveza Slovenije	Case	Honorary President*	SI	Ljubljana	F2F	Bar	00:57:05
15/03/2017	Zavod RS za Varstvo Narave	Info	Senior Nature Conservation Advisor	SI	Ljubljana	F2F	Office	
15/03/2017	Zveza slovenske podeželske mladine	Case	Volunteer in Charge of International Affairs*	SI	Ljubljana	F2F	Office	01:04:52
16/03/2017	Turistično gostinska zbornica Slovenije - Tourism and Hospitality Chamber of Slovenia	Case	President* of the Slovenian Hotel Managers Association (in charge of the relations with HOTREC)	SI	Ljubljana	F2F	Office	00:43:40
16/03/2017	Združenje Delodajalcev Slovenije - Association of Employers of Slovenia	Case	Secretary General	SI	Ljubljana	F2F	Office	00:49:11
16/03/2017	Ekologi Brez Meja - Ecologists without Border	Info	Secretary General	SI	Ljubljana	F2F	Office	
17/03/2017	Slocem	Case	President*	SI	Anhovo	F2F	Office	01:09:42
21/03/2017	Lovska Zveza Slovenije	Case	Director	SI	Ljubljana	F2F	Office	00:44:09
21/03/2017	Energetska Zbornica Slovenije - Slovenska sekcija EURELECTRIC	Case	President*	SI	Kranj	F2F	Office	00:49:29
22/03/2017	Focus	Case	Head of Energy Affairs	SI	Ljubljana	F2F	Office	00:56:15
22/03/2017	Umanotera	Case	Project manager	SI	Ljubljana	F2F	Office	01:03:04
24/03/2017	Združenje turističnih kmetij Slovenije	Case	Adviser for Development of Rural Tourism	SI	Celje	F2F	Office	00:48:15
24/03/2017	Društvo Temno Nebo Slovenije – Dark Sky Slovenia	Case	Board Member*	SI	Ljubljana	F2F	Bar	01:26:56

27/03/2017	Zadružna zveza Slovenije	Case	Head of Departement of Cooperative Affairs	SI	Ljubljana	F2F	Office	01:12:23
27/03/2017	Društvo za opazovanje in proučevanje ptic Slovenije	Case	Conservation ornithologist	SI	Ljubljana	F2F	Bar	01:08:14
28/03/2017	University of Ljubljana - Centre for Political Science Research	Info	Professor & Doctor	SI	Ljubljana	F2F	University	
29/03/2017	Kmetijsko gozdarska zbornica Slovenije	Case	Project Manager on European Affairs	SI	Ljubljana	F2F	Office	01:09:31
30/03/2017	Obrtno-podjetniška Zbornica Slovenije	Case	Adviser for Economic Interest representation in Slovenia and in the EU	SI	Ljubljana	F2F	Office	00:42:01
30/03/2017	Inštitut za trajnostni razvoj	Case	Director	SI	Ljubljana	F2F	Bar	01:16:58
4/04/2017	Zveza Lastikov Godzov Slovenije	Case	Secretary General*	BE	LLN	Skype	University	00:43:01
18/04/2017	Sportfiskarna	Case	Conservation Manager	SE	Göteborg	F2F	Office	01:03:08
18/04/2017	Air Pollution & Climate Secretariat - Luftförorenings- och klimatsekretariatet	Case	Air Pollution Expert	SE	Göteborg	F2F	Office	00:46:28
19/04/2017	Svensk Sjöfart	Case	Director Shipping Policy/Executive vice President	SE	Göteborg	F2F	Office	00:48:50
20/04/2017	KRAV	Case	Standards Officer	SE	Uppsala	F2F	Office	00:57:02
20/04/2017	Miljöorganisationernas kärnavfallsgranskning	Case	Director	SE	Stockholm	F2F	Office	00:58:16
21/04/2017	Visita	Case	Senior Legal Adviser	SE	Stockholm	F2F	Office	00:35:49
21/04/2017	Energiföretagen Sverige	Case	Director of EU Affairs	SE	Stockholm	F2F	Office	00:55:34
21/04/2017	Sveriges Hamnar	Case	CEO	SE	Stockholm	F2F	Office	00:46:08
23/04/2017	Föreningen Sveriges Fäbodbrukare	Case	International Representative*	SE	Edsbyn	F2F	Ski Resort	00:51:03
24/04/2017	Svemin – Branschorganisationen för gruvor, mineral- och metallproducenter i Sverige	Case	Director Environment and Coordinator EU Affairs	SE	Stockholm	F2F	Office	00:45:45
25/04/2017	Lantbrukarnas Riksförbund	Case	Secretary to the Board	SE	Stockholm	F2F	Office	00:56:07

25/04/2017	Lantbrukarnas Riksförbund Ungdomen	Case	International delegate* + officer	SE	Stockholm	F2F	Office	00:39:46
25/04/2017	Företagarna	Case	Head of unit of analysis and opinion	SE	Stockholm	F2F	Office	00:49:05
26/04/2017	Spillkråkan	Info	Board Member – Director*	SE	Stockholm	F2F	Bar	
27/04/2017	Jägarnas Riksförbund	Info	Nature Conservation Manager	SE	Södertälje	F2F	Office	
27/04/2017	Swedtrain	Case	Secretary General	SE	Stockholm	F2F	Office	00:43:40
4/05/2017	Jördens Vänner	Case	Head of Unit Advocacy & Campaign	BE	LLN	Skype	University	00:38:53
4/05/2017	Sveriges Ornitologiska Förening	Case	Conservation Officer	BE	LLN	Skype	University	00:40:39
4/05/2017	Skärgårdarnas Riksförbund	Case	Board Member*	BE	LLN	Tel	University	00:50:31
8/05/2017	Lantbrukarnas Riksförbund Skogsägarna	Case	Senior Advisor on International Affairs	BE	LLN	Skype	University	00:47:00
23/05/2017	Ekologiska Lantbrukarna	Case	Expert in standards & regulation	BE	LLN	Tel	University	00:52:54
6/06/2017	European Environmental Bureau	Info	Membership and Development Manager	BE	Bruxelles	F2F	Office	
7/06/2017	Naturskyddsföreningen - Swedish Society for Nature Conservation	Case	President*	BE	LLN	Skype	University	00:51:13
7/06/2017	Groupement National des Indépendants = SYNHORCAT (Syndicat National des Hôtels Restaurants Cafetiers Traiteurs) + FAGIHT (Fédération Autonome Générale de l'Industrie Hôtelière Touristique	Case	Responsable Département Europe & Numérique	BE	LLN	Tel	University	01:20:30
7/06/2017	World Wide Fund for Nature Sweden - Världsnaturfonden WWF	Case	Senior Policy Advisor	BE	LLN	Skype	University	00:46:23
8/06/2017	Assemblée Permanente des Chambres de métiers et de l'artisanat	Case	Responsable Département Europe	BE	Bruxelles	Skype	Home	01:00:58

9/06/2017	Svenskt Näringsliv	Case	International Director	BE	Bruxelles	F2F	Office	00:40:42
20/06/2017	UP'Chaux	Case	Secrétaire Générale	BE	LLN	Tel	University	00:59:44
22/06/2017	Fondation François Sommer pour la Chasse et la Nature	Case	Assistante scientifique au Pôle Nature	BE	LLN	Tel	University	00:48:58
26/06/2017	Fédération française d'aquaculture	Case	Secrétaire Générale	BE	LLN	Tel	University	00:58:10

Document a.3.1 Example of e-mail sent to an NIG

Subject: Sveriges Hamnar and interest representation at the EU level

Dear Mr. XXX,

I am Research Fellow at the FNRS (the National Research Fund) and the University of Louvain (Belgium) where I am currently PhD candidate. I am writing to you for the purpose of a university research about Swedish organizations and their links with European interest groups. I would like to meet you in order to understand the activities of your organization related to European Affairs (and especially your relations with the ESPO – the European Seaports organization).

I would be grateful if you could meet me for an interview in April. I will be in Sweden between the 11th and the 28th of April 2017. This interview would last approximately 45 minutes and would take place at the time and place of your choice.

I hope I could benefit from your experience to carry out this project aiming at acquiring a better understanding of the action of civil society in Sweden and in Europe. I have already conducted interviews in France, Malta and Slovenia. When this project will be completed, I will come back to you with the results. I am of course at your disposal for any further information.

Best regards,

Samuel Defacqz

Samuel Defacqz

PhD candidate – Aspirant F.R.S.-FNRS

Centre de Science Politique et de Politique Comparée – CESPOL

Institut de Sciences Politiques Louvain-Europe – ISPOLE

Université catholique de Louvain – UCL

Place Montesquieu 1 bte L2.08.07

1348 Louvain-la-Neuve / Belgique - Belgium

T: +32 10 47 82 47

@: samuel.defacqz@uclouvain.be

Document a.3.2 Interview grid

CASE # ID	<i>Name of the NIG</i>		
European IG	<i>Name of the EIG</i>		M-S <i>Country</i>
Interviewee	<i>Name of the interviewee</i>		<i>Position of the interviewee</i>
Details itw	<i>00:00am</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>
Notes			

INTERVIEW GRID - ENGLISH

[Introduction + explanation + « Discussion in three parts : 1) your organization 2) the activities of your organizations related to European issues 3) a few questions about your own professional background »]

1. The organization

1.1. Who or what does your organisation represent?

1.2. What does make your organization, a legitimate organization? (*Towards political institutions? towards the public?*)

1.3. How does your organization define its political positions and priorities?

1.4. ID of the organization

# Staff	<i>Number of staff members</i>	Communication/lobbying? EU Affairs?
Type of members	How do you attract new members within organization? What are the relations between the members and the organization?	
# members	<i>Number of members</i>	
Finance / How is your organization funded?		Budget € or SEK
Political targets? General public? Institutions?		

2. Activities related to European issues

- 2.1. How important is being present at the EU-level to achieve your organisational goals?
→ PRESENT DOCUMENT 1 **Why?**
- 2.2. How does your organisation define its political positions and priorities related to European issues? Is there any internal process for this matter?
- 2.3. Is it possible for the members to participate in the definition of these positions? *Do they actually participate in this definition process?*
- 2.4. How does your organisation advocate its positions at the EU level?
- 2.5. *Are you lobbying the European institutions 'yourself', without involving your European organization? [In collaboration with other organizations?]*
- 2.6. Is the European organisation of which you are a member a legitimate interest group→
PRESENT DOCUMENT 2 **Why?** ***Could you identify the elements that makes the European organisation a legitimate interest group?***
- 2.7. When did your organisation join the European organisation? And for what purpose?
- 2.8. Who is the organisation's representative to the European group?
- 2.9. How many contacts do you have with the European organisation? [Daily? Weekly? Monthly? Less?] How are you involved in the activities of the European organisation?
- 2.10. How would you evaluate the quality of work of the European organisation?
- 2.11. The positions of the European organisation of which you are a member and your own positions are: PRESENT DOCUMENT 3 **Do you have an example?**
- 2.12. Do you have a means of control to check the positions advocated by the European organisation?
- 2.13. Had you already any disagreement with the European organisation?
- 2.14. Have you ever consider to leave the European organisation?
- 2.15. What are your relations with the other members of the European organisation (in other member states)?
- 2.16. Has your organisation been involved in the Stakeholder consultation of the Nature Legislation fitness check? In the public consultation?

3. Professional background and ID

3.1. ID:

M/F	Age :	
Position	Years :	Former position? Years :
Other professional experience?		
# of personal contacts with the European organisation		
Languages spoken		
Attitude % European integration	Some believe that European integration should be pushed further. Others believe that it has already gone too far. Some are satisfied with the situation as it is. What do you think? [0] 1 2 3 4 [5] 6 7 8 9 [10]	

Would you like to add something about a subject that we would not have addressed?

➔ **Contact details for the communication of the results**

➔ Any contacts in Malta, Slovenia, Sweden or France?

DOCUMENT 1

1. How important is being present at the EU-level to achieve your organisational goals?									
Not important									Very important
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

DOCUMENT 2

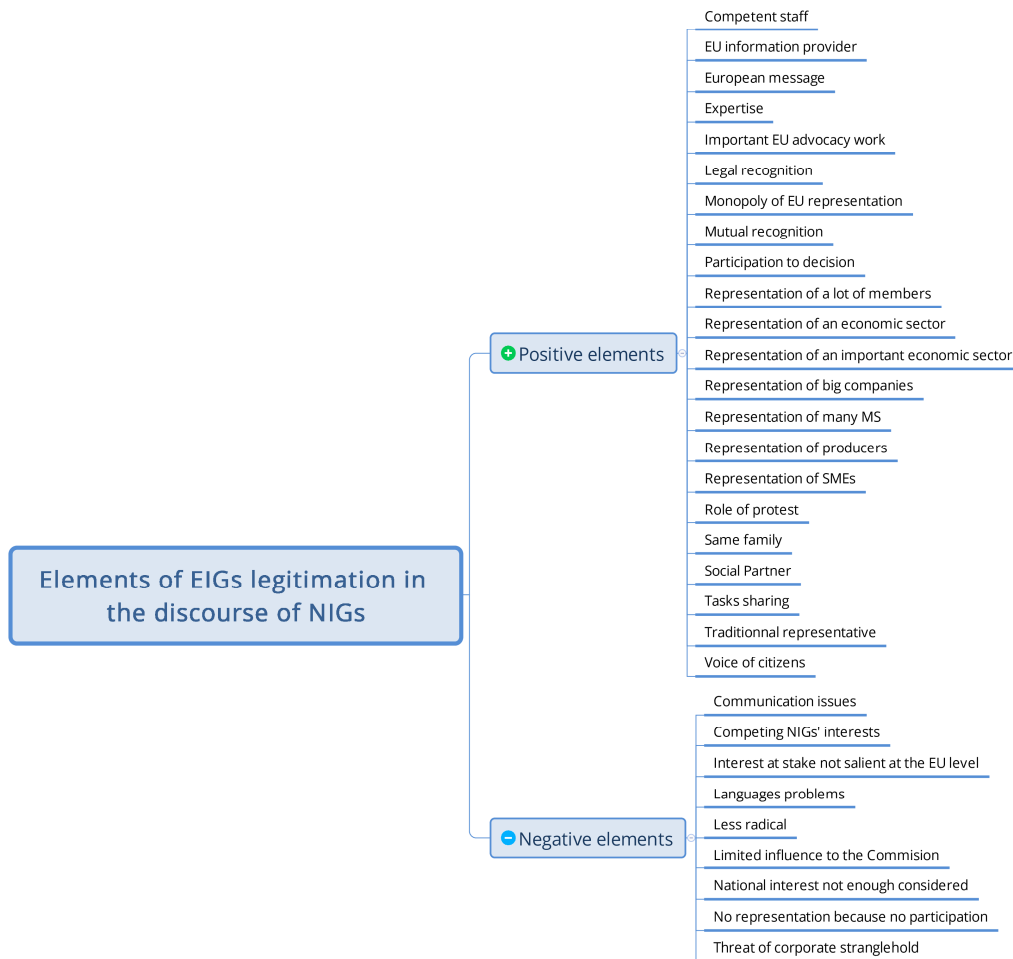
2. Is the European organisation of which you are a member, a legitimate interest group?									
Not legitimate at all									Highly legitimate
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

DOCUMENT 3

3. The positions of the European organisation of which you are a member and your own positions are:									
Completely different									Completely similar
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

7.2. Appendixes of Chapter 4

Figure a.4.1 First attempt at organising themes at the end of the first reading



Source: author's own elaboration with XMind 8, based on 78 interview transcripts concerning 84 cases.

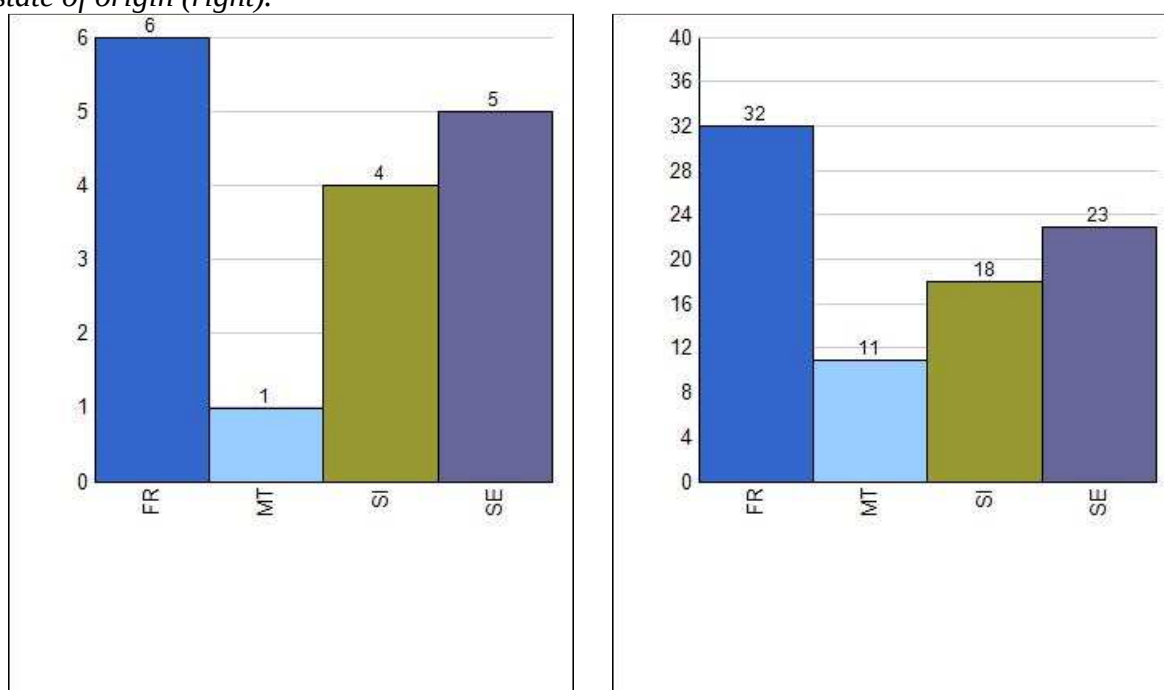
NB Figures related to discursive analysis (Chapter 4) are provided in the following pages. Each couple of figures is a comparison between the distribution of cases with NIGs using a given elements of discourse (on the left) and the distribution of all cases (on the right). Note that the source of all these figures, from figure a.4.2 to figure a.4.161 is the same:

Source: Retrieved from Nvivo, based on 78 interview transcripts concerning 84 cases

In order to gain space, the legend of each couple of figures is only provided for the first series (concerning NIGs using elements of discourse about expertise).

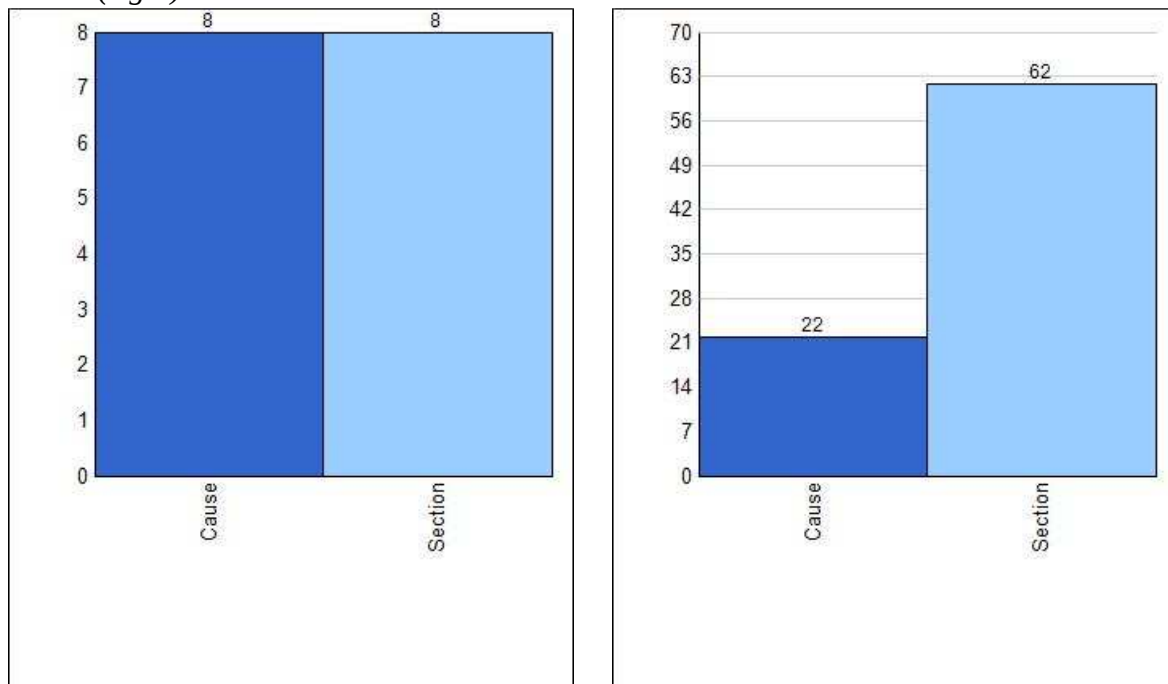
7.2.1. NIGs using elements of discourse about expertise

Figures a.4.2 and a.4.3 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about expertise by NIGs' member state of origin (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' member state of origin (right).



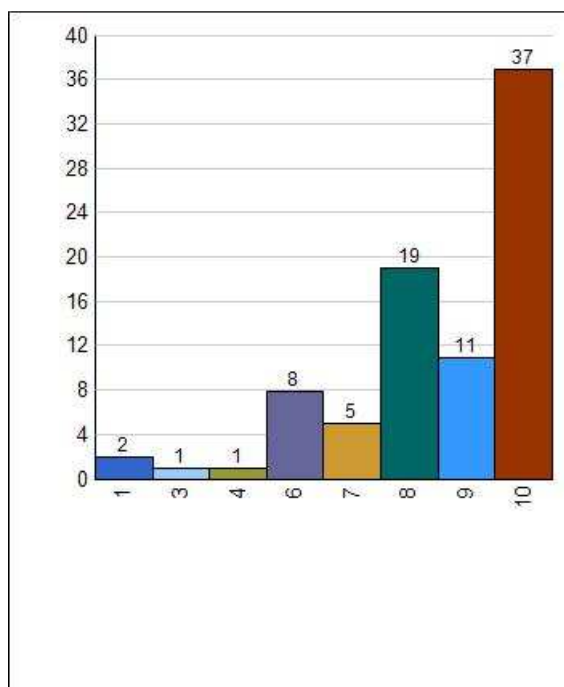
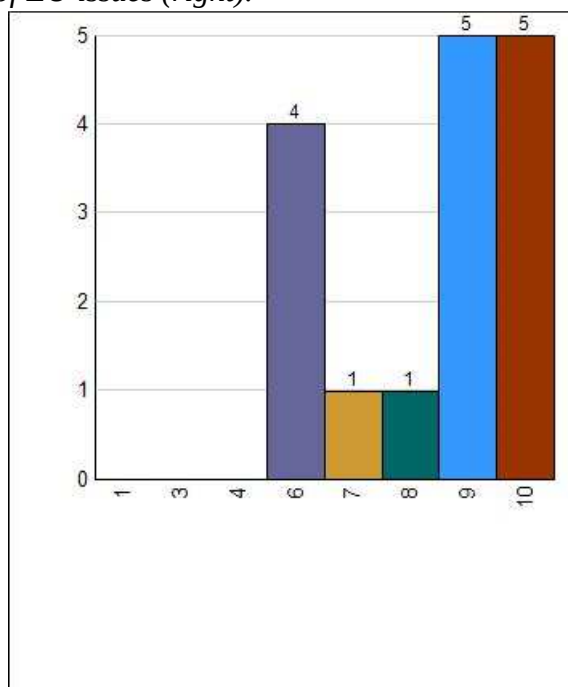
Y axes provide the number of cases; X axes provide the label of member states (FR=France; MT=Malta; SI=Slovenia; SE=Sweden)

Figures a.4.4 and a.4.5 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about expertise by NIGs' nature of interest (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' nature of interest (right).



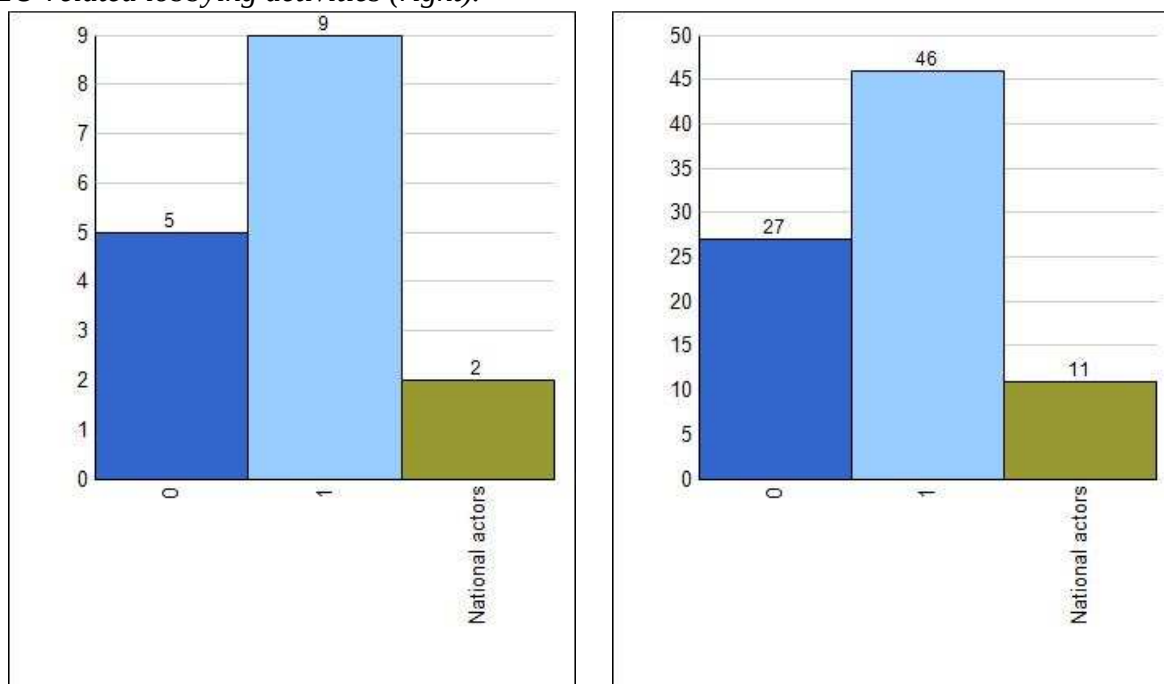
Y axes provide the number of cases; X axes provide the label of NIG's nature of interest (Cause=corresponds to cause groups; Section=corresponds to sectional groups)

Figures a.4.6 and a.4.7 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about expertise by NIGs' saliency of EU issues (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' saliency of EU issues (right).



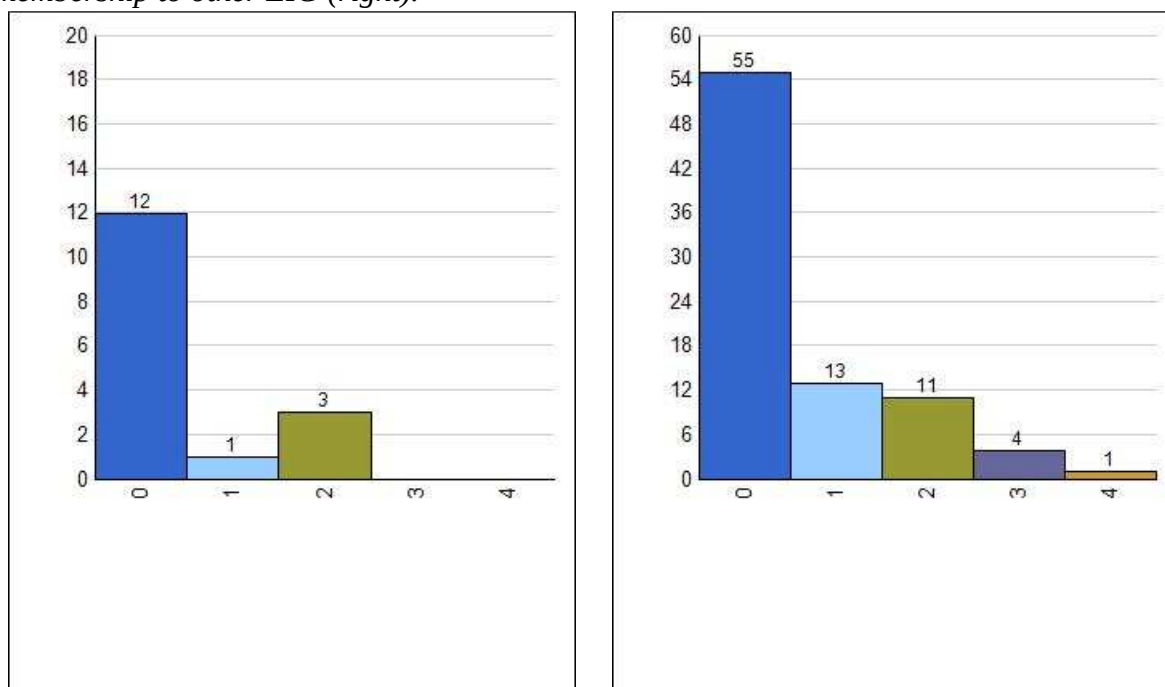
Y axes provide the number of cases; X axes provide NIGs representatives' answer to the following question (scale): "How important is being present at the EU-level to achieve your organisational goals?". Answer on a 1–10 scale (1 = Not important, 10 = Very important).

Figures a.4.8 and a.4.9 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about expertise by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities (right).



Y axes provide the number of cases; X axes provide the label of NIG's EU-related lobbying activities (0=no EU-related lobbying activities; 1=direct lobbying activities towards EU institutions; National actors=EU-related lobbying activities towards national actors – national MEPs or national government)

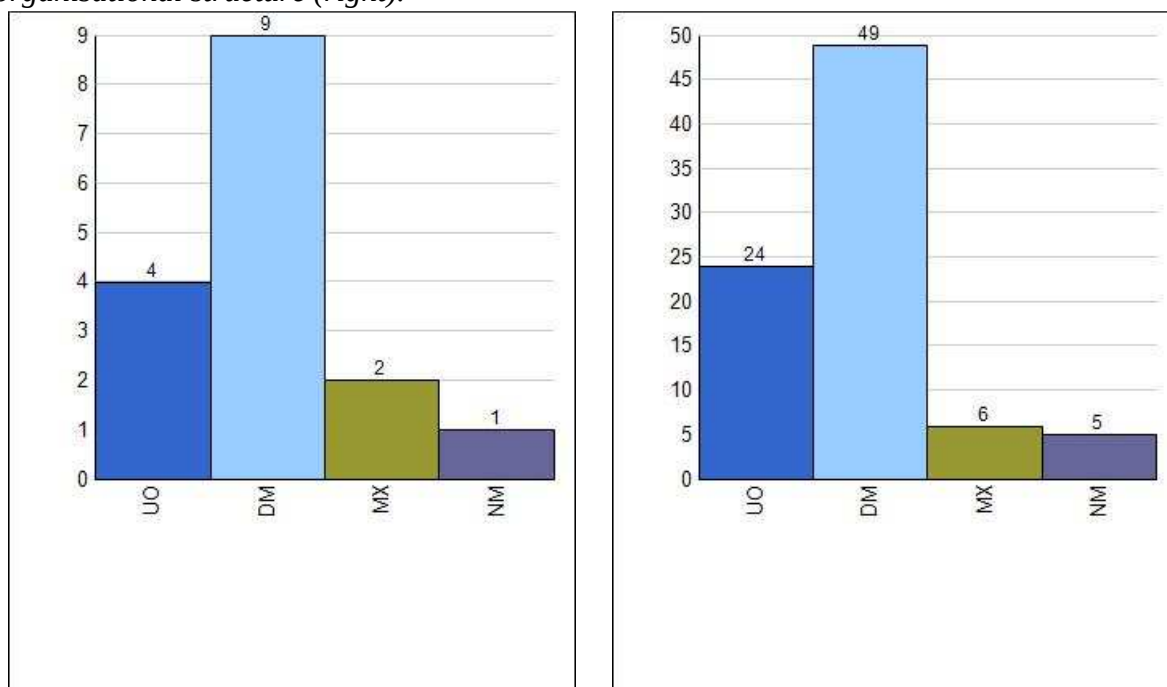
Figures a.4.10 and a.4.11 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about expertise by NIGs' membership to other EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' membership to other EIG (right).



Y axes provide the number of cases; X axes provide NIGs' number of additional memberships to EIGs (=membership other than the one concerned in the case).

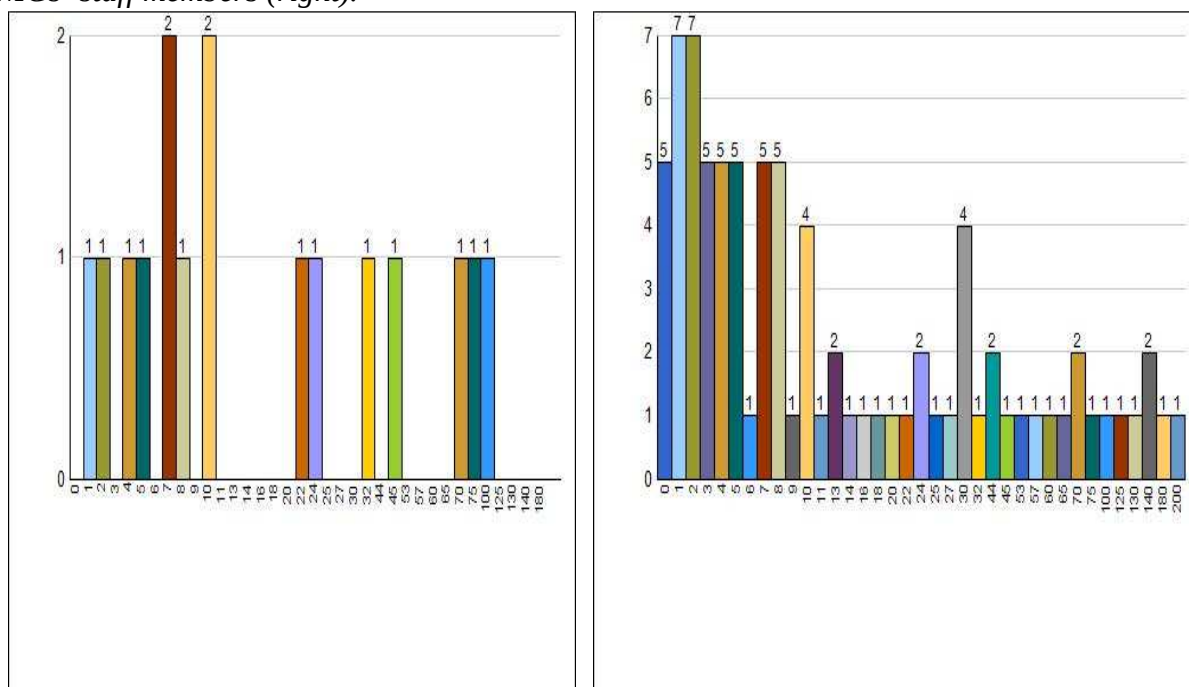
Source: Retrieved from Nvivo, based on 78 interview transcripts concerning 84 cases

Figures a.4.12 and a.4.13 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about expertise by NIGs' organisational structure (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' organisational structure (right).



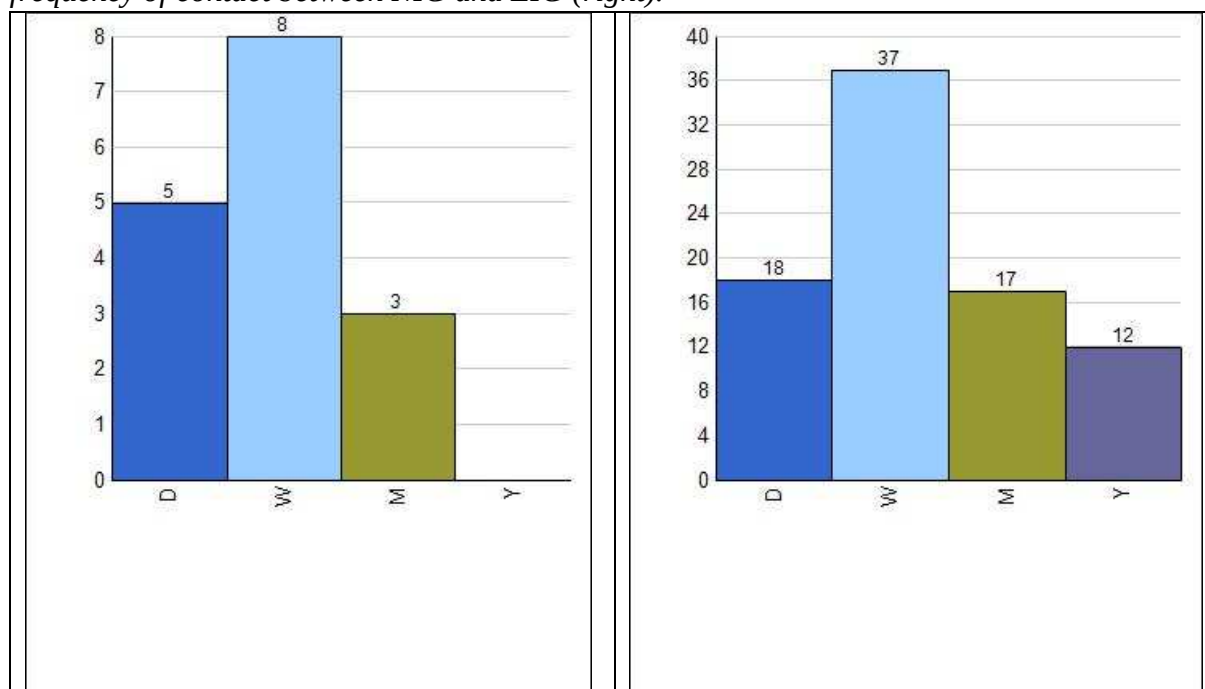
Y axes provide the number of cases; X axes provide label of NIGs' organisational structure (UO=umbrella organization; DM=direct membership; MX=mixed membership; NM=no members)

Figures a.4.14 and a.4.15 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about expertise by number of NIGs' staff members (left) and distribution of all cases by number of NIGs' staff members (right).



Y axes provide the number of cases; X axes provide number of NIGs' staff members. Note that some numbers have been rounded up to allow Nvivo to draw the figure correctly (2 cases have NIGs with 0.5 employee, 3 cases have NIGs with 1.5 employees, 2 cases have NIGs with 2.5 employees, 3 cases have NIGs with 3.5 employees and 1 case has a NIG with 7.5 employees)
Source: Retrieved from Nvivo, based on 78 interview transcripts concerning 84 cases

Figures a.4.16 and a.4.17 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about expertise by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (right).

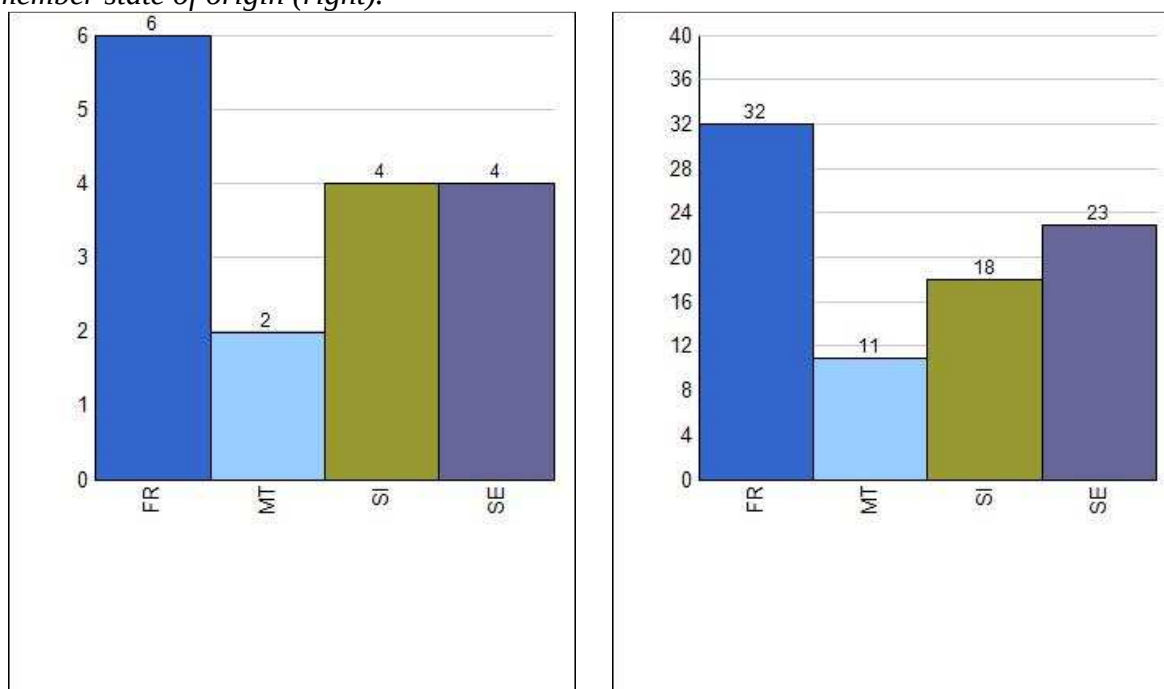


Y axes provide the number of cases; X axes provide frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (D=daily; W=weekly; M=monthly; Y=less than monthly)

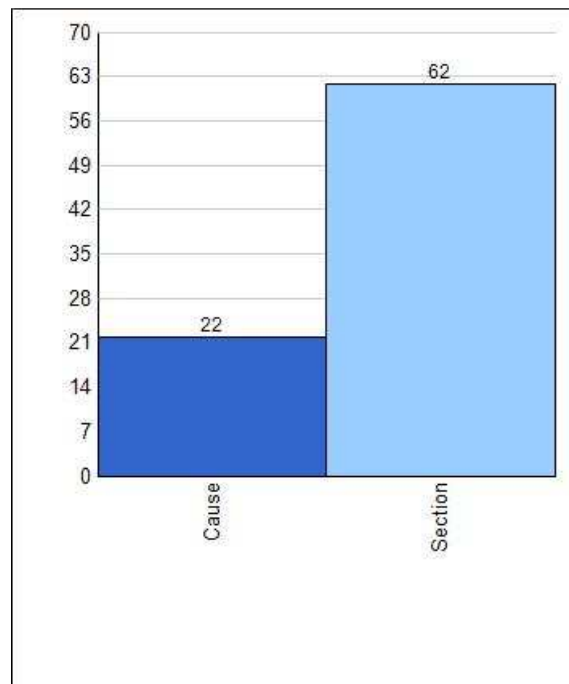
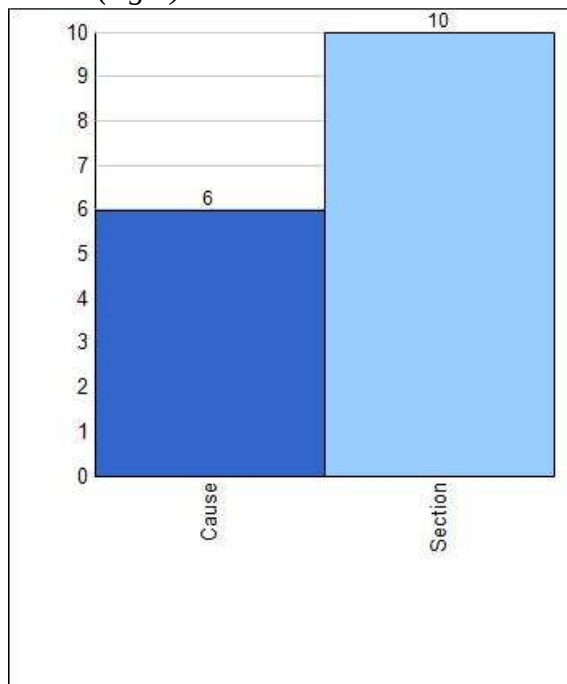
Source: Retrieved from NVivo, based on 78 interview transcripts concerning 84 cases

7.2.2. NIGs using elements of discourse about participation

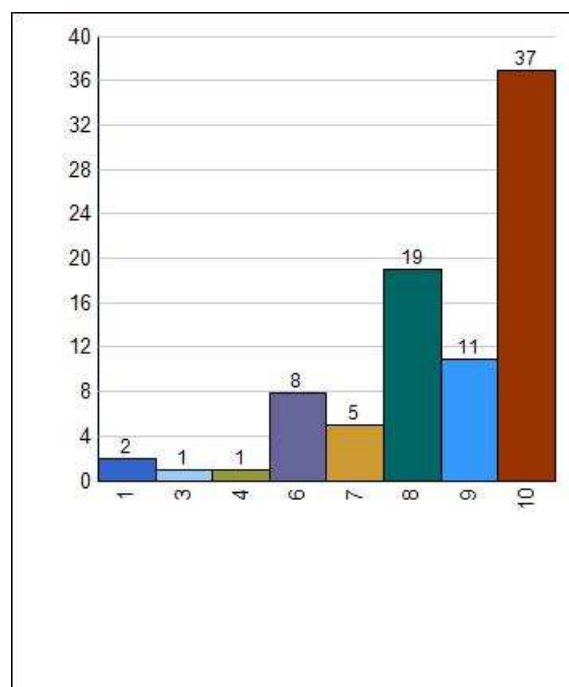
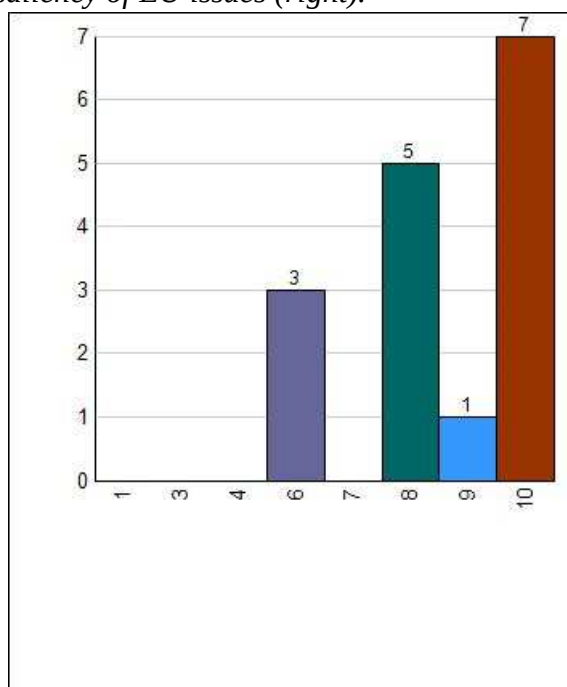
Figures a.4.18 and a.4.19 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about participation by NIGs' member state of origin (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' member state of origin (right).



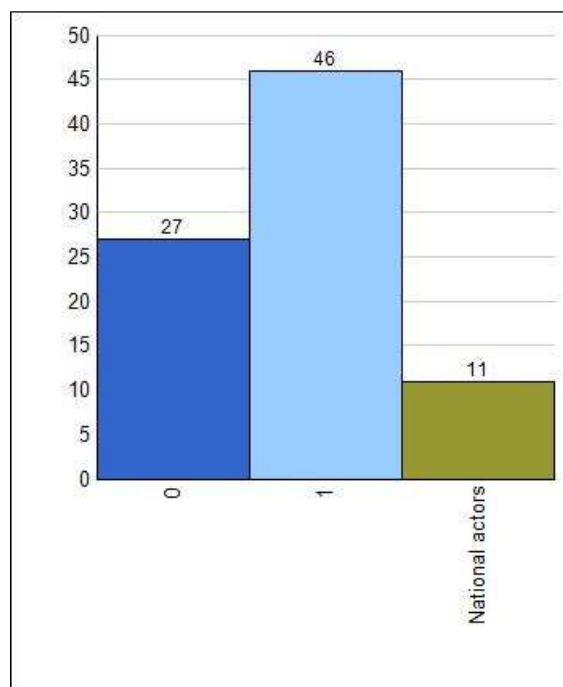
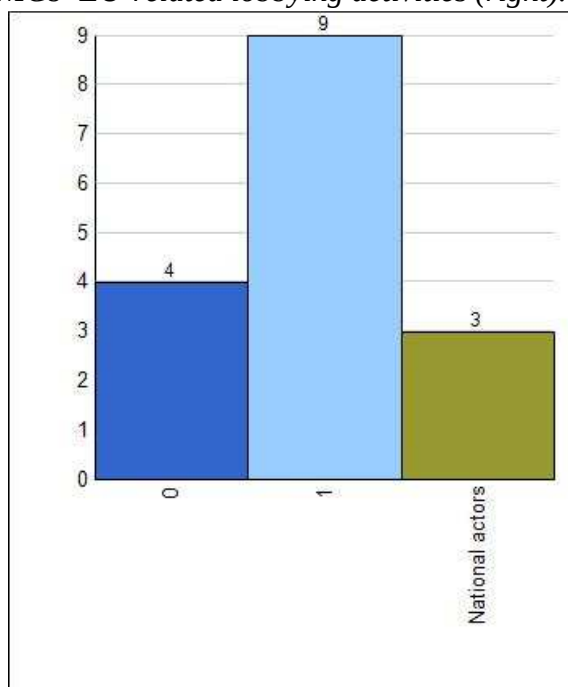
Figures a.4.20 and a.4.21 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about participation by NIGs' nature of interest (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' nature of interest (right).



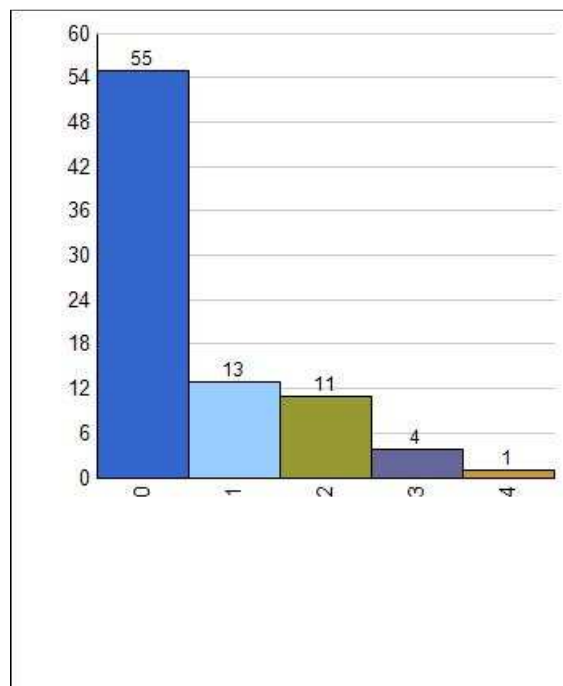
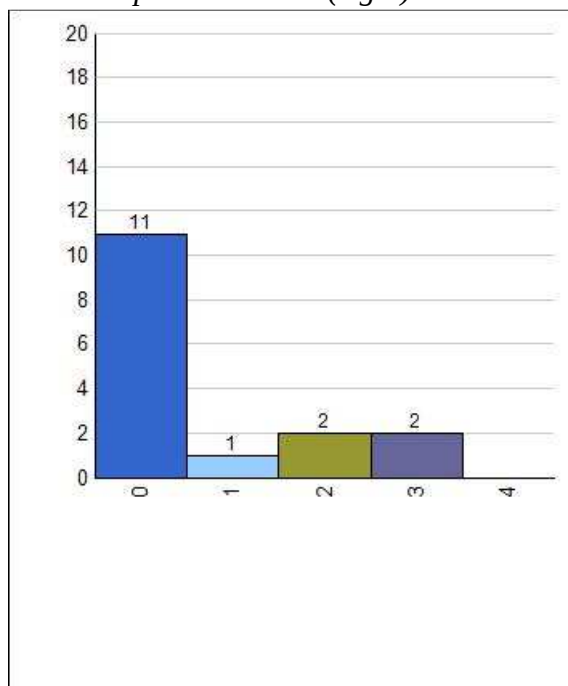
Figures a.4.22 and a.4.23 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about participation by NIGs' saliency of EU issues (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' saliency of EU issues (right).



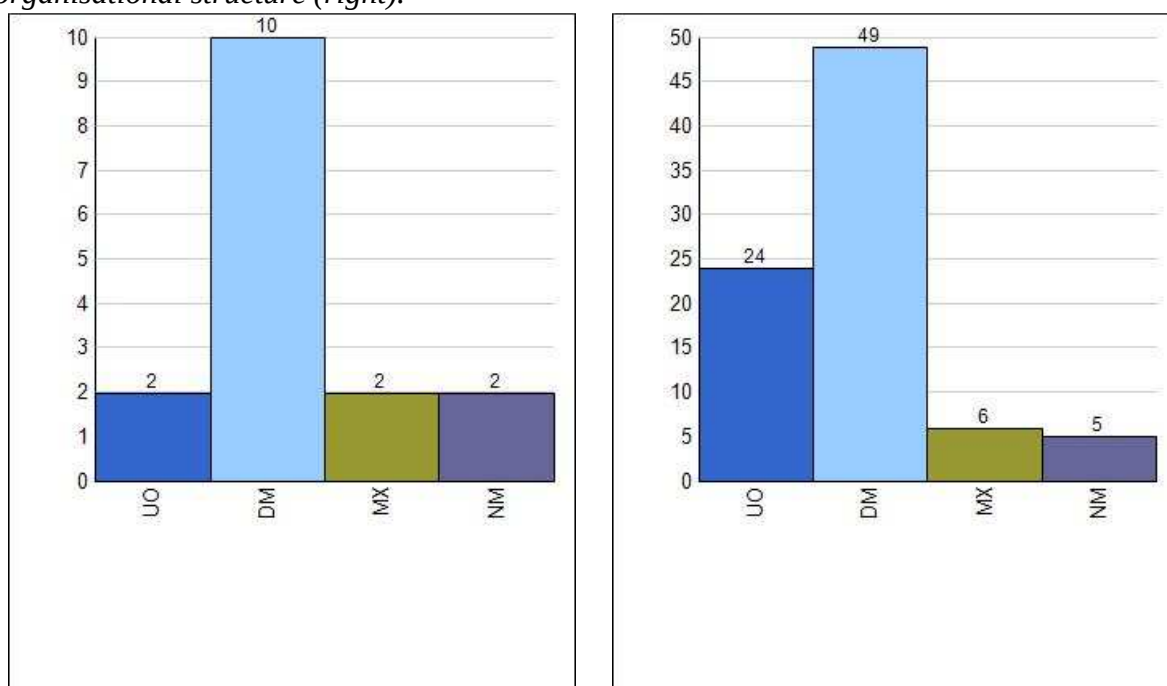
Figures a.4.24 and a.4.25 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about participation by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities (right).



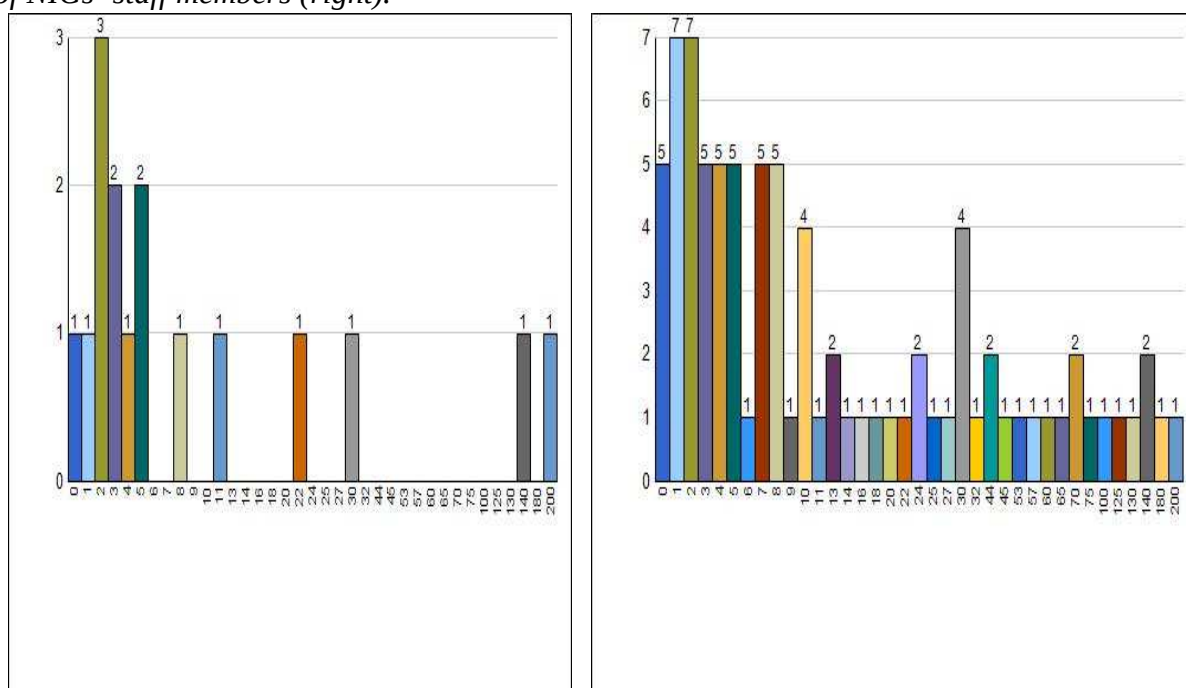
Figures a.4.26 and a.4.27 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about participation by NIGs' membership to other EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' membership to other EIG (right).



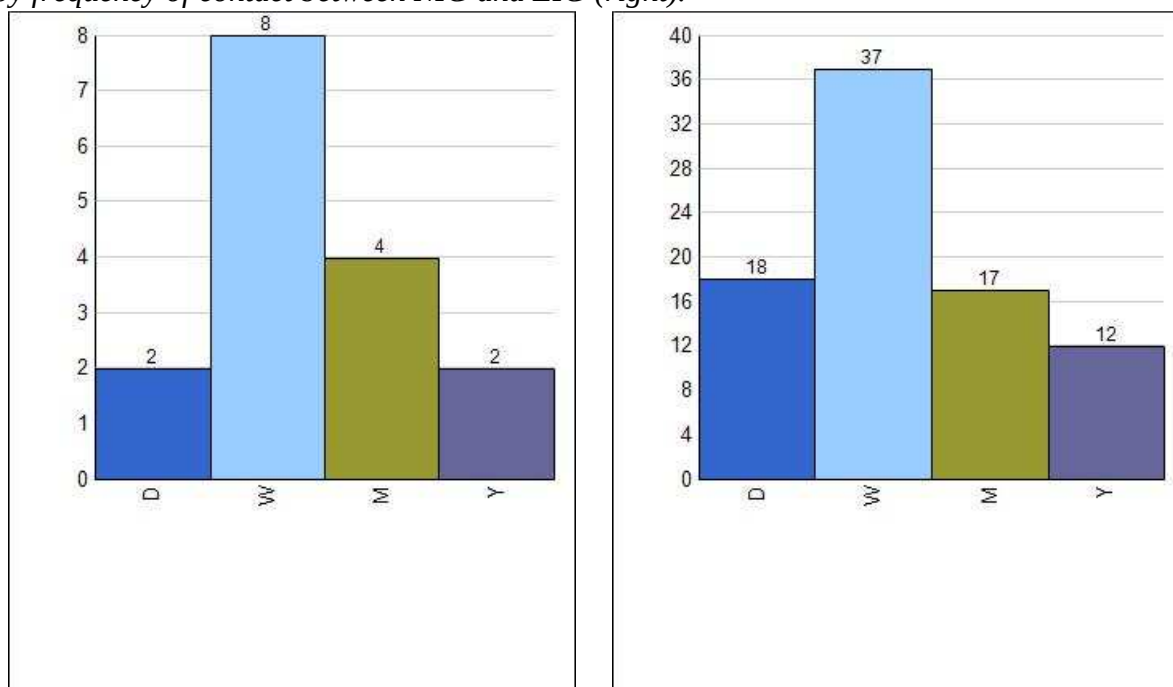
Figures a.4.28 and a.4.29 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about participation by NIGs' organisational structure (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' organisational structure (right).



Figures a.4.30 and a.4.31 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about participation by number of NIGs' staff members (left) and distribution of all cases by number of NIGs' staff members (right).

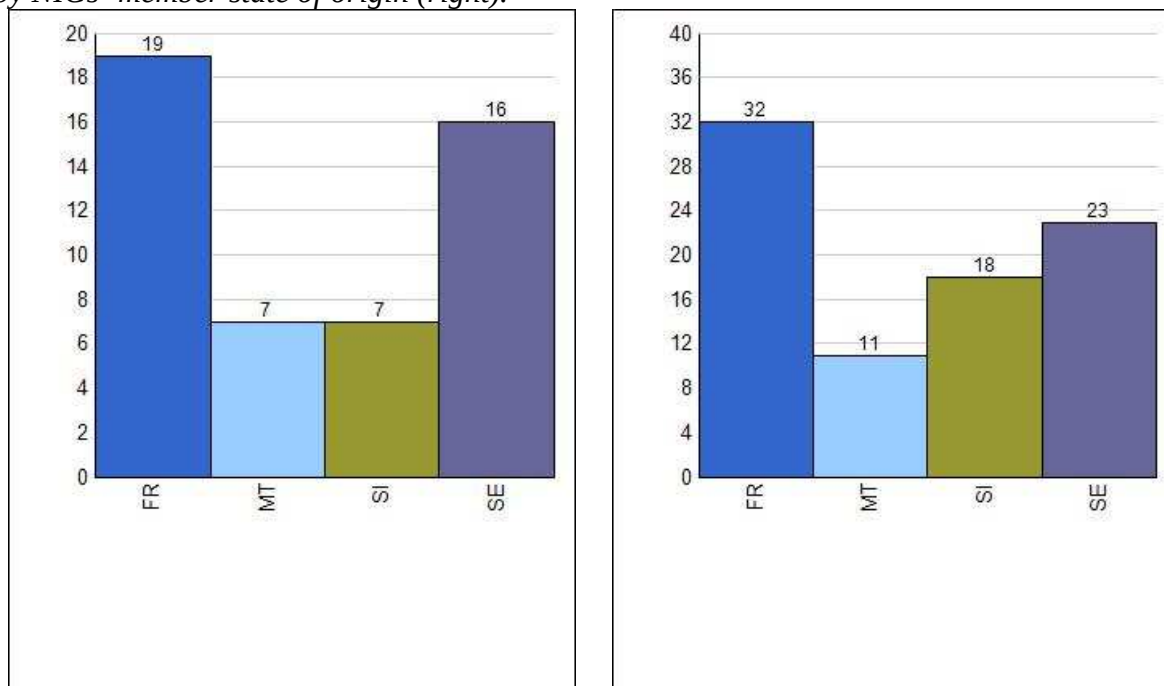


Figures a.4.32 and a.4.33 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about participation by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (right).

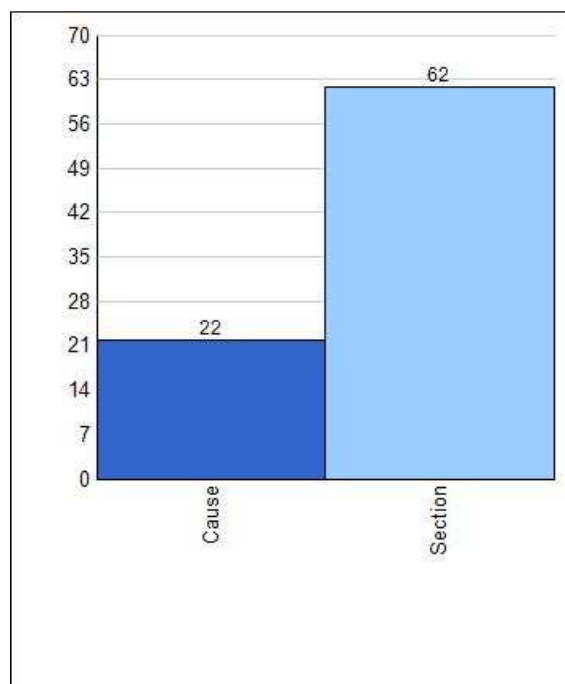
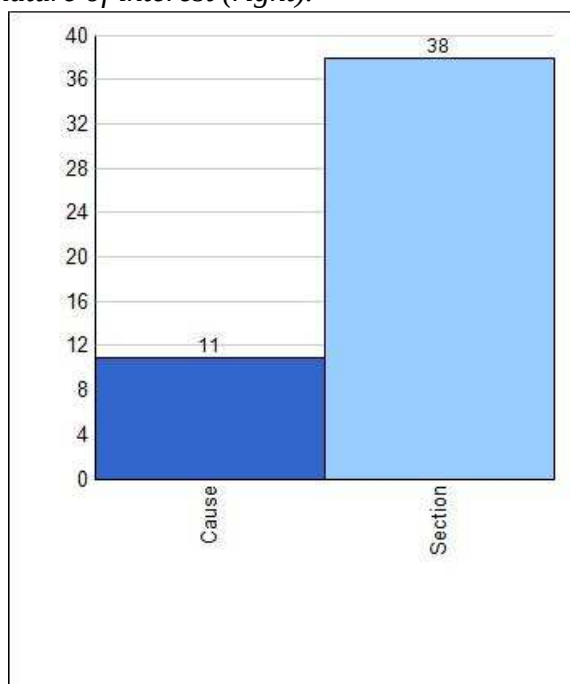


7.2.3. NIGs using elements of discourse about functional representation

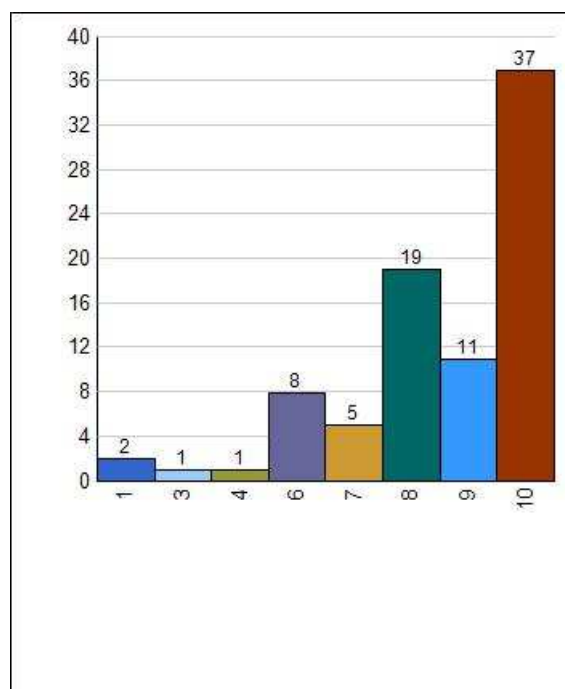
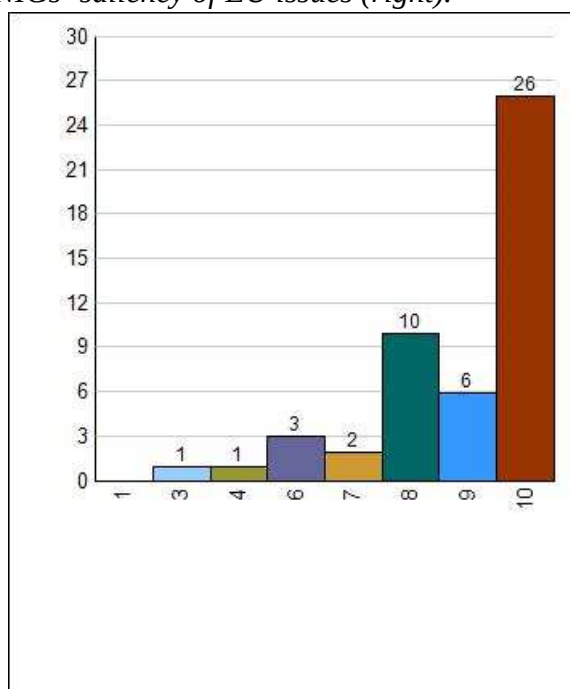
Figures a.4.34 and a.4.35 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about functional representation by NIGs' member state of origin (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' member state of origin (right).



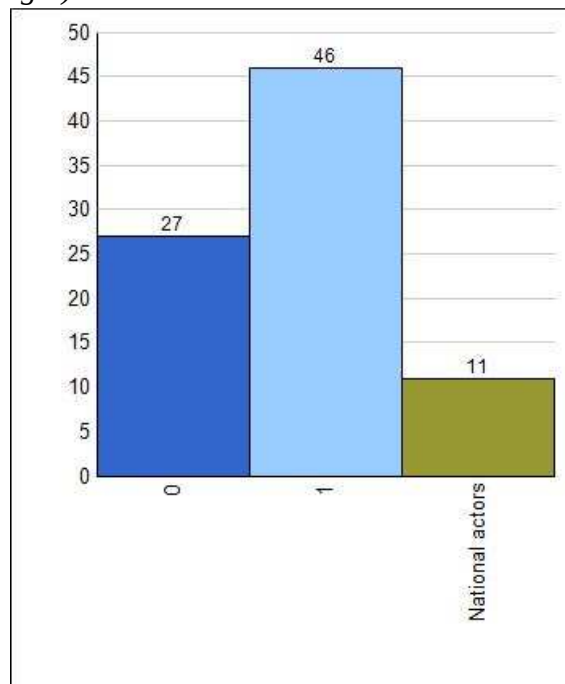
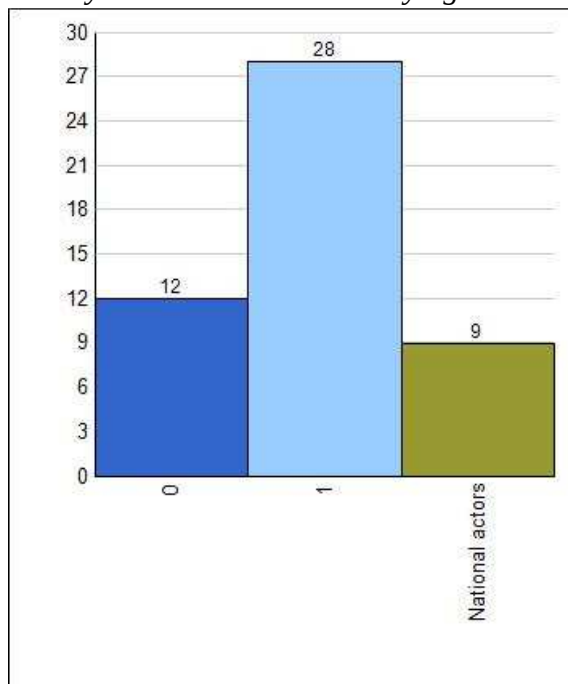
Figures a.4.36 and a.4.37 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about functional representation by NIGs' nature of interest (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' nature of interest (right).



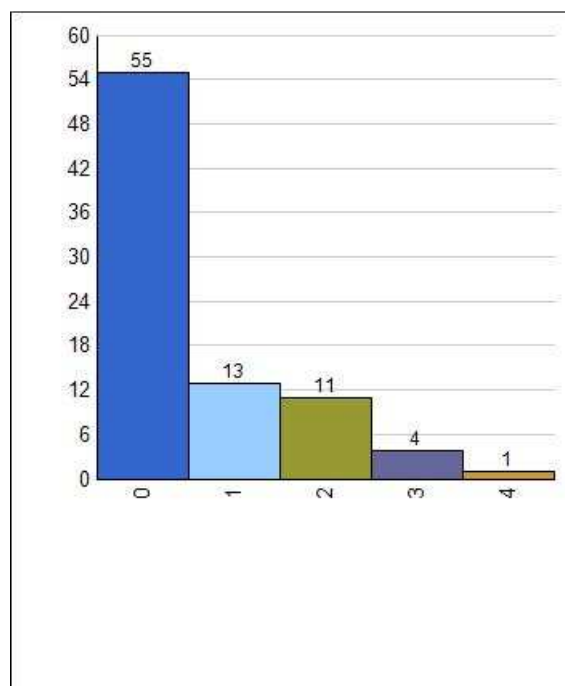
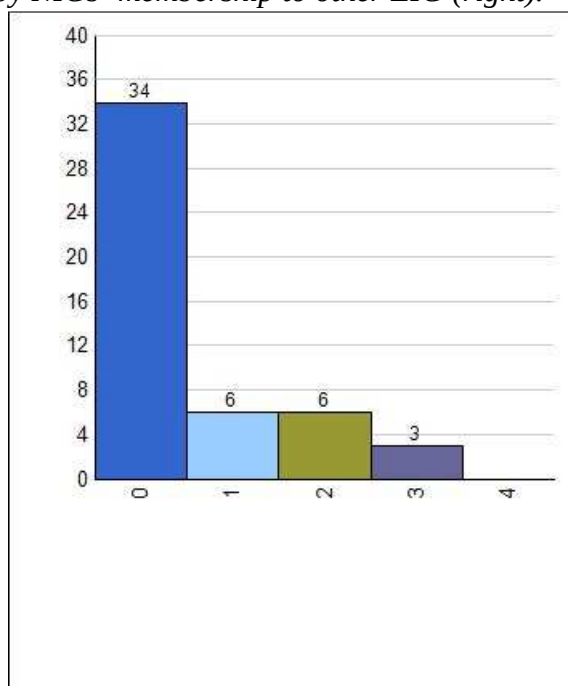
Figures a.4.38 and a.4.39 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about functional representation by NIGs' saliency of EU issues (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' saliency of EU issues (right).



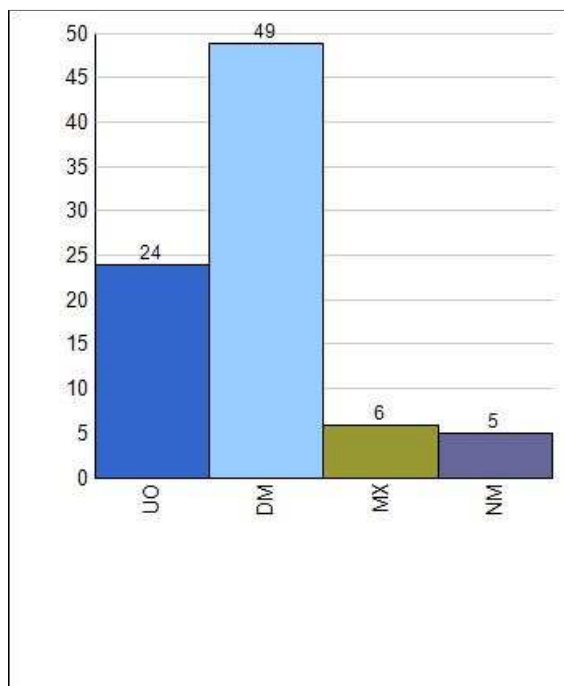
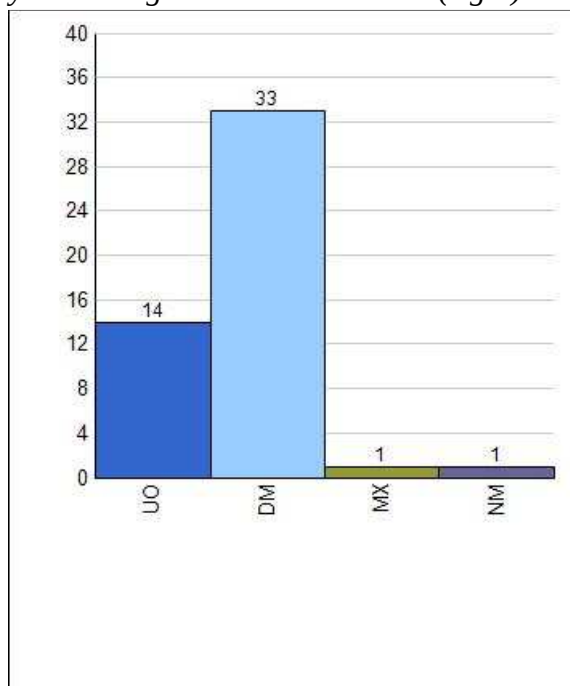
Figures a.4.40 and a.4.41 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about functional representation by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities (right).



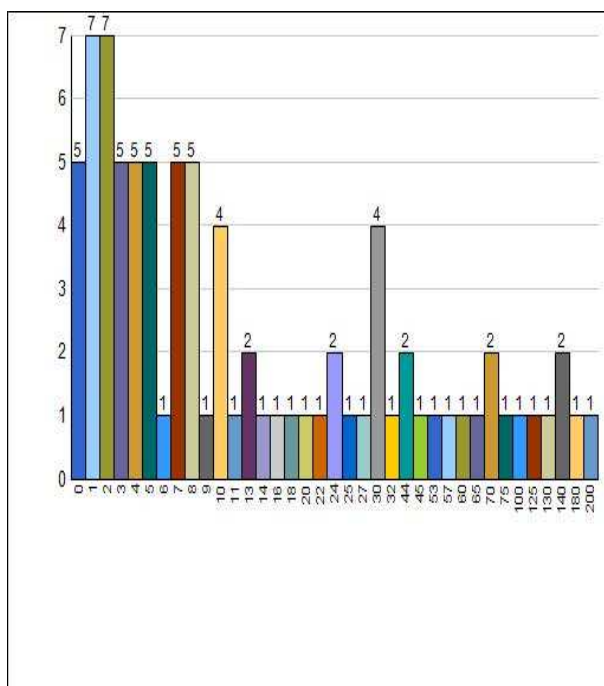
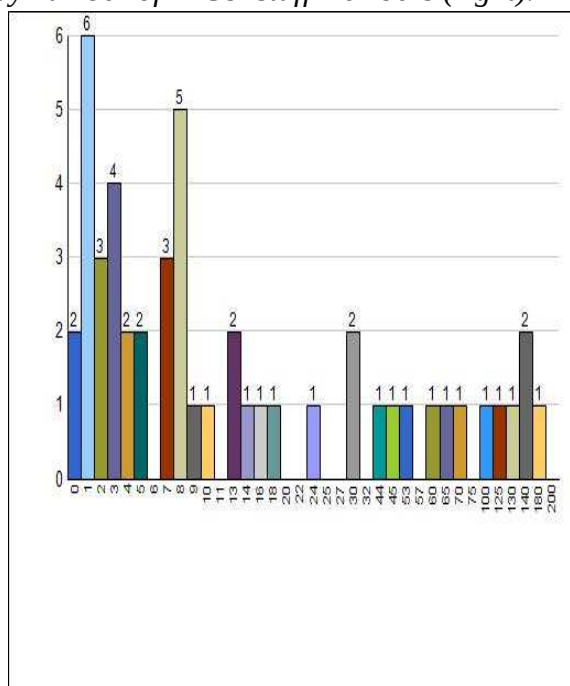
Figures a.4.42 and a.4.43 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about functional representation by NIGs' membership to other EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' membership to other EIG (right).



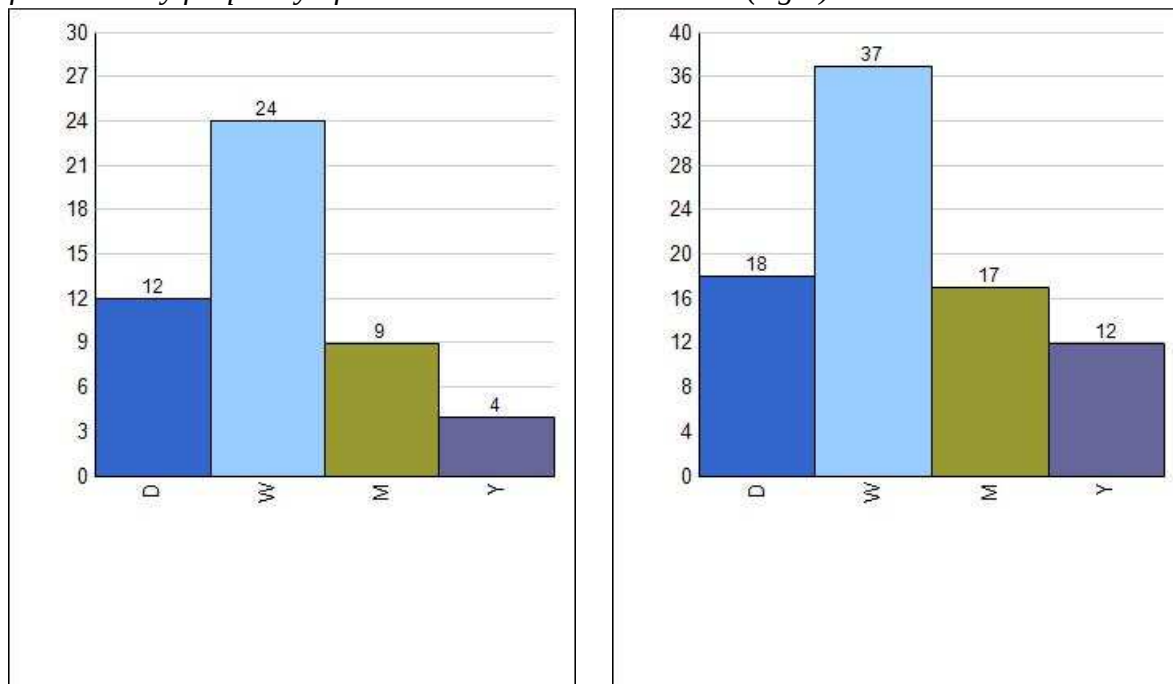
Figures a.4.44 and a.4.45 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about functional representation by NIGs' organisational structure (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' organisational structure (right).



Figures a.4.46 and a.4.47 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about functional representation by number of NIGs' staff members (left) and distribution of all cases by number of NIGs' staff members (right).

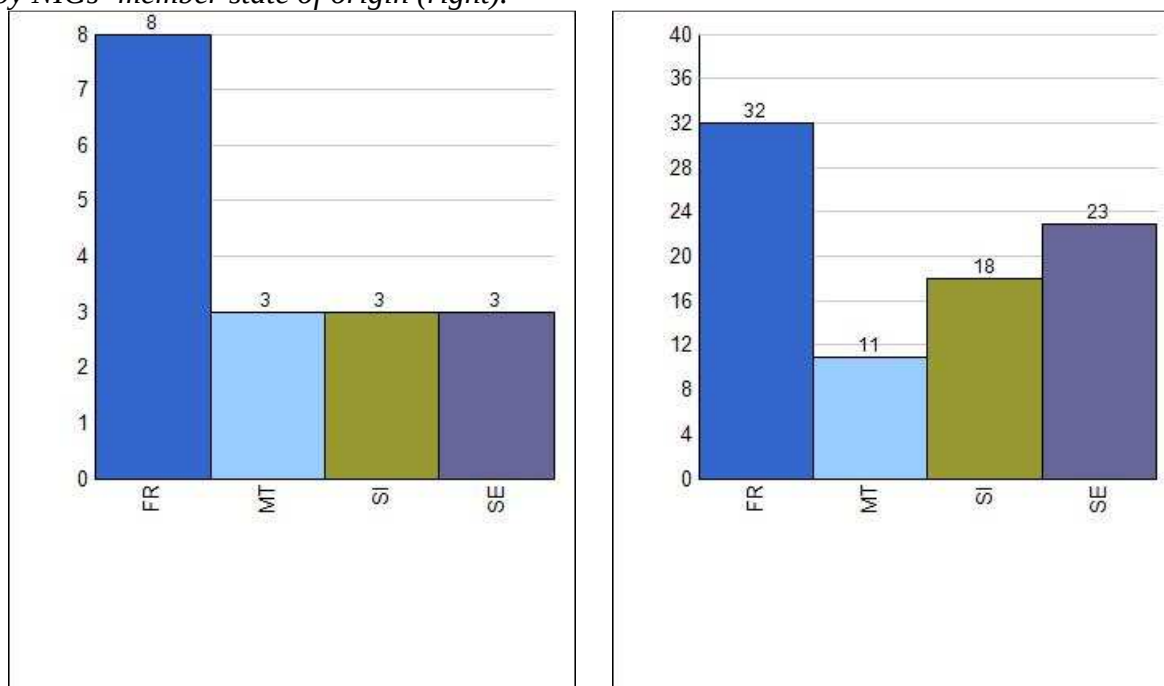


Figures a.4.48 and a.4.49 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about functional representation by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (right).

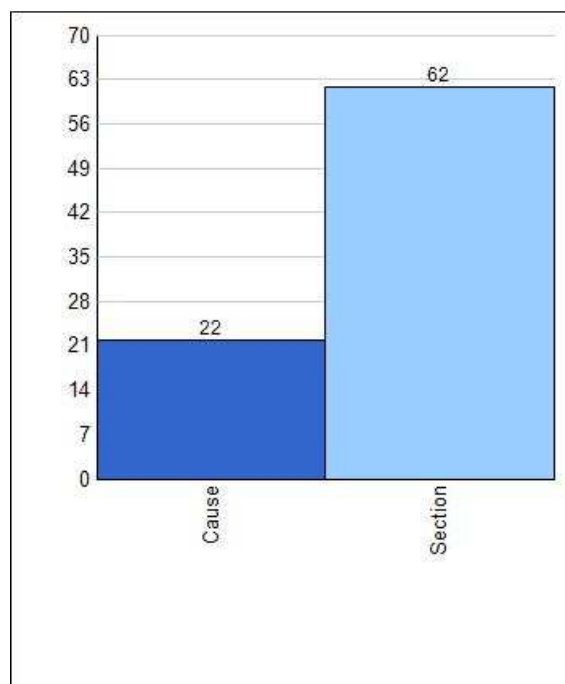
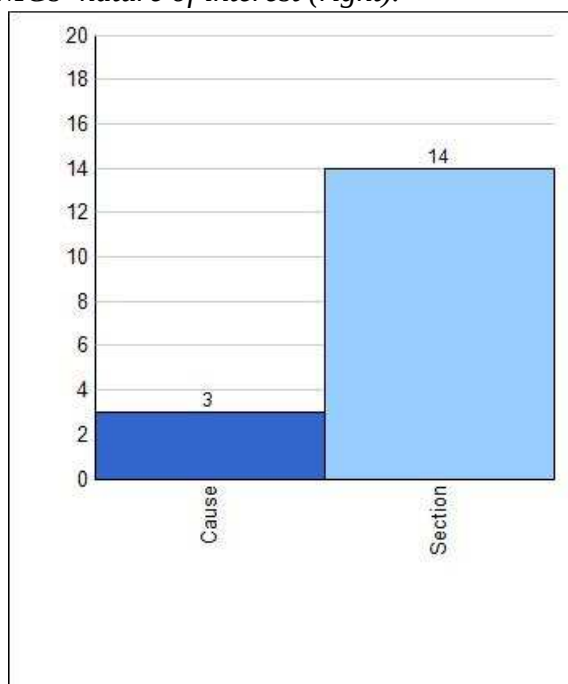


7.2.4. NIGs using elements of discourse about substantive representation

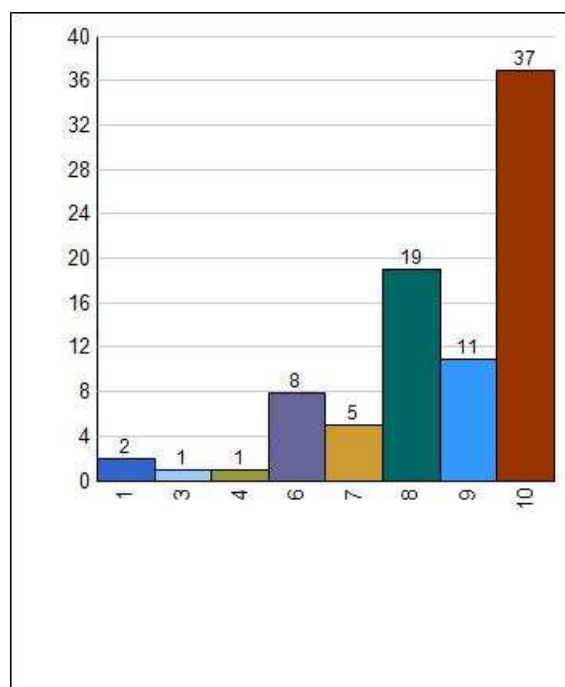
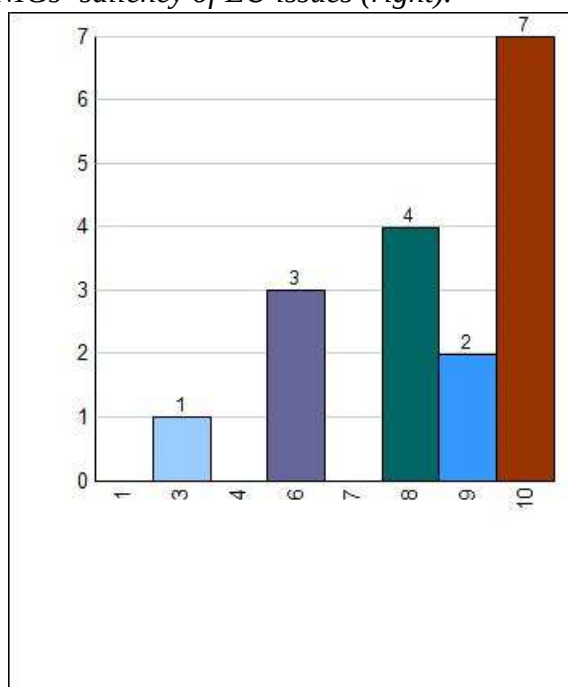
Figures a.4.50 and a.4.51 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about substantive representation by NIGs' member state of origin (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' member state of origin (right).



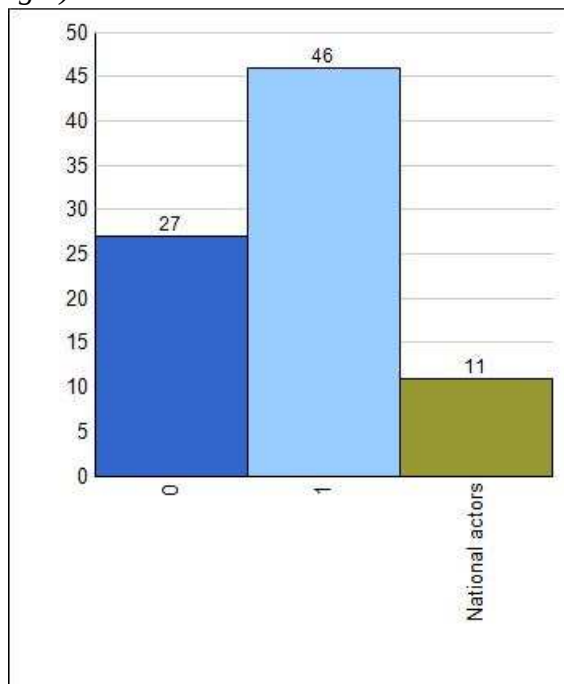
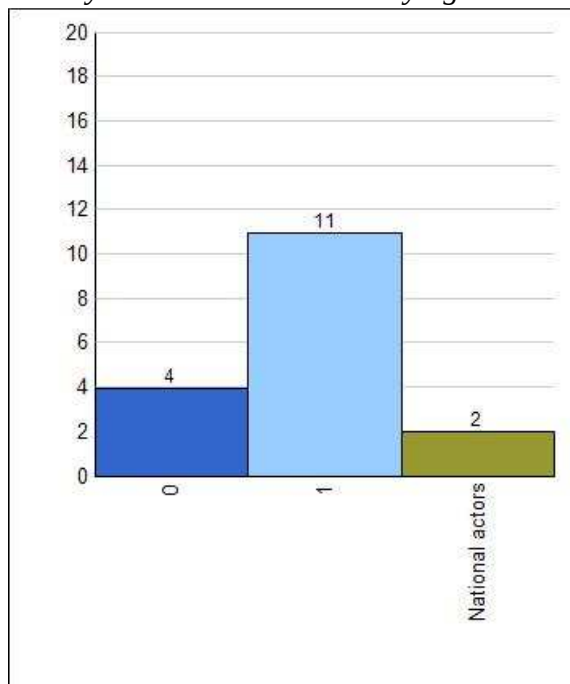
Figures a.4.52 and a.4.53 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about substantive representation by NIGs' nature of interest (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' nature of interest (right).



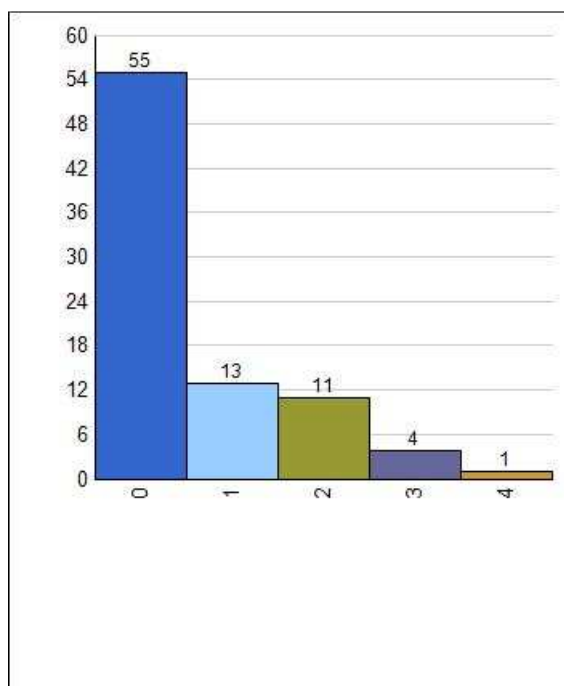
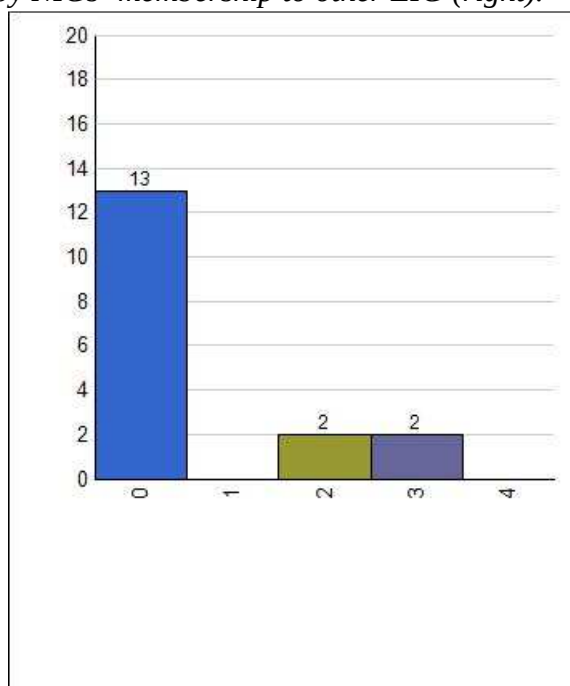
Figures a.4.54 and a.4.55 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about substantive representation by NIGs' saliency of EU issues (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' saliency of EU issues (right).



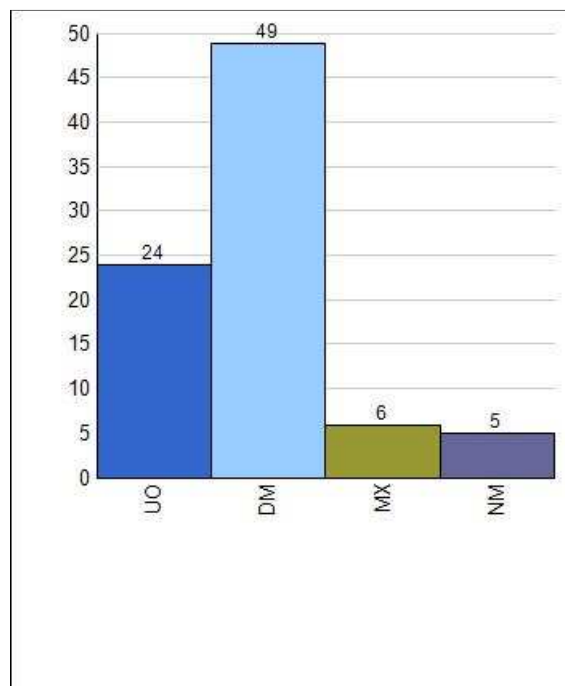
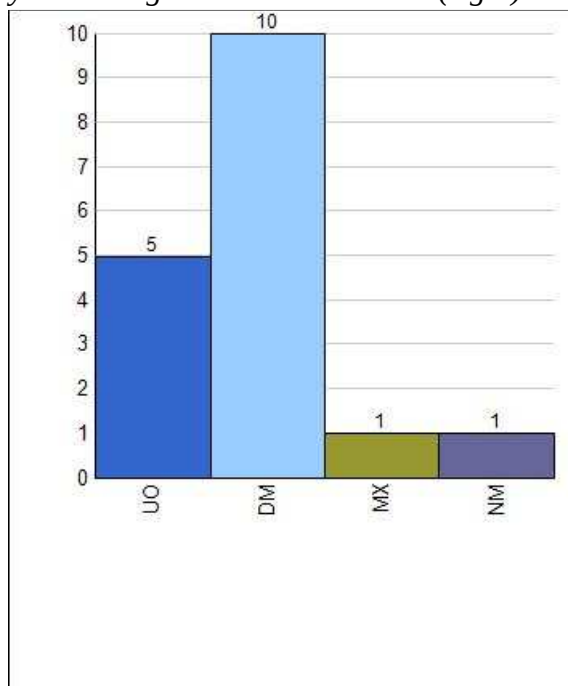
Figures a.4.56 and a.4.57 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about substantive representation by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities (right).



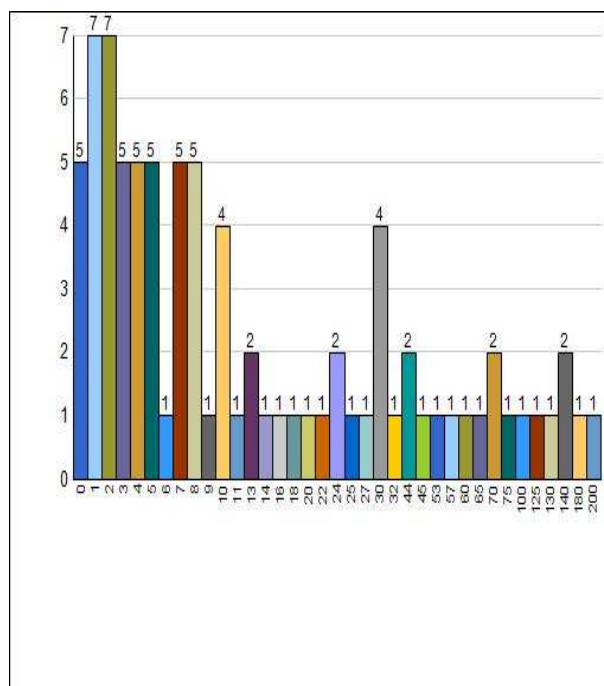
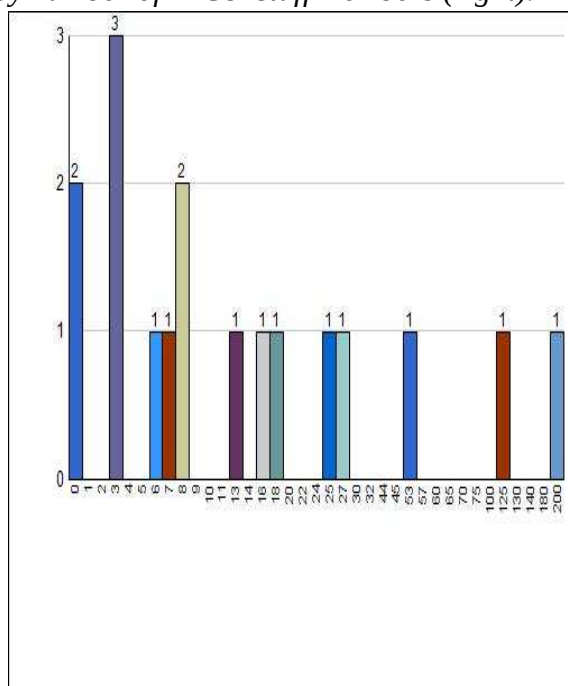
Figures a.4.58 and a.4.59 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about substantive representation by NIGs' membership to other EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' membership to other EIG (right).



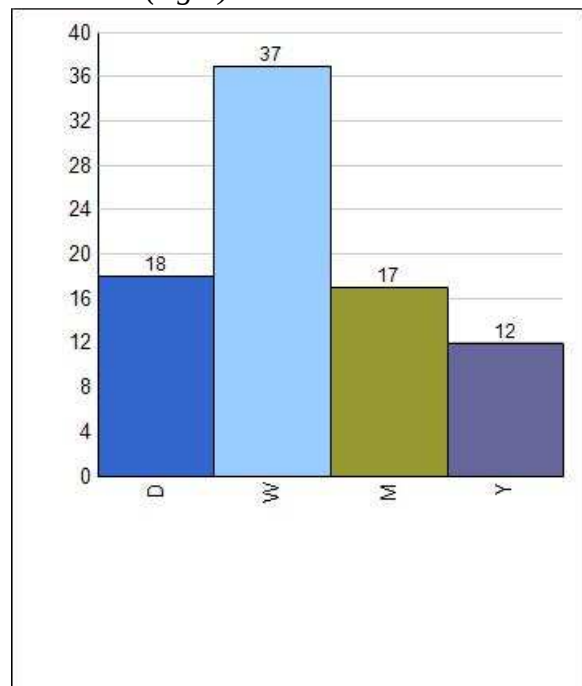
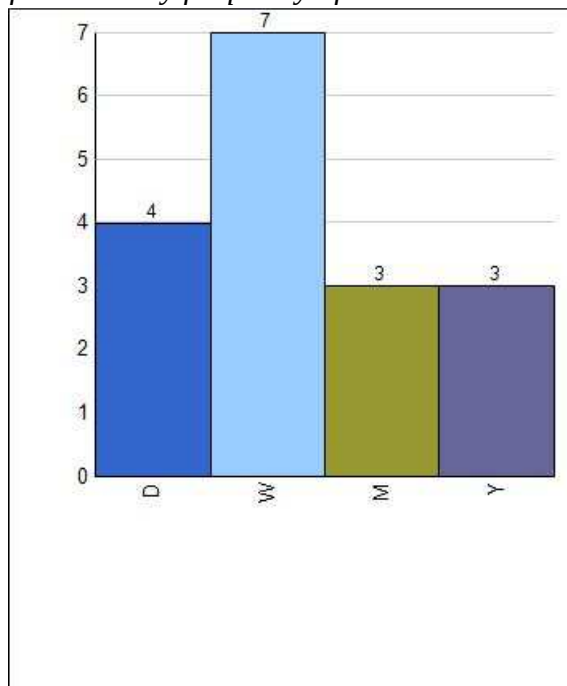
Figures a.4.60 and a.4.61 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about substantive representation by NIGs' organisational structure (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' organisational structure (right).



Figures a.4.62 and a.4.63 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about substantive representation by number of NIGs' staff members (left) and distribution of all cases by number of NIGs' staff members (right).

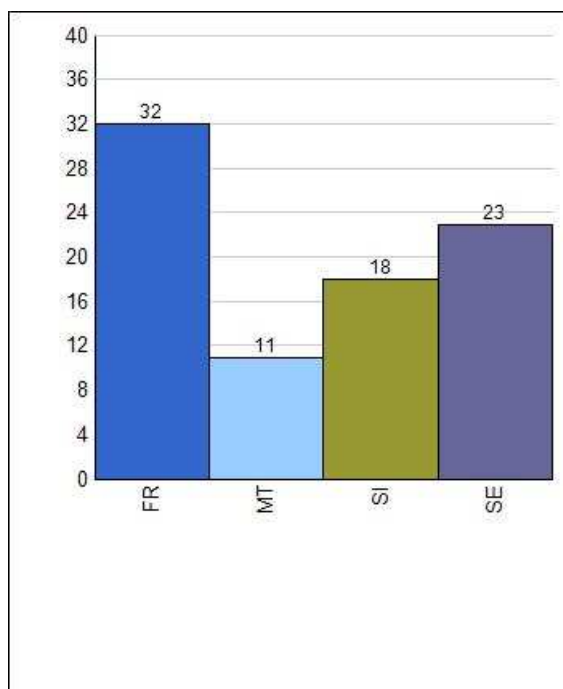
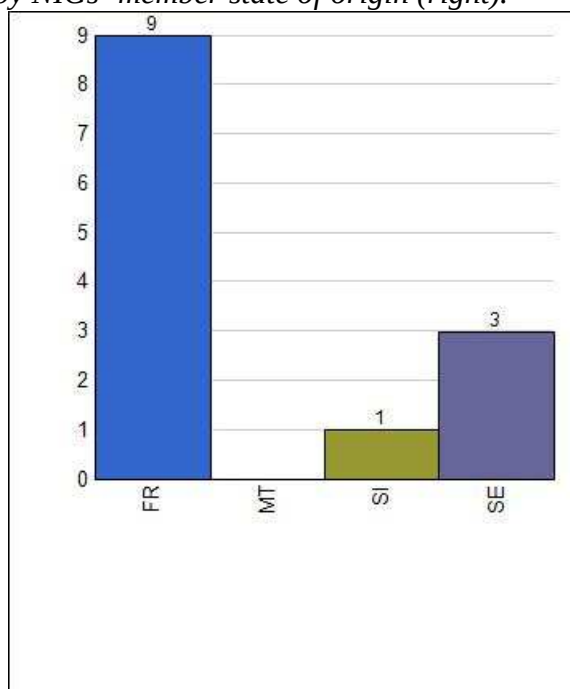


Figures a.4.64 and a.4.65 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about substantive representation by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (right).

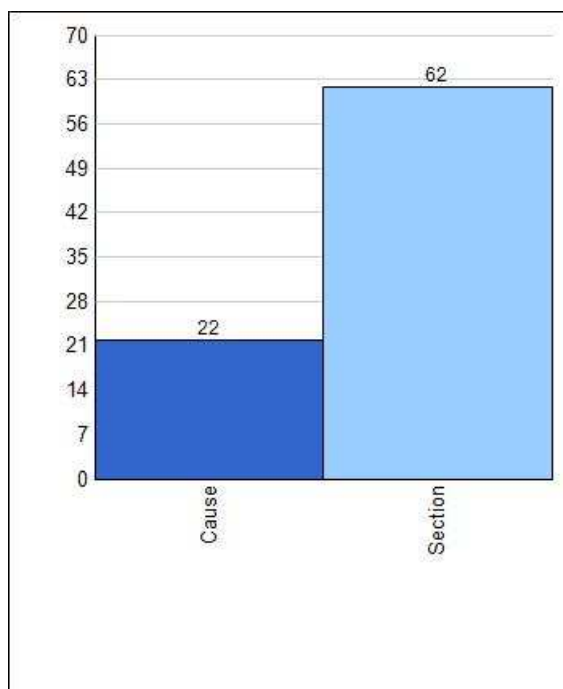
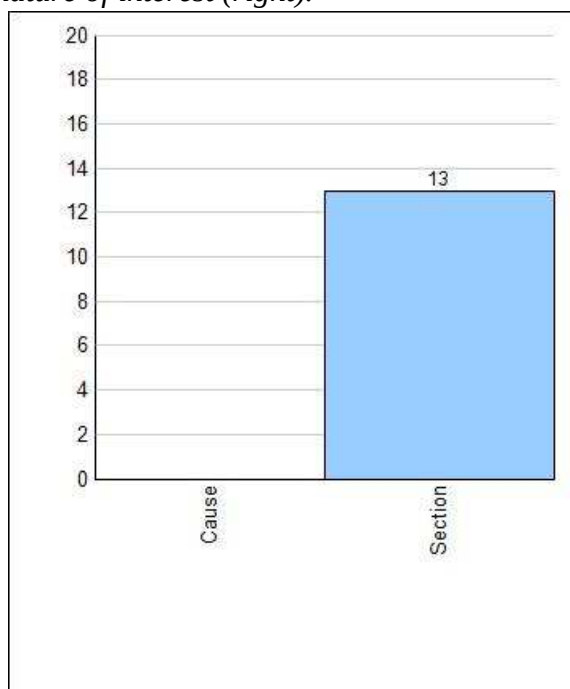


7.2.5. NIGs using elements of discourse about territorial representation

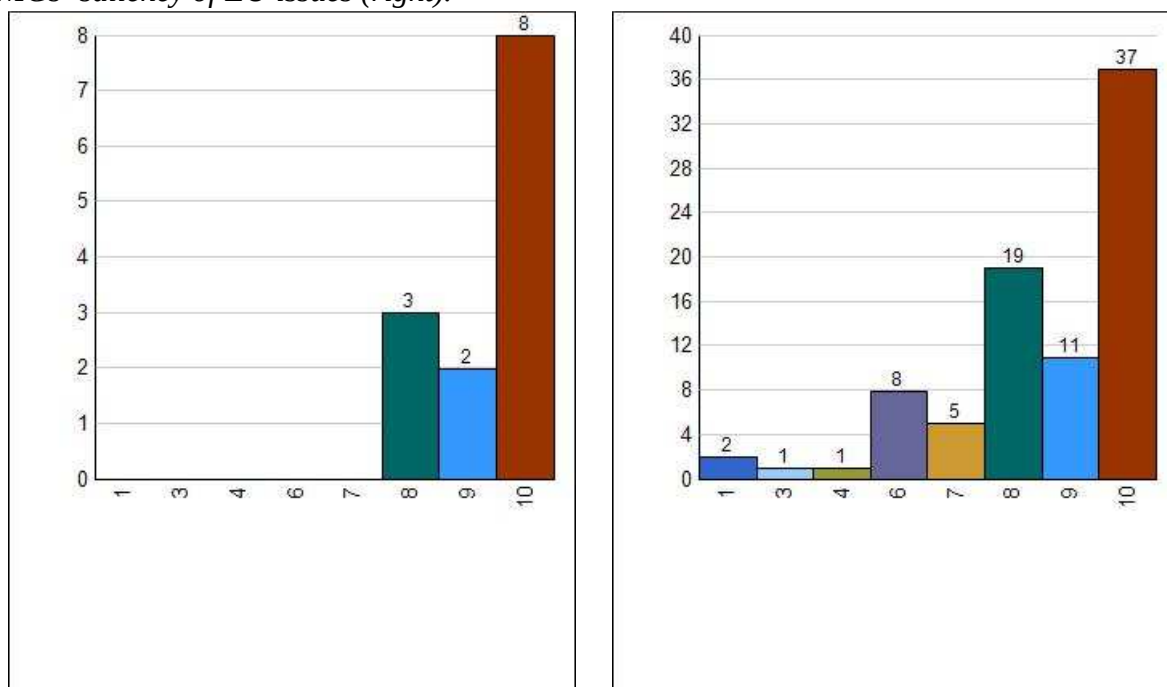
Figures a.4.66 and a.4.67 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about territorial representation by NIGs' member state of origin (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' member state of origin (right).



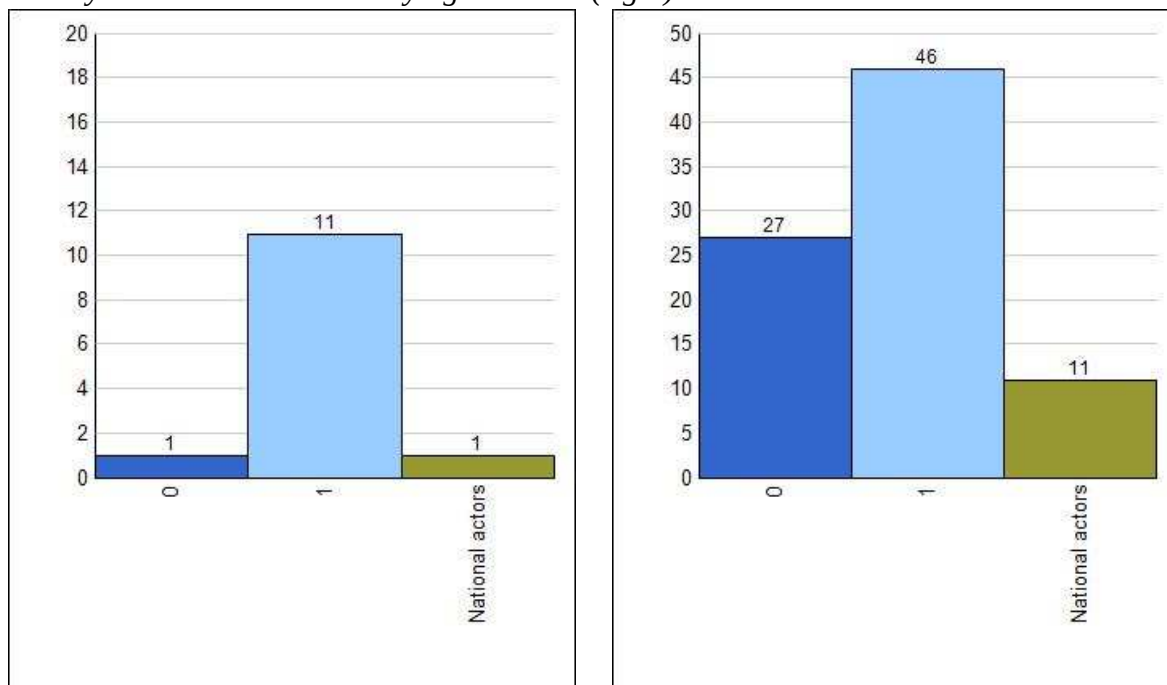
Figures a.4.68 and a.4.69 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about territorial representation by NIGs' nature of interest (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' nature of interest (right).



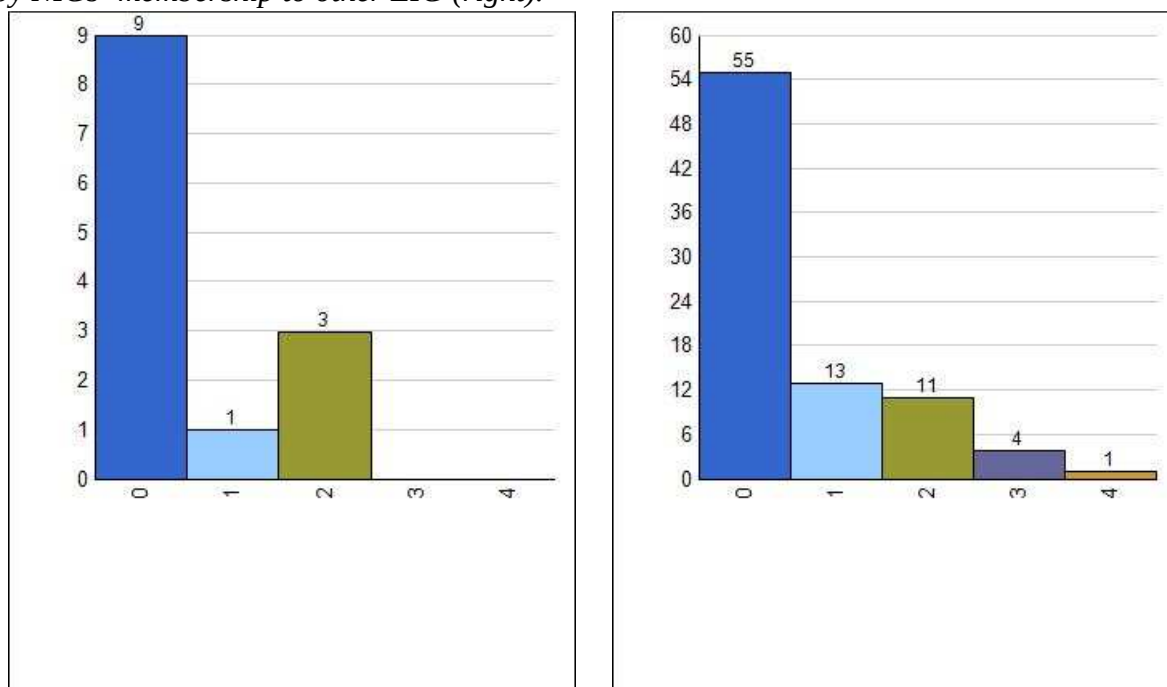
Figures a.4.70 and a.4.71 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about territorial representation by NIGs' saliency of EU issues (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' saliency of EU issues (right).



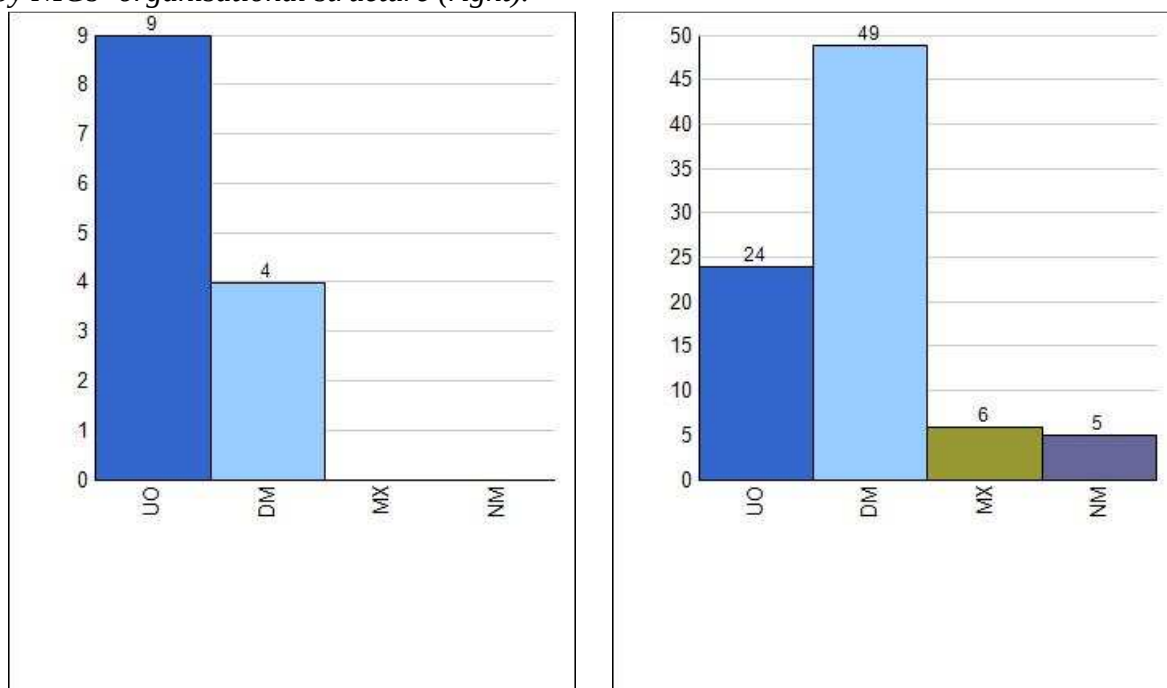
Figures a.4.72 and a.4.73 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about territorial representation by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities (right).



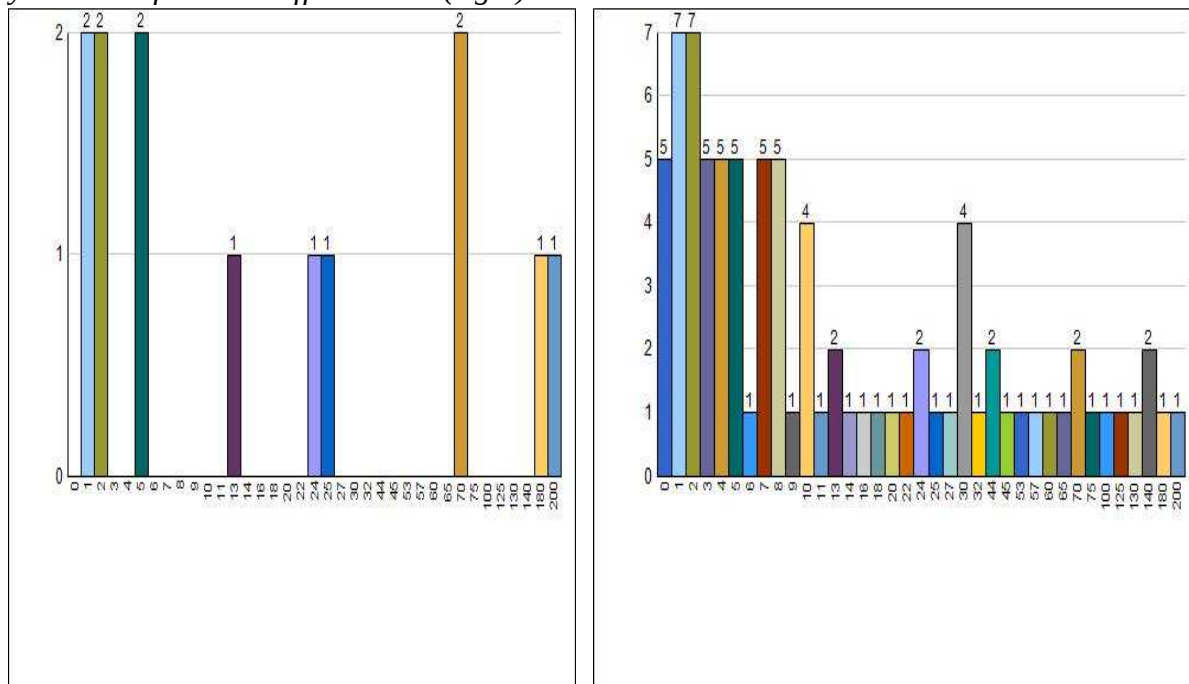
Figures a.4.74 and a.4.75 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about territorial representation by NIGs' membership to other EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' membership to other EIG (right).



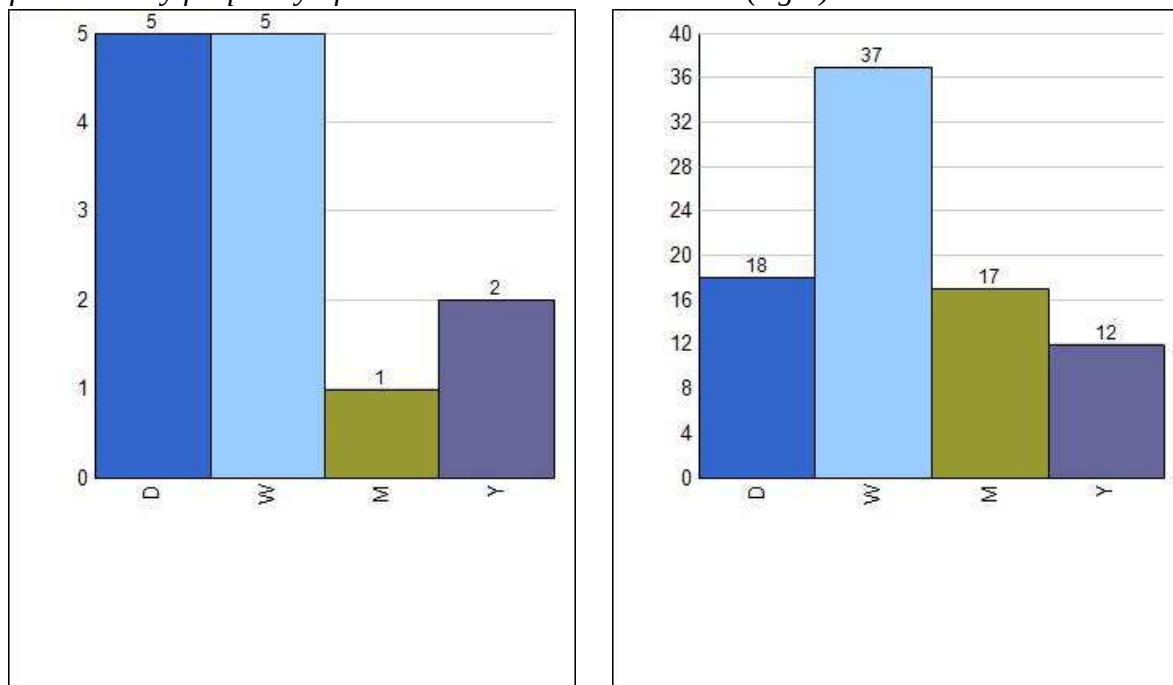
Figures a.4.76 and a.4.77 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about territorial representation by NIGs' organisational structure (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' organisational structure (right).



Figures a.4.78 and a.4.79 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about territorial representation by number of NIGs' staff members (left) and distribution of all cases by number of NIGs' staff members (right).

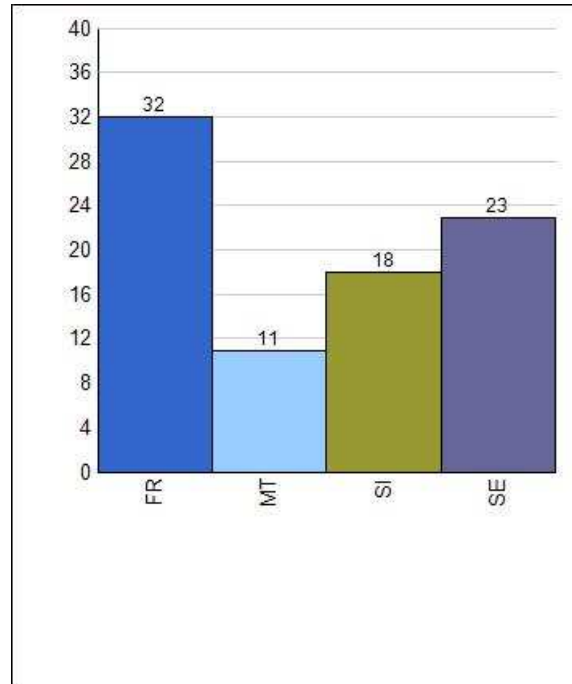
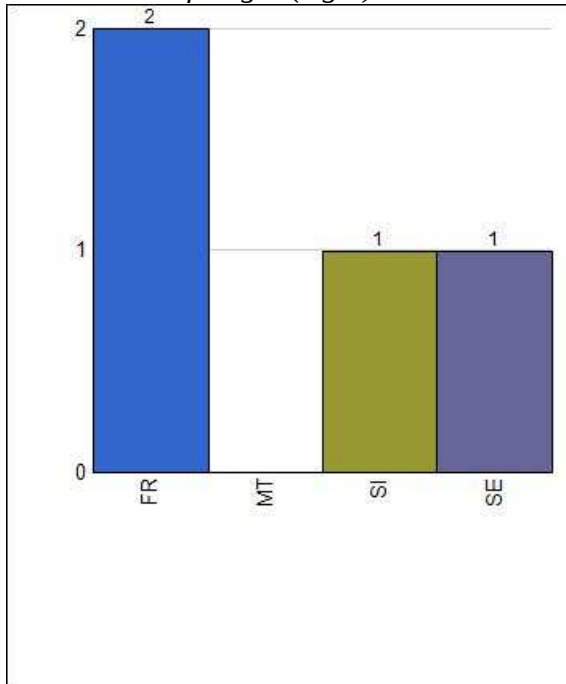


Figures a.4.80 and a.4.81 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about territorial representation by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (right).

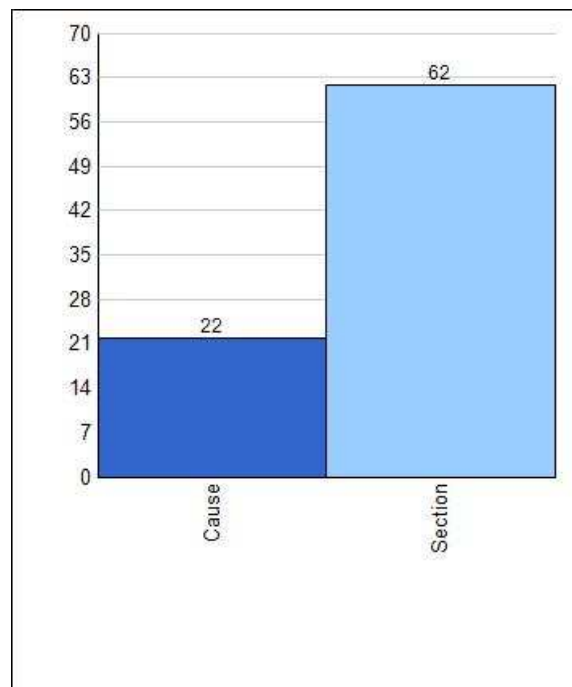
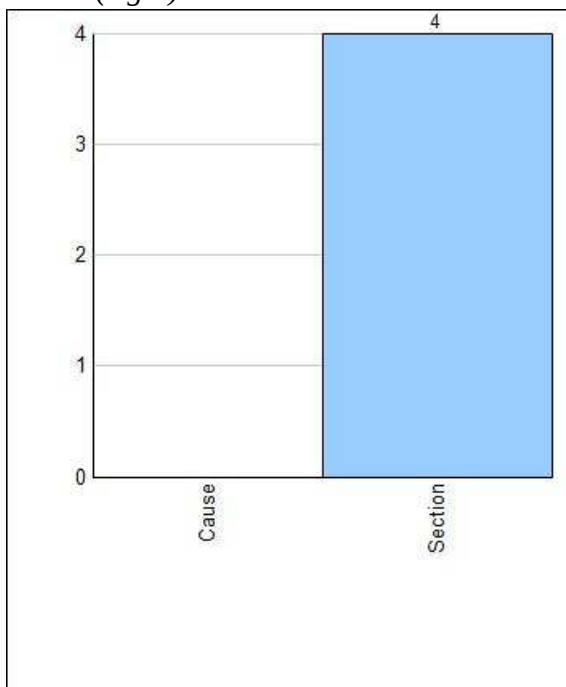


7.2.6. NIGs using elements of discourse about transparency

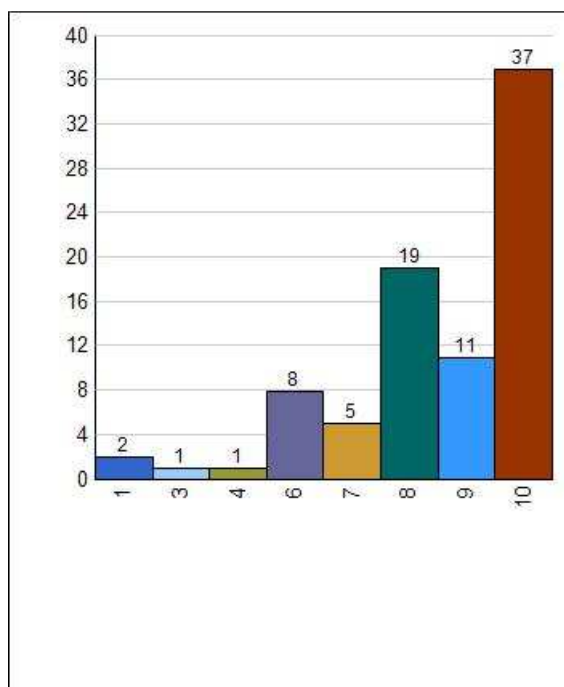
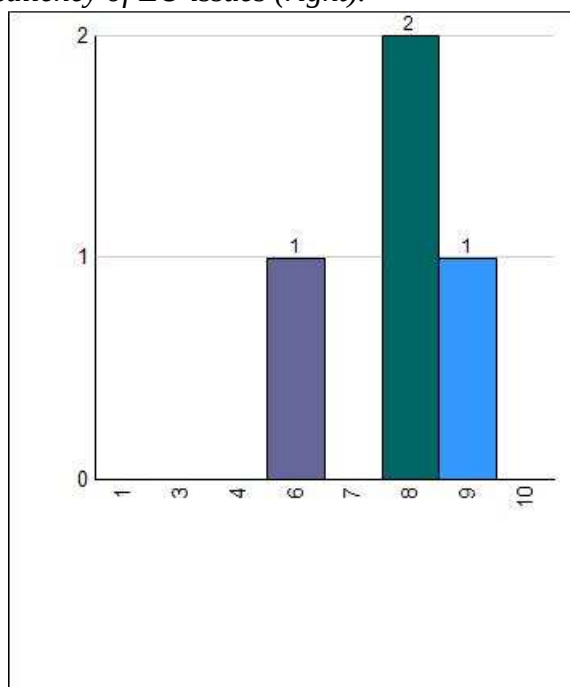
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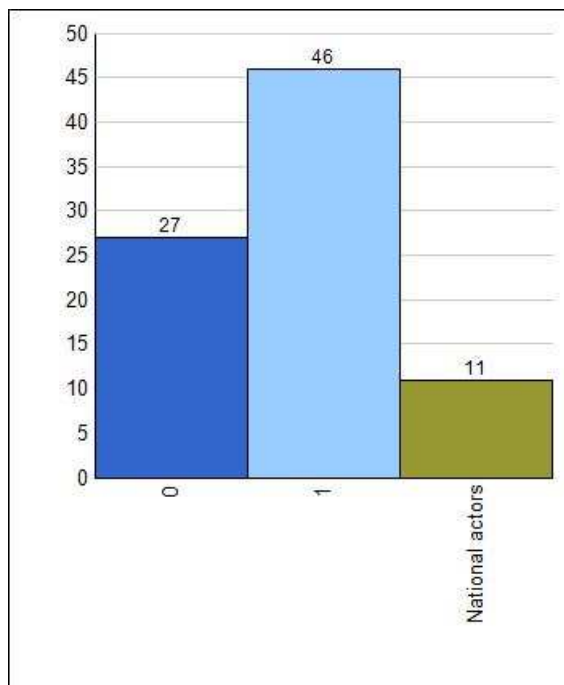
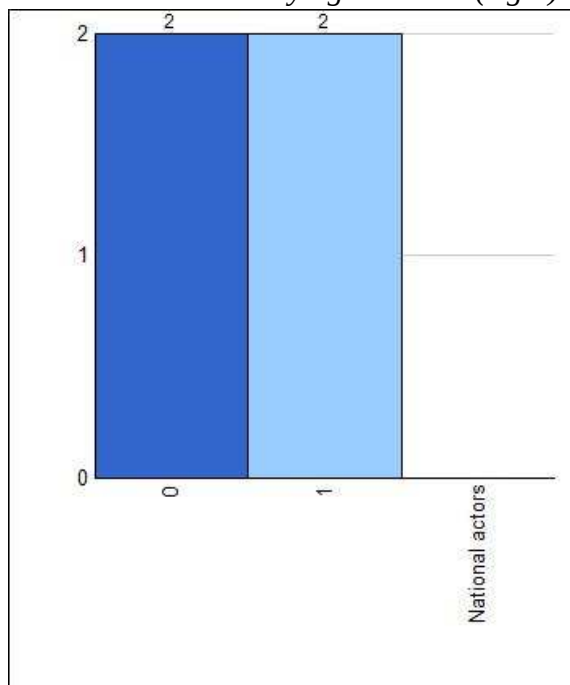
Figures a.4.84 and a.4.85 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about transparency by NIGs' nature of interest (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' nature of interest (right).



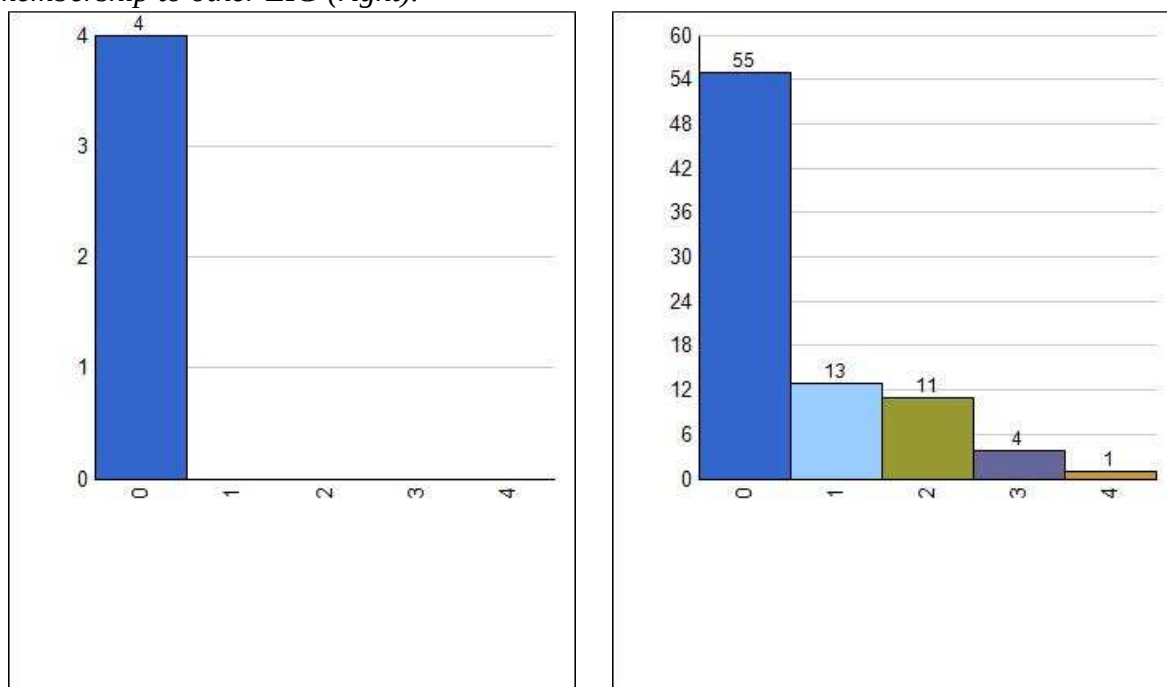
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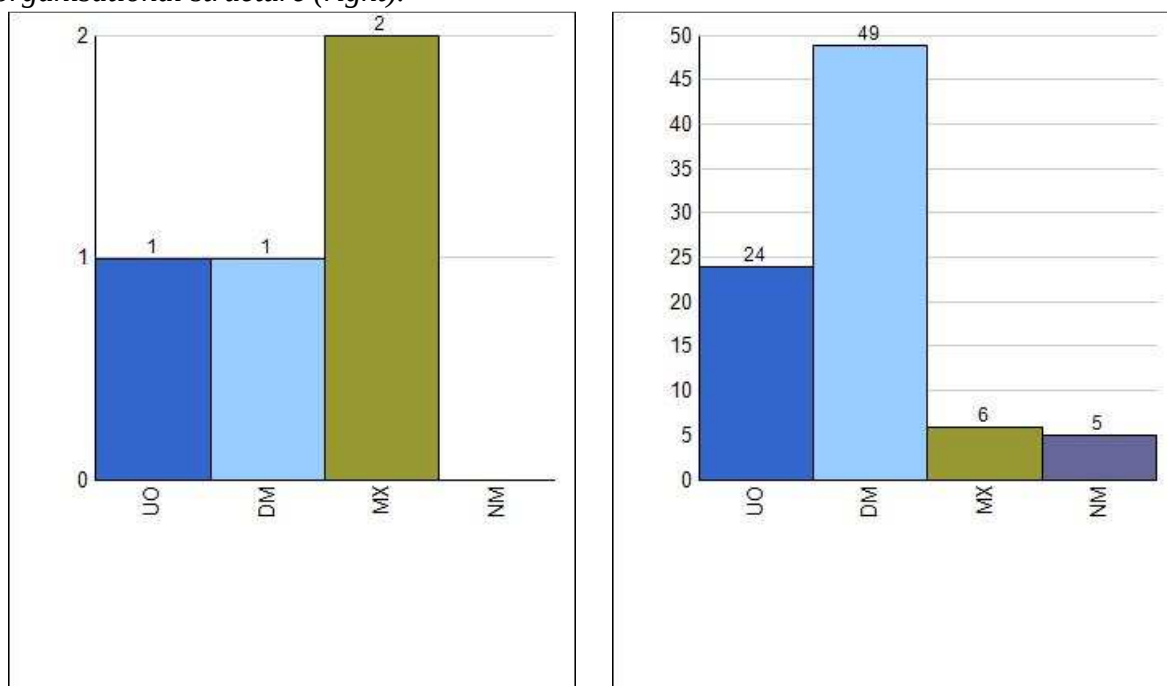
Figures a.4.88 and a.4.89 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about transparency by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities (right).



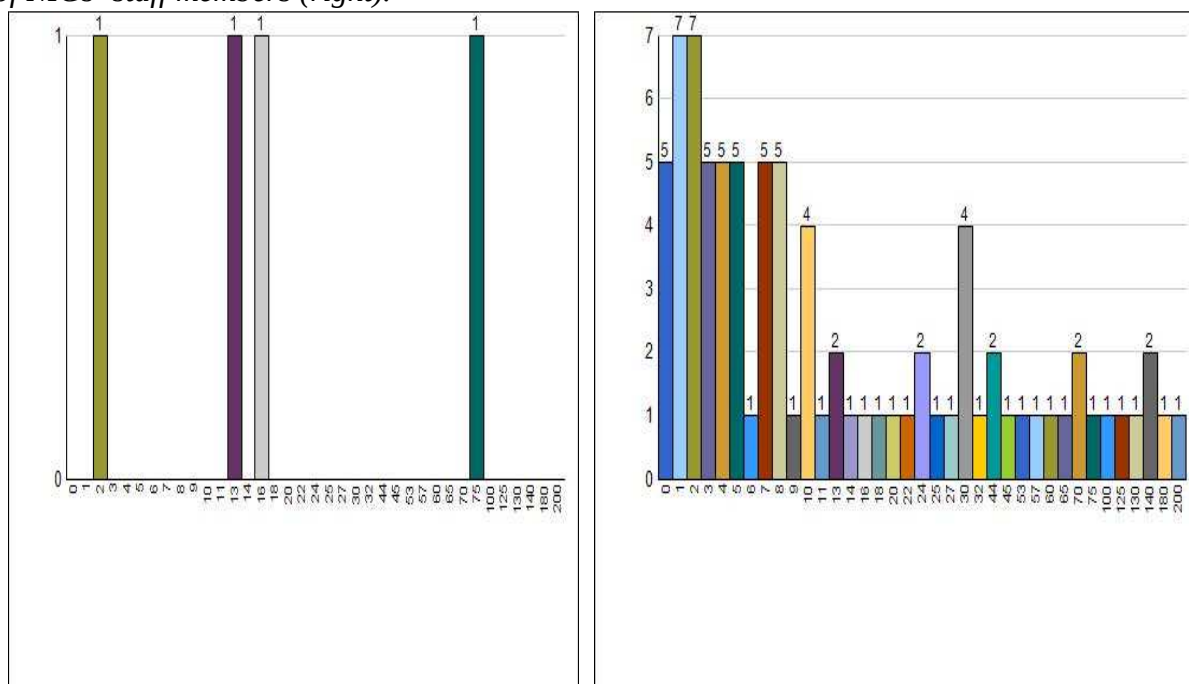
Figures a.4.90 and a.4.91 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about transparency by NIGs' membership to other EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' membership to other EIG (right).



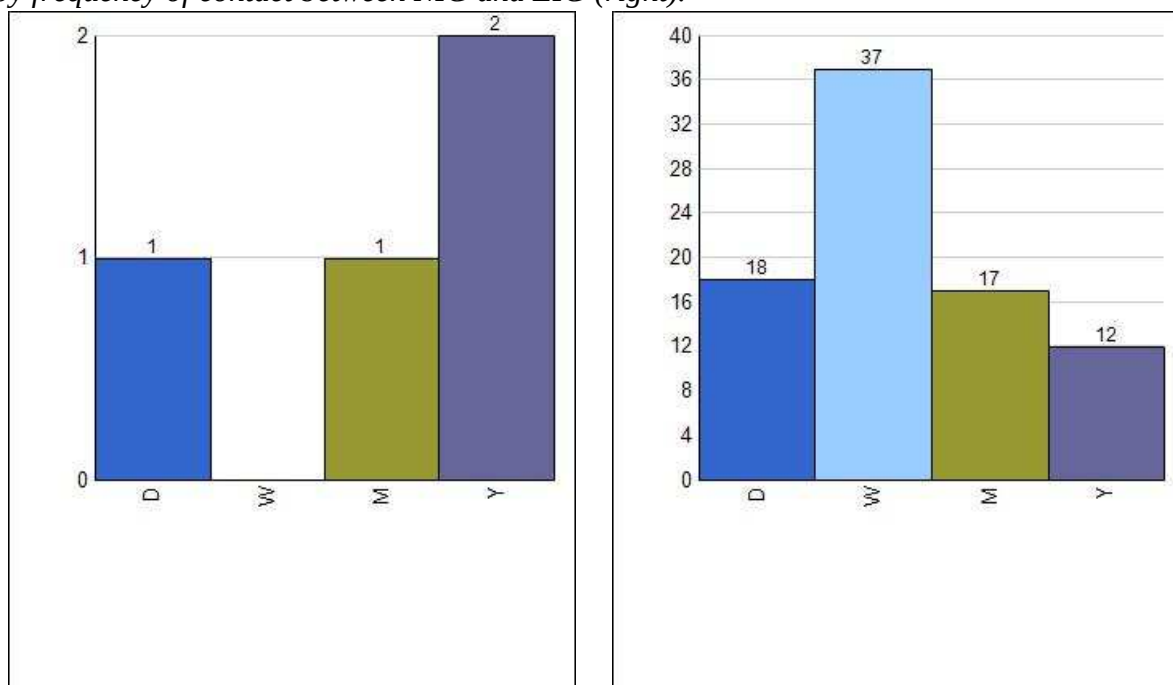
Figures a.4.92 and a.4.93 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about transparency by NIGs' organisational structure (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' organisational structure (right).



Figures a.4.94 and a.4.95 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about transparency by number of NIGs' staff members (left) and distribution of all cases by number of NIGs' staff members (right).

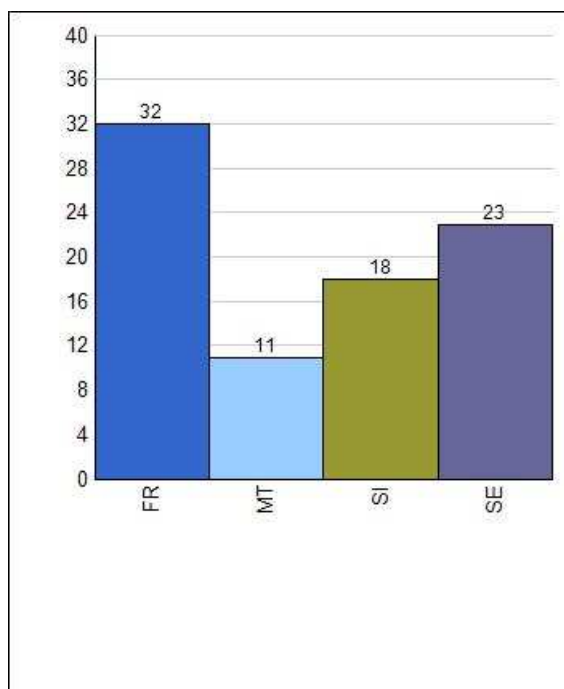
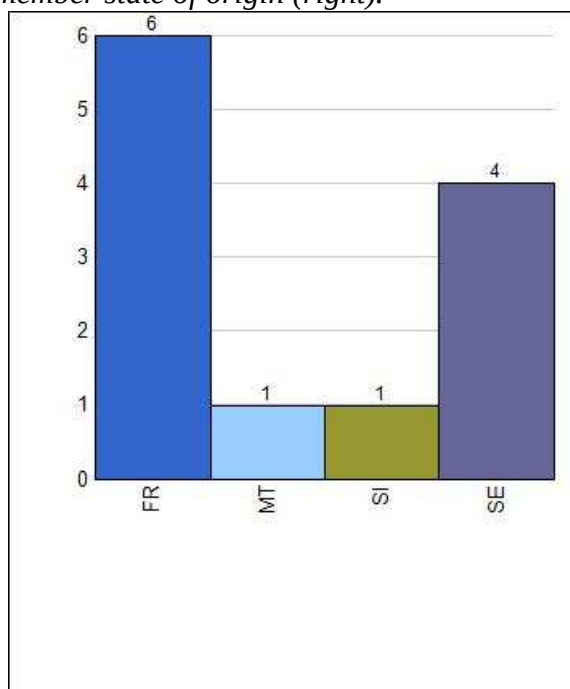


Figures a.4.96 and a.4.97 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about transparency by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (right).

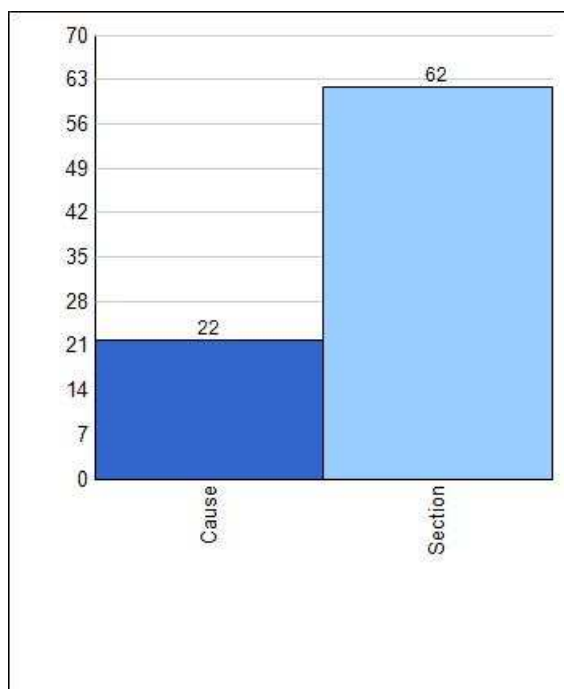
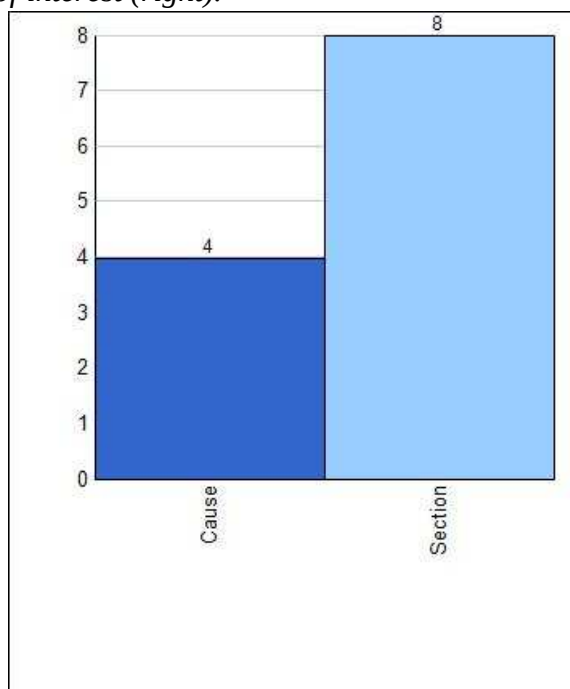


7.2.7. NIGs using elements of discourse about EU lobbying work

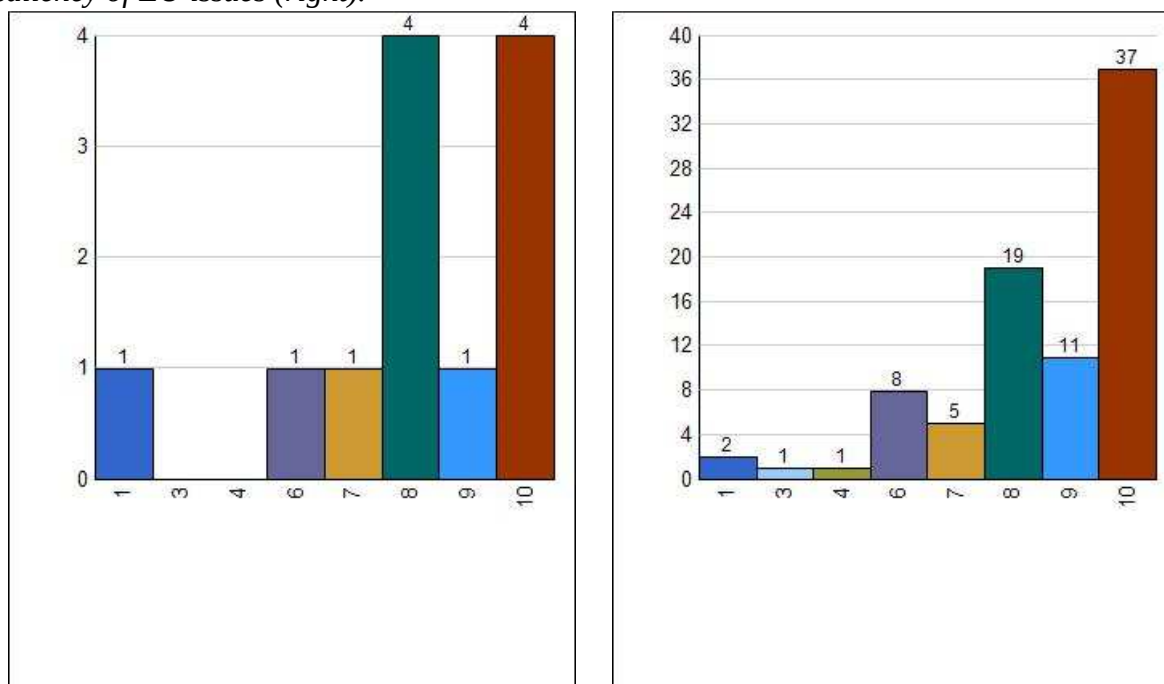
Figures a.4.98 and a.4.99 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about EU lobbying work by NIGs' member state of origin (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' member state of origin (right).



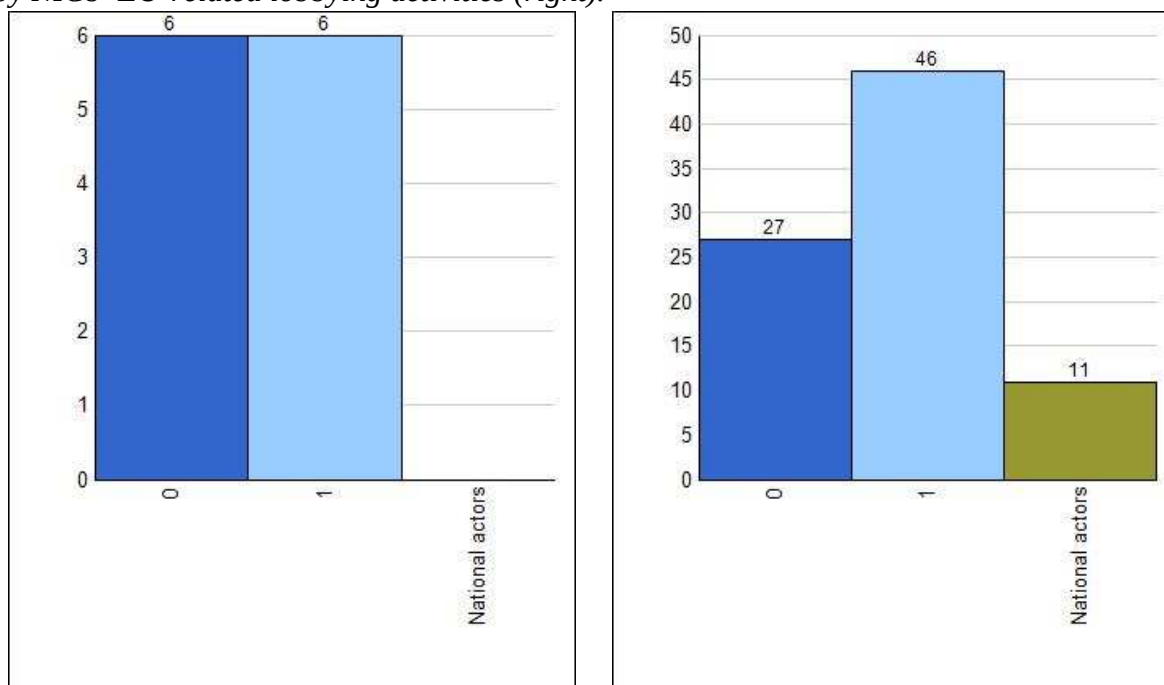
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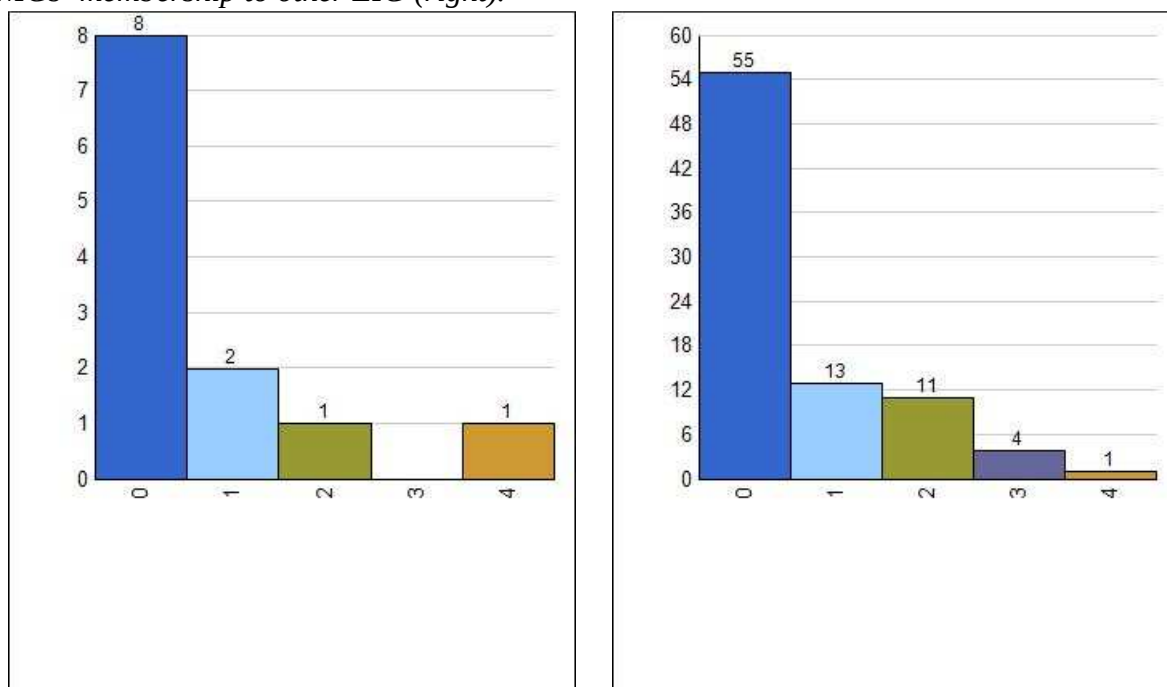
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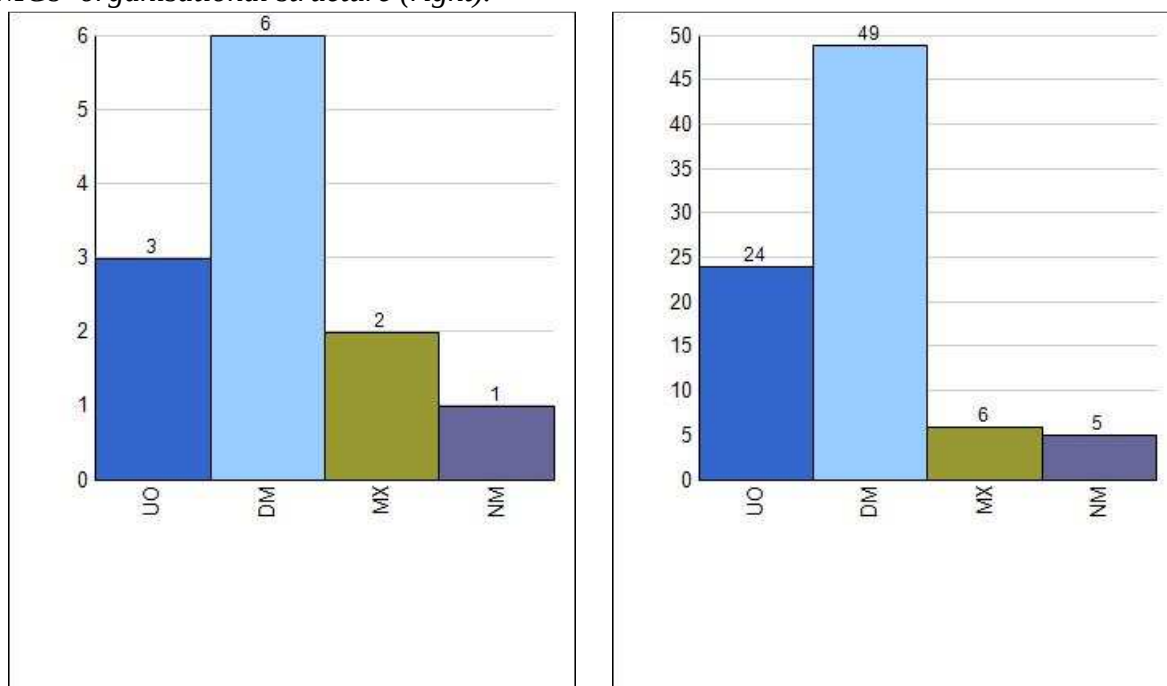
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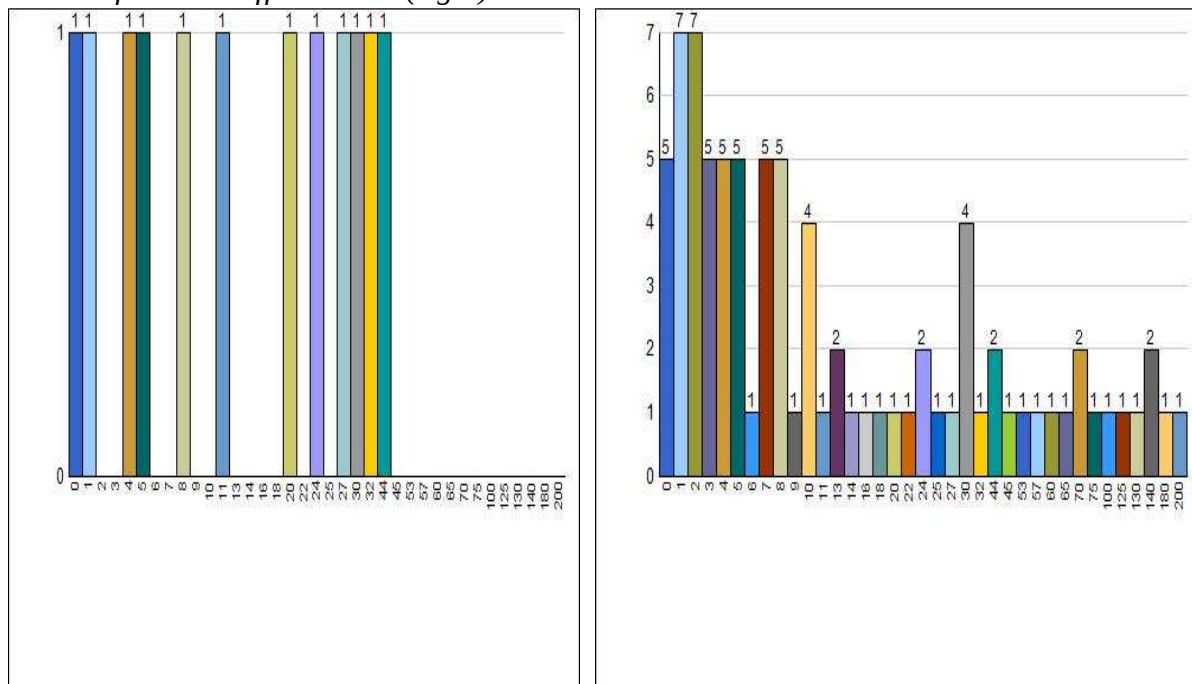
Figures a.4.106 and a.4.107 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about EU lobbying work by NIGs' membership to other EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' membership to other EIG (right).



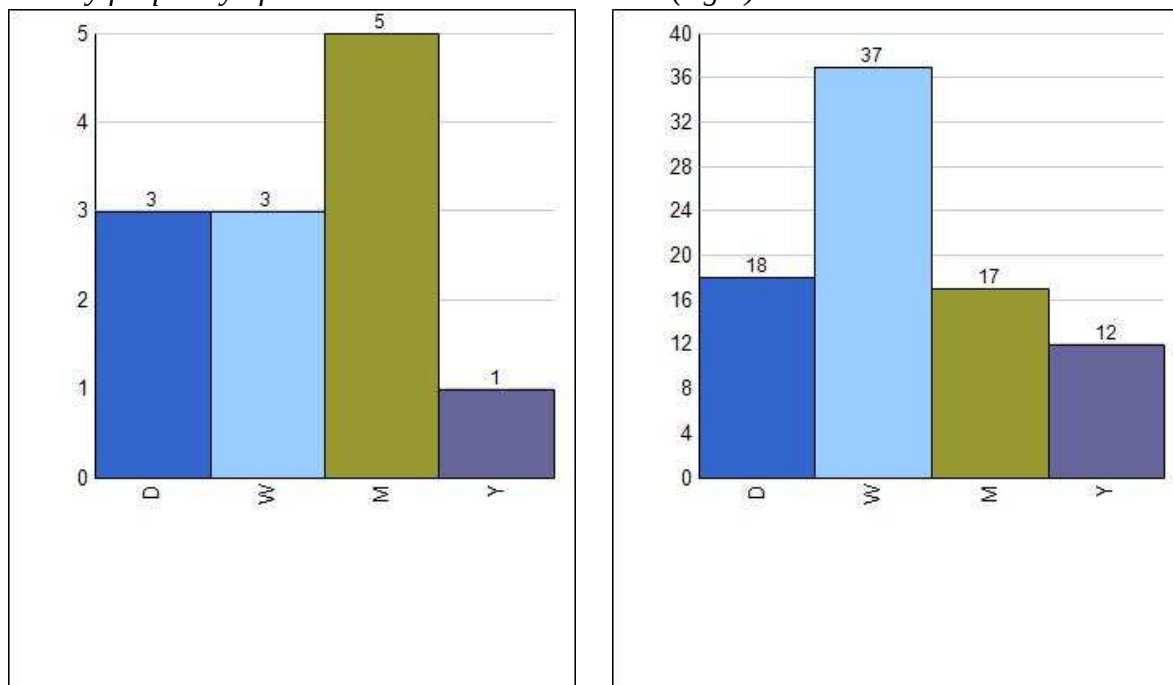
Figures a.4.108 and a.4.109 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about EU lobbying work by NIGs' organisational structure (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' organisational structure (right).



Figures a.4.110 and a.4.111 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about EU lobbying work by number of NIGs' staff members (left) and distribution of all cases by number of NIGs' staff members (right).

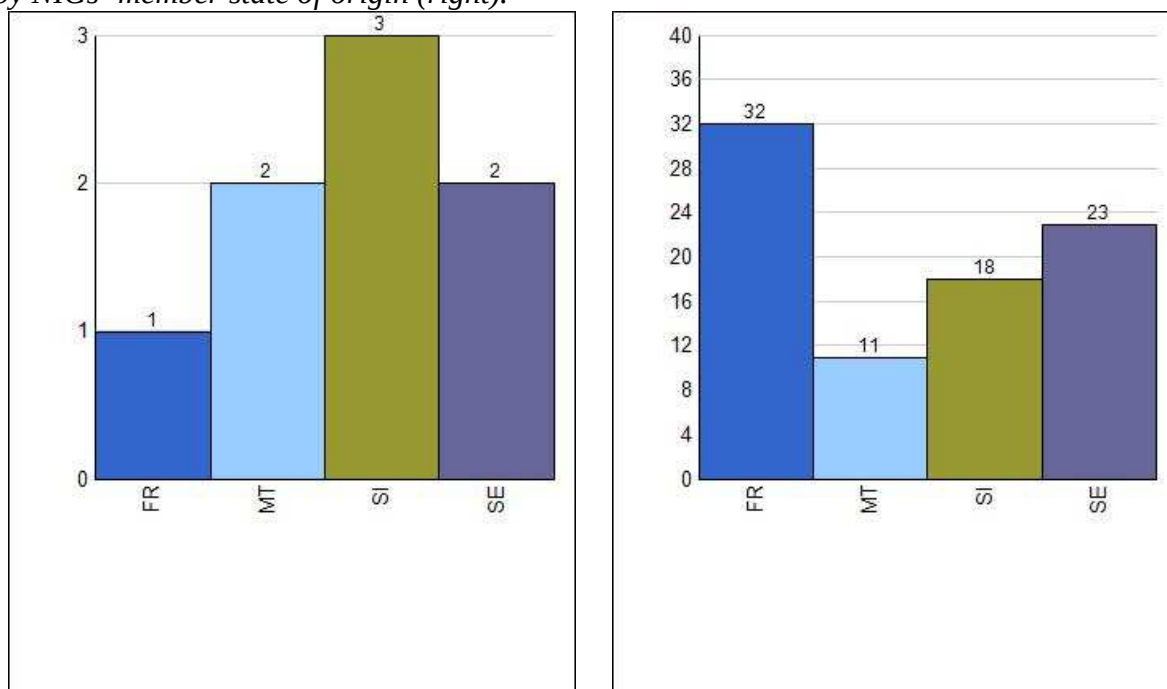


Figures a.4.112 and a.4.113 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about EU lobbying work by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (right).

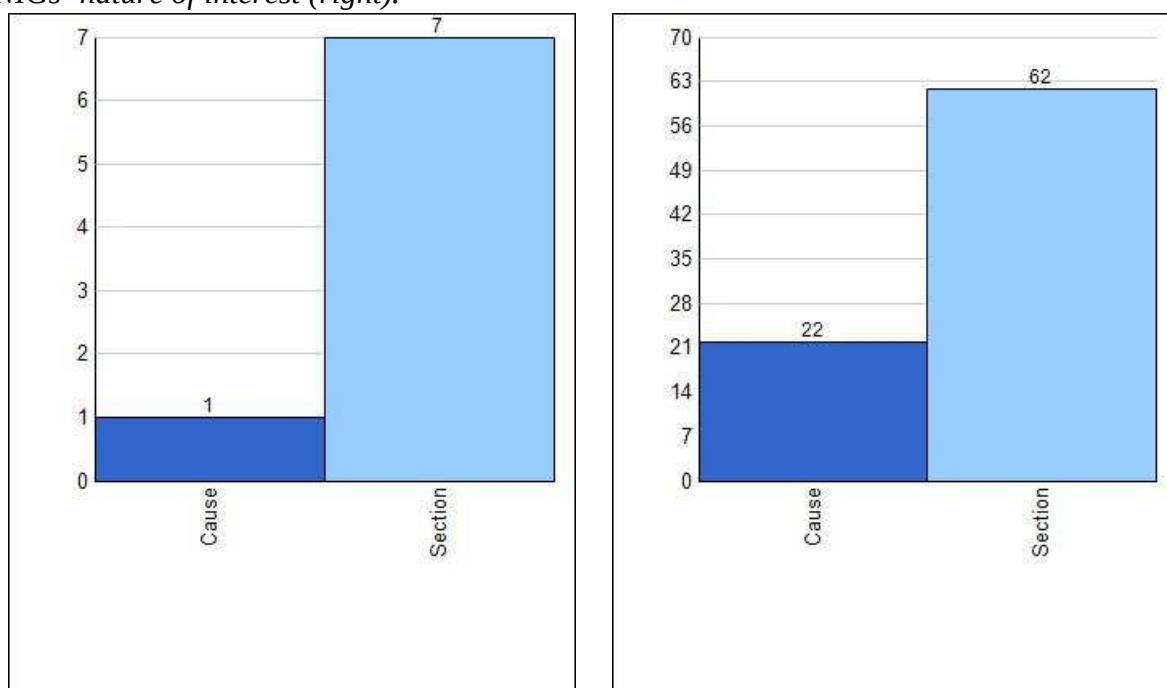


7.2.8. NIGs using elements of discourse about effectiveness of EU lobbying

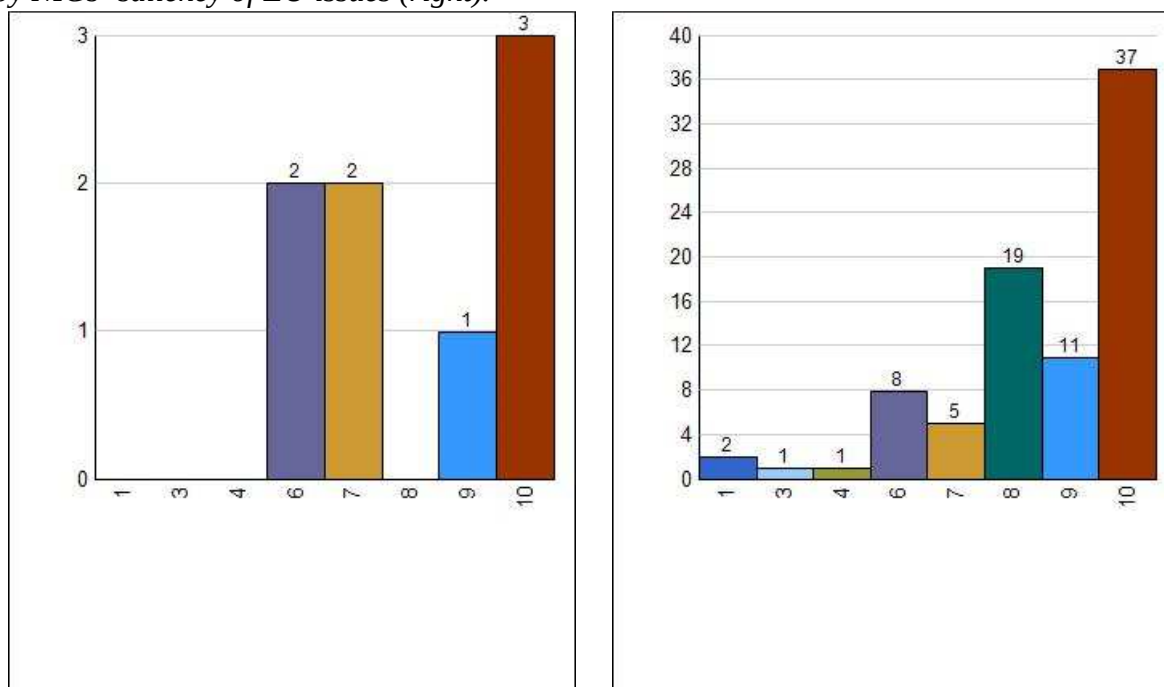
Figures a.4.114 and a.4.115 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about effectiveness of EU lobbying by NIGs' member state of origin (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' member state of origin (right).



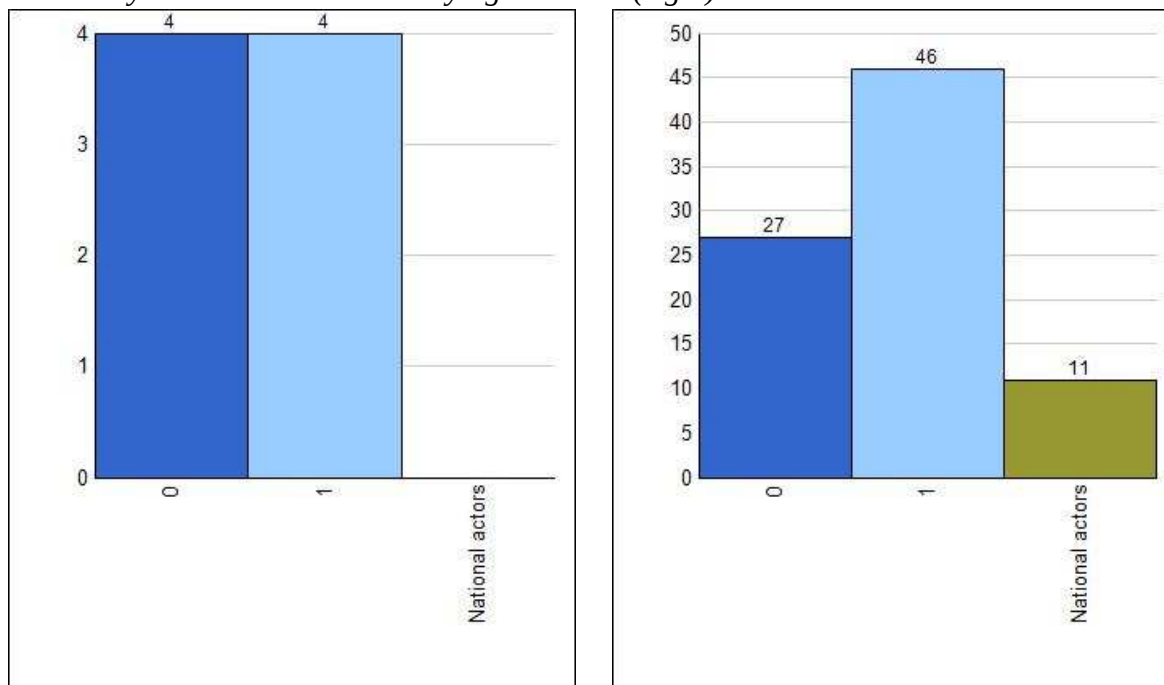
Figures a.4.116 and a.4.117 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about effectiveness of EU lobbying by NIGs' nature of interest (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' nature of interest (right).



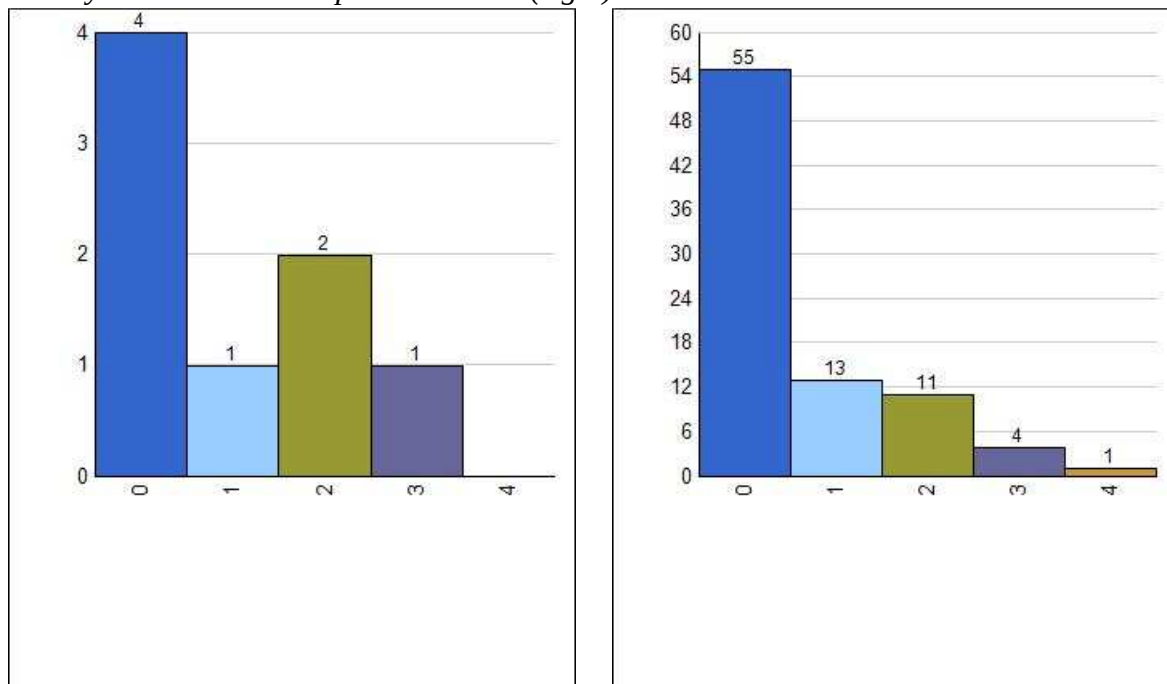
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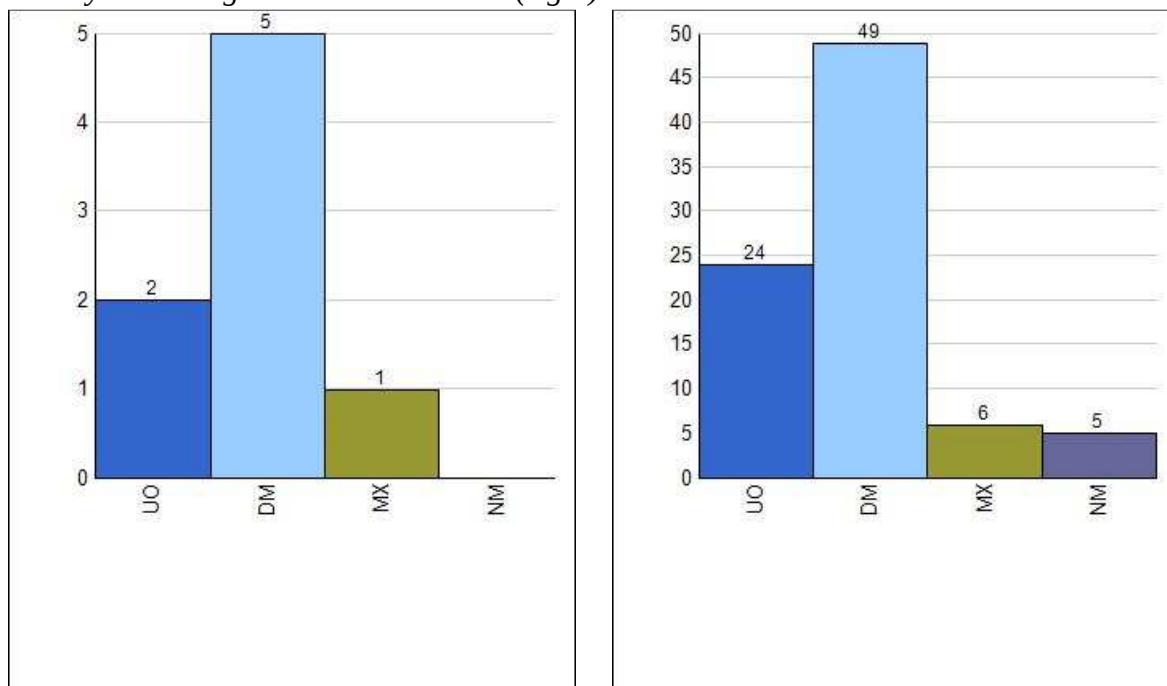
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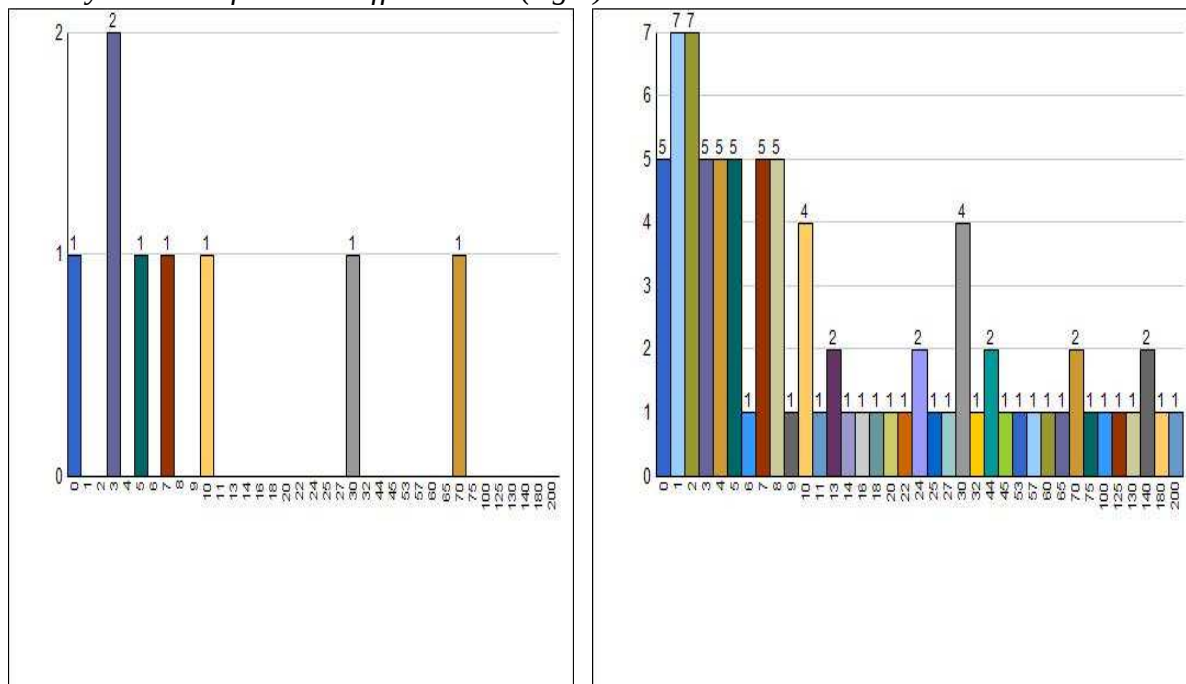
Figures a.4.122 and a.4.123 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about effectiveness of EU lobbying by NIGs' membership to other EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' membership to other EIG (right).



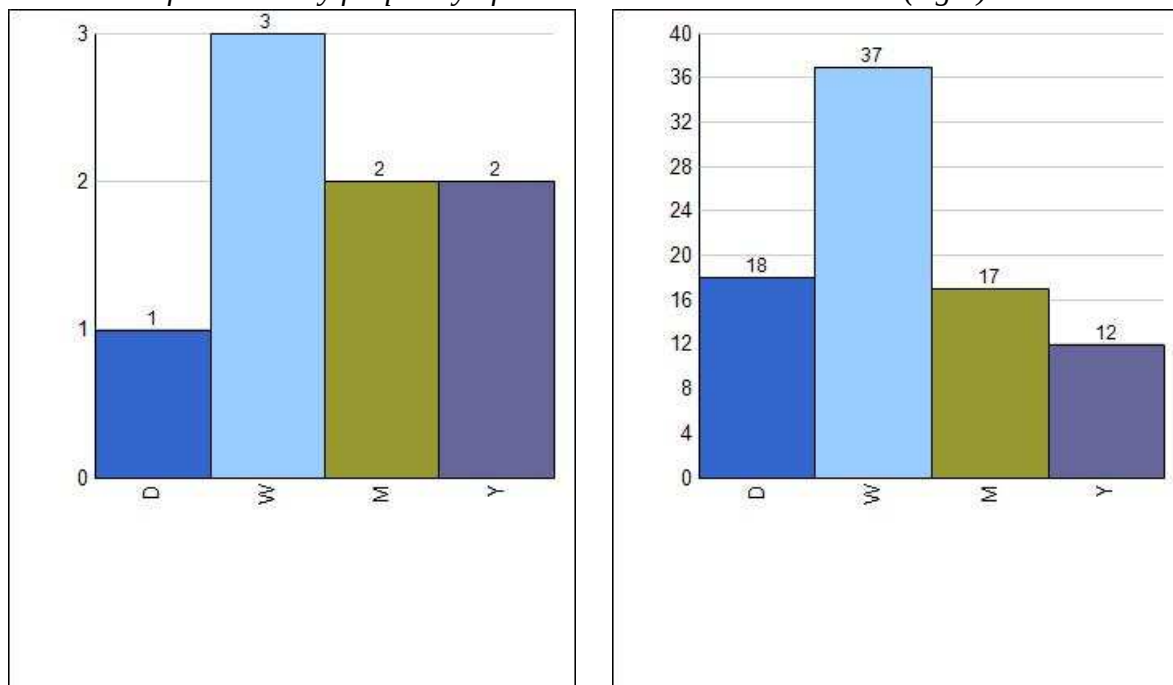
Figures a.4.124 and a.4.125 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about effectiveness of EU lobbying by NIGs' organisational structure (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' organisational structure (right).



Figures a.4.126 and a.4.127 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about effectiveness of EU lobbying by number of NIGs' staff members (left) and distribution of all cases by number of NIGs' staff members (right).

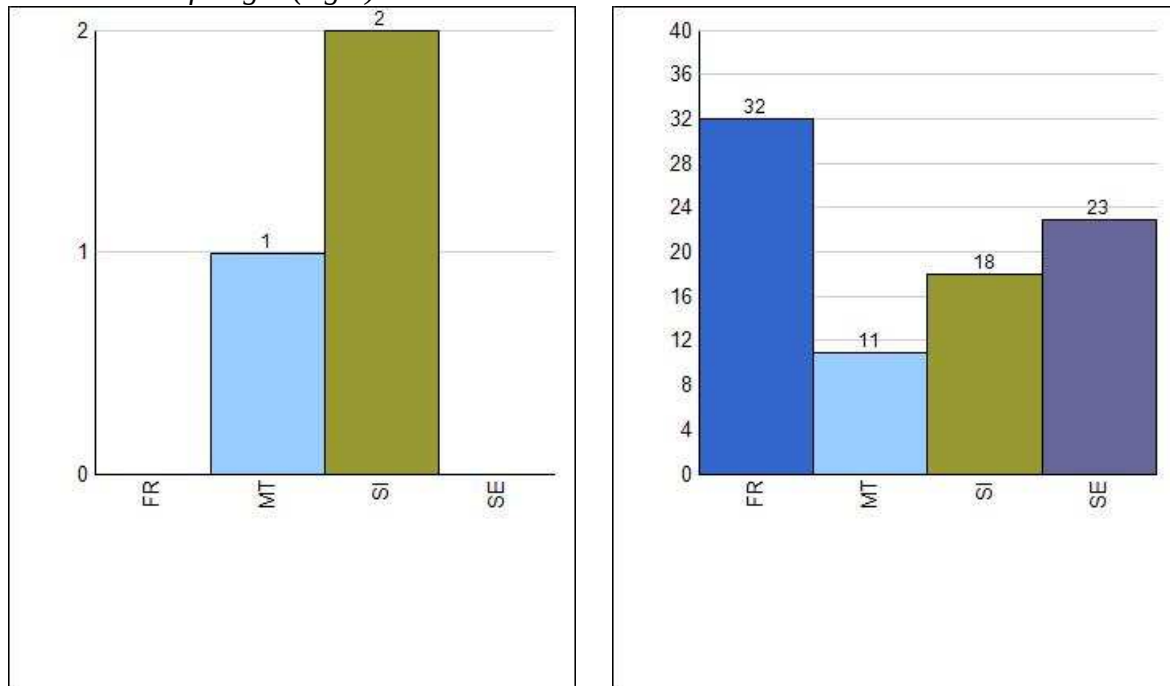


Figures a.4.128 and a.4.129 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about effectiveness of EU lobbying by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (right).

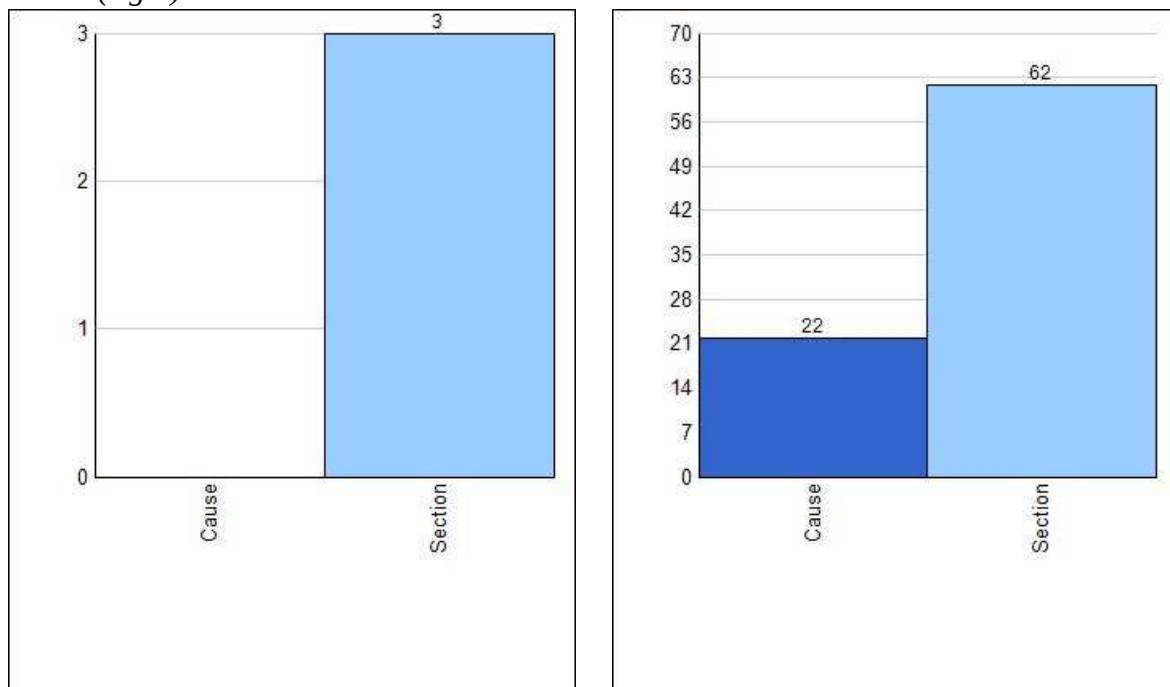


7.2.9. NIGs using elements of discourse about information

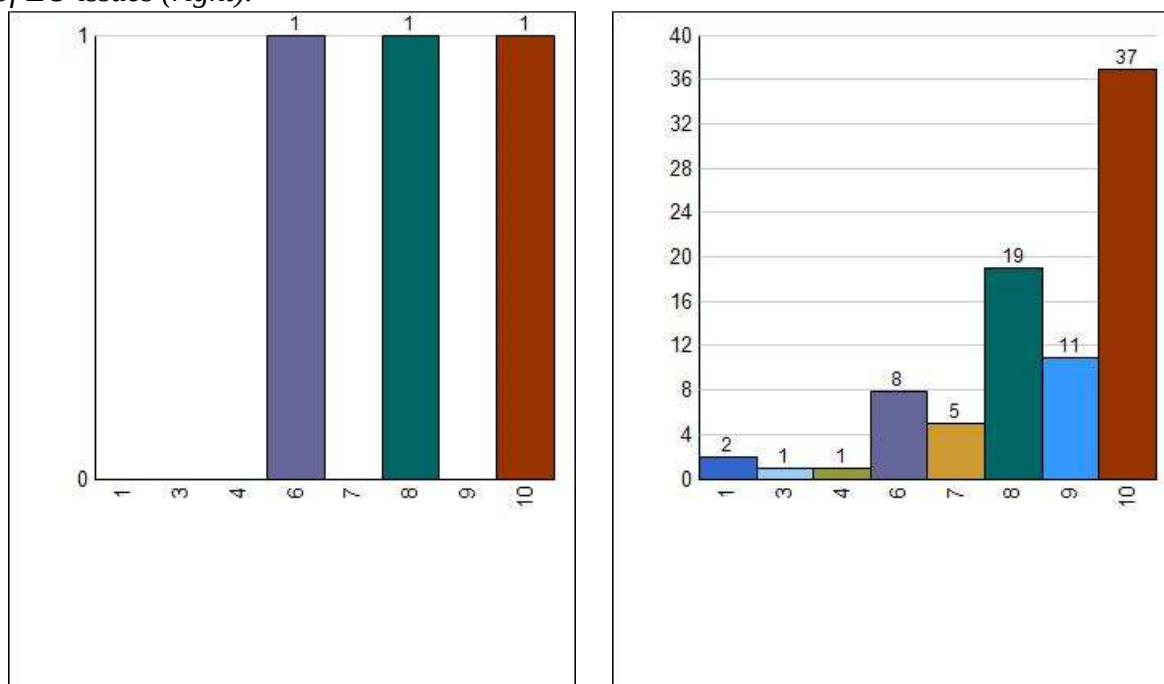
Figures a.4.130 and a.4.131 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about information by NIGs' member state of origin (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' member state of origin (right).



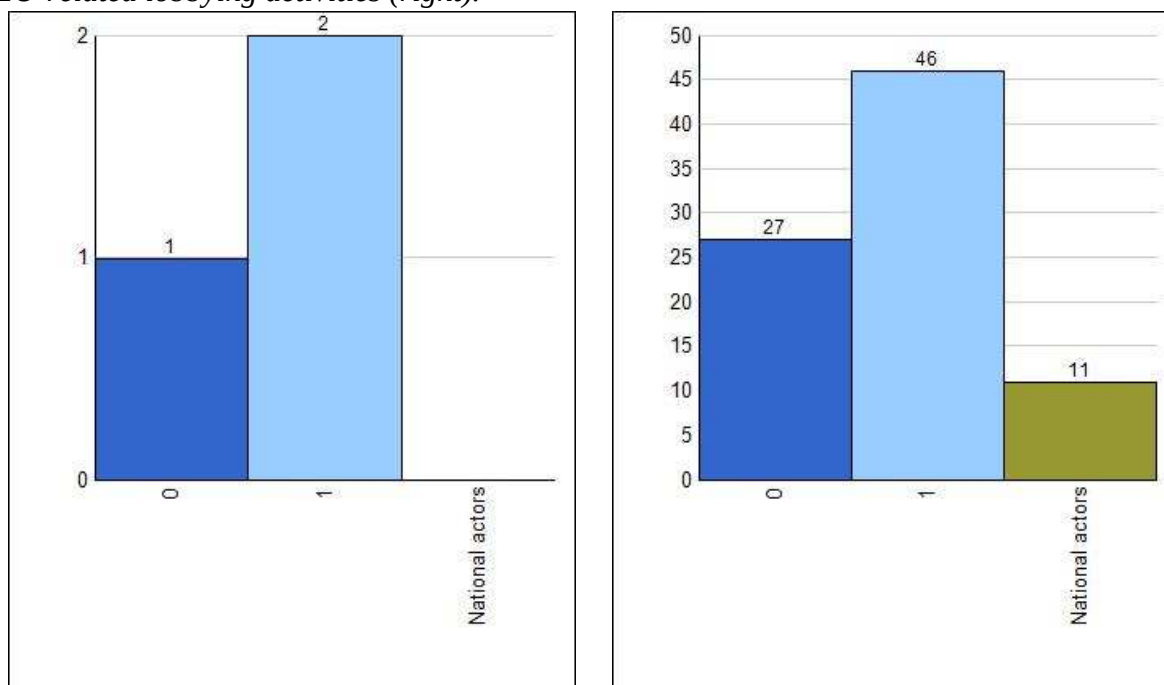
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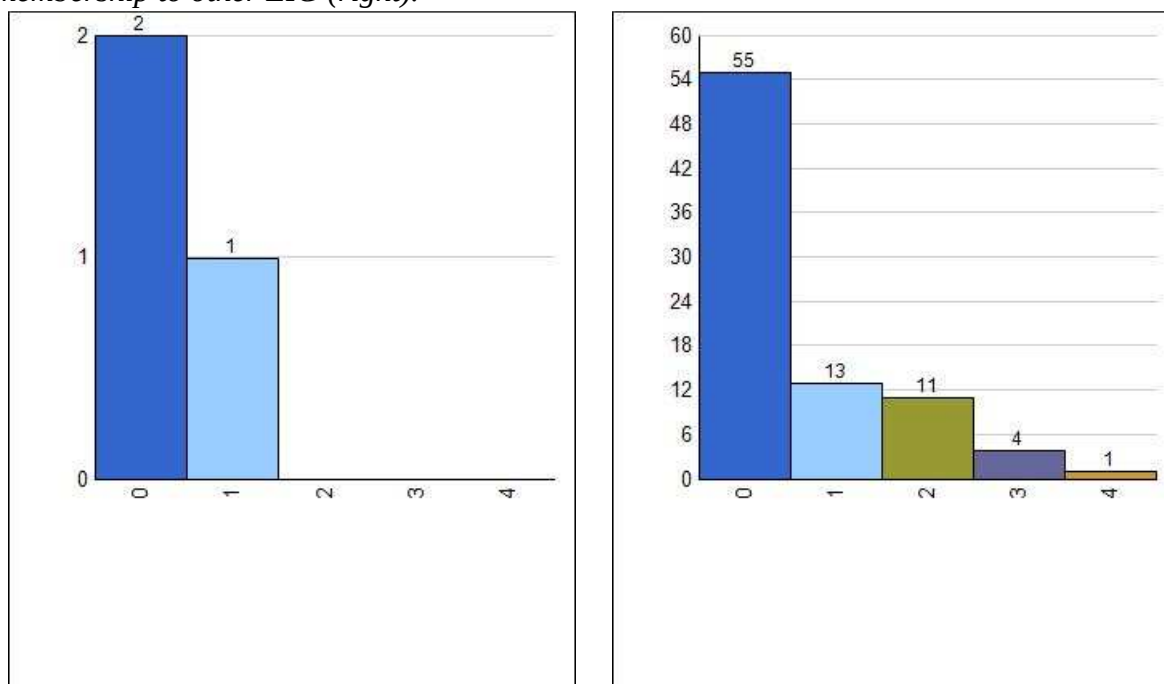
Figures a.4.134 and a.4.135 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about information by NIGs' saliency of EU issues (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' saliency of EU issues (right).



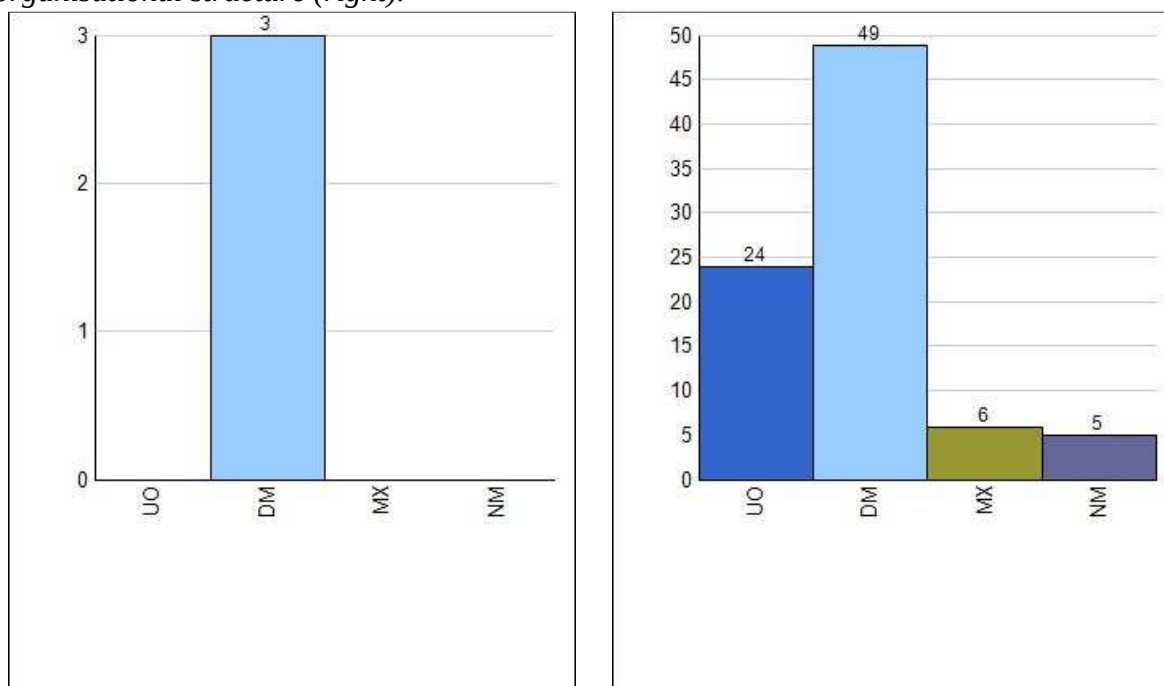
Figures a.4.136 and a.4.137 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about information by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities (right).



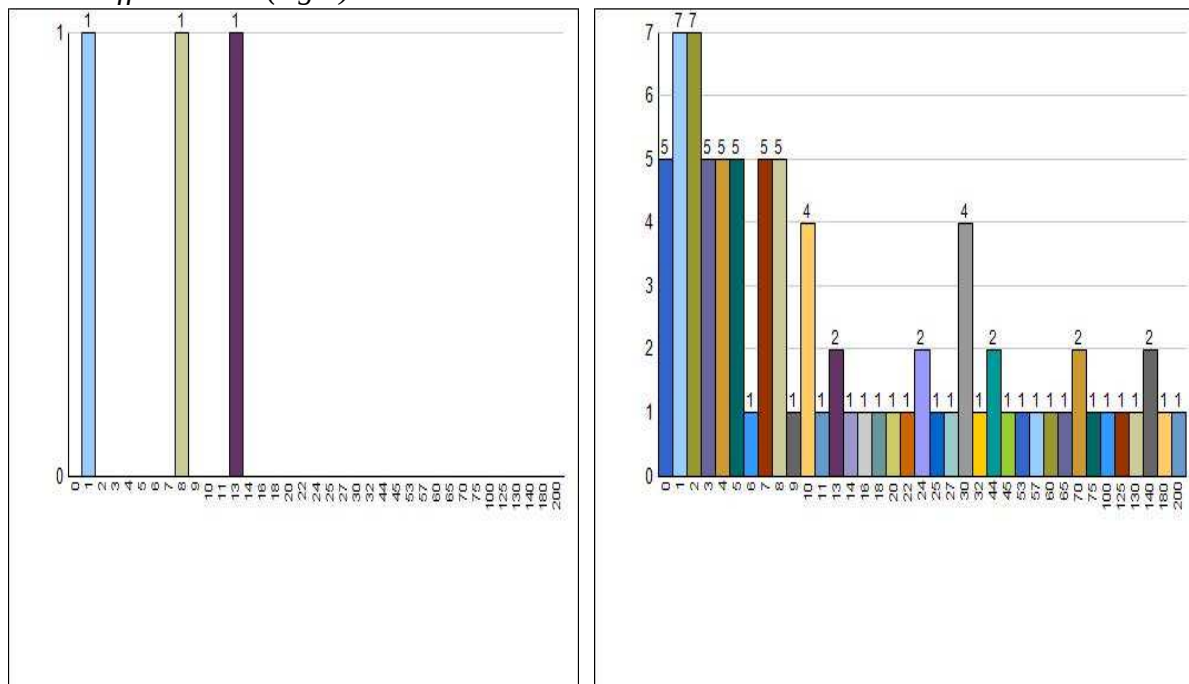
Figures a.4.138 and a.4.139 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about information by NIGs' membership to other EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' membership to other EIG (right).



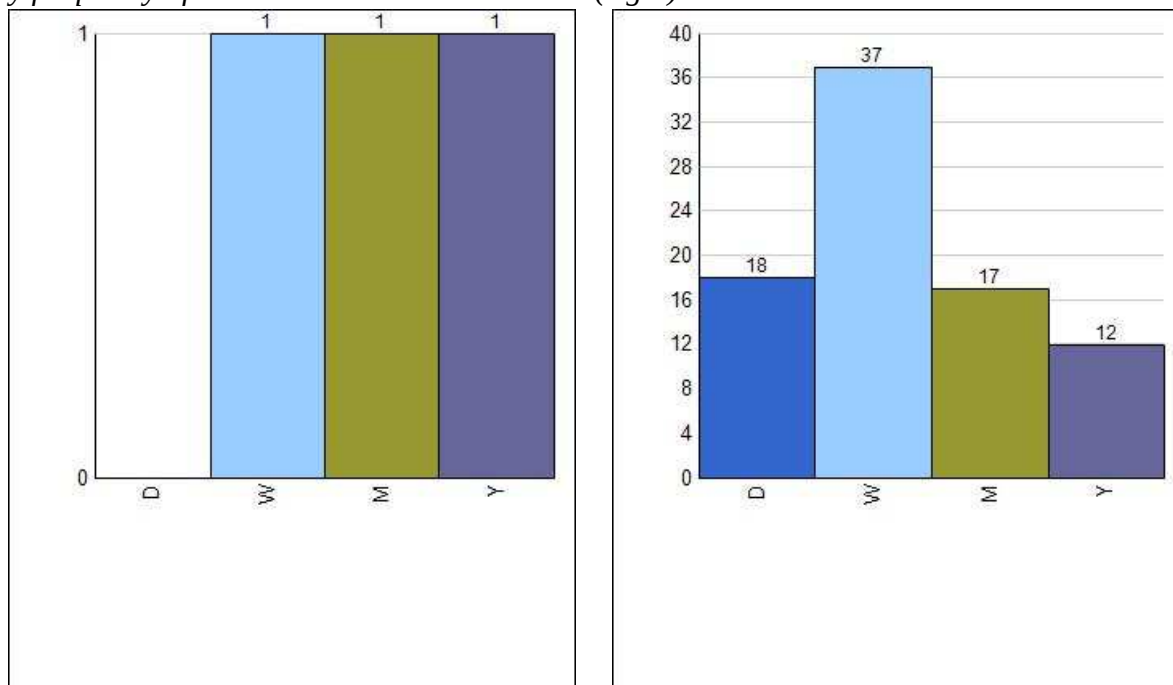
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Figures a.4.142 and a.4.143 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about information by number of NIGs' staff members (left) and distribution of all cases by number of NIGs' staff members (right).

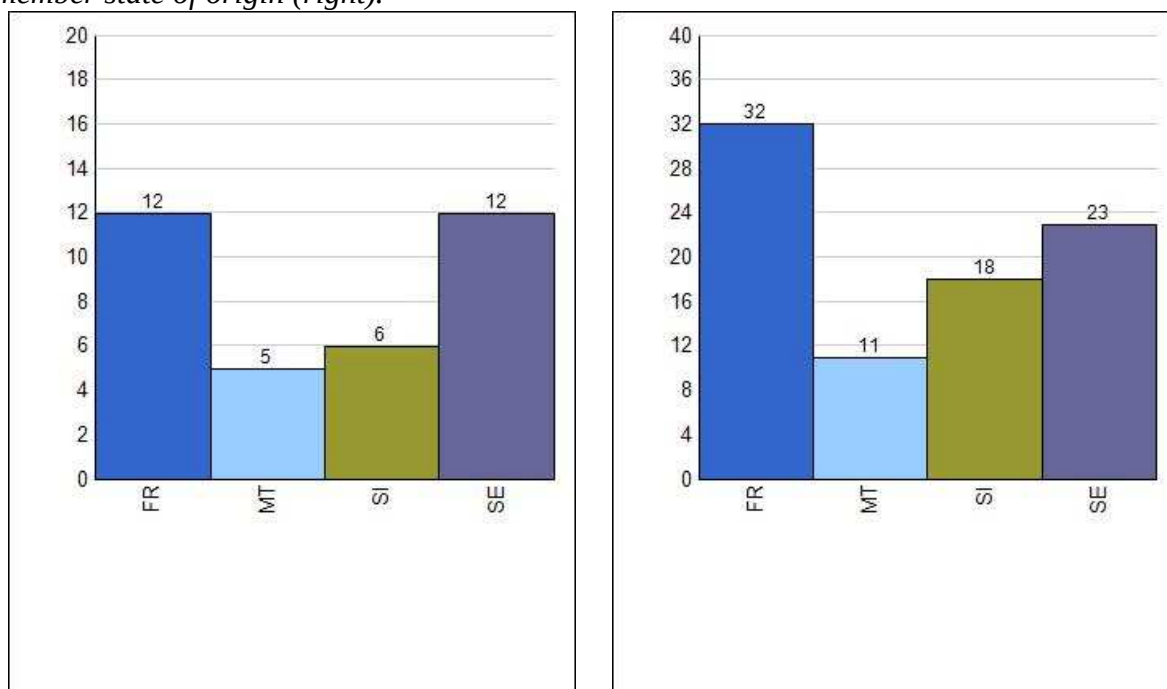


Figures a.4.144 and a.4.145 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about information by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (right).

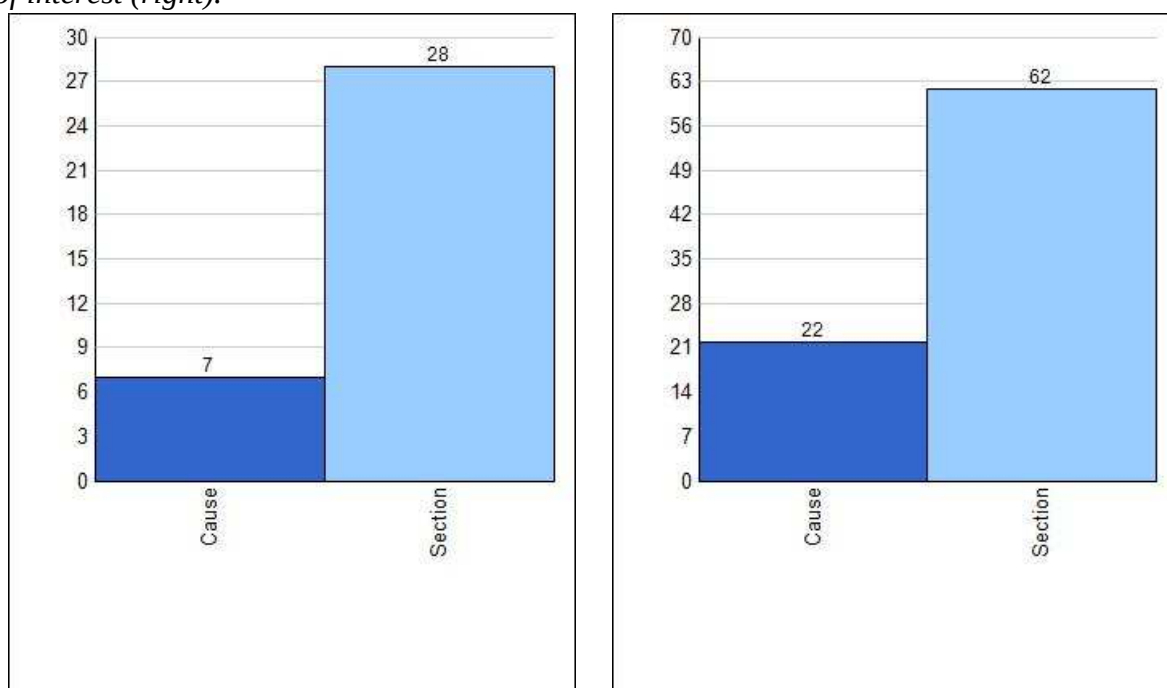


7.2.10. NIGs using elements of discourse about status in Brussels

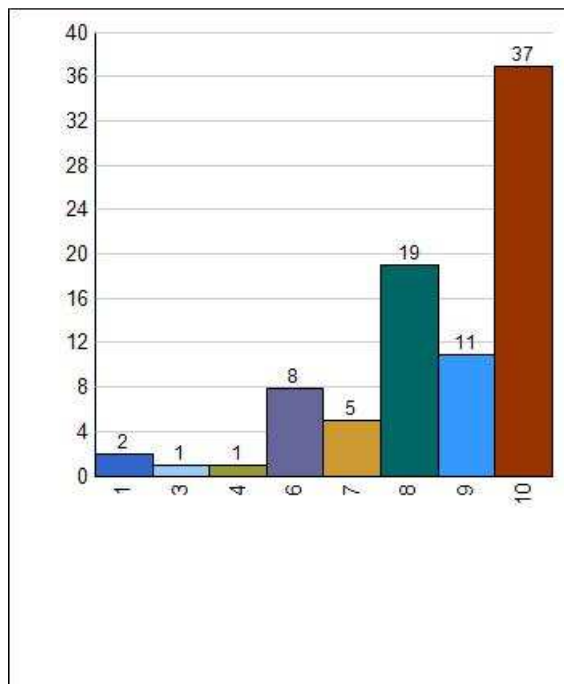
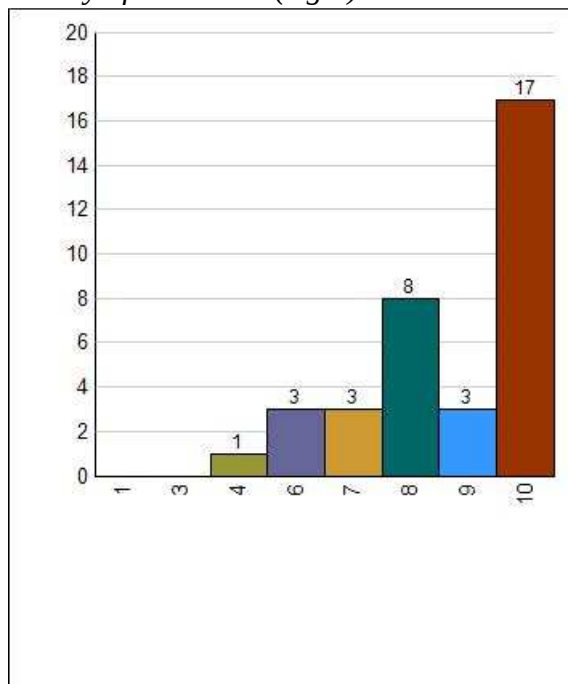
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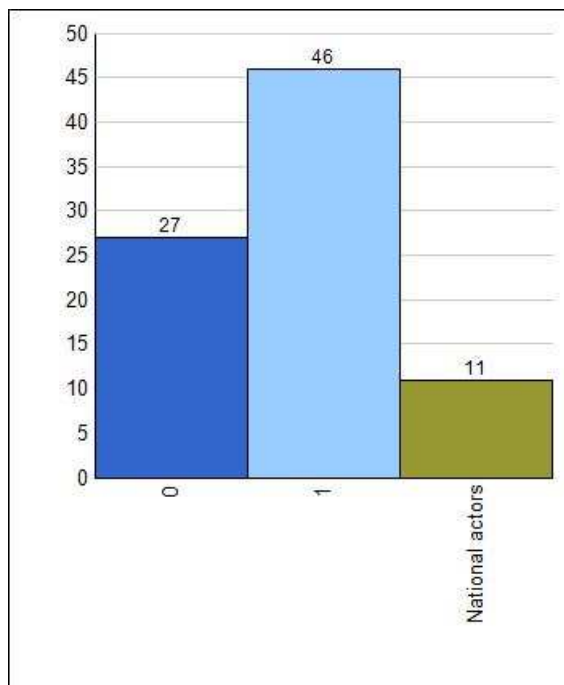
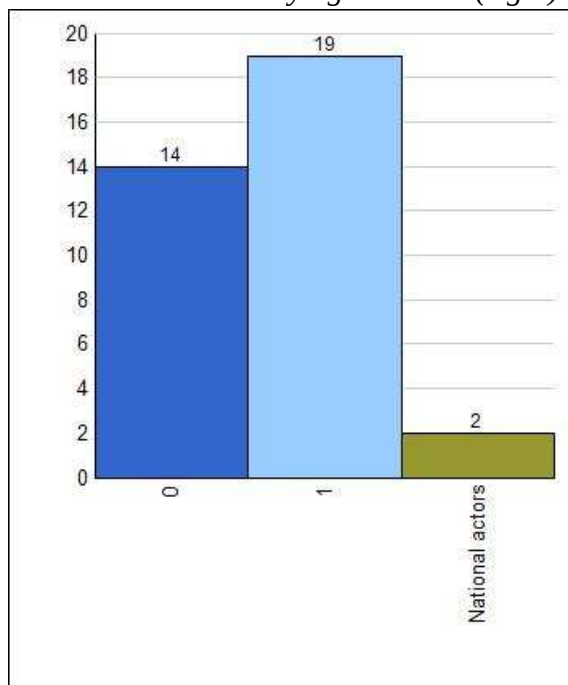
Figures a.4.148 and a.4.149 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about status in Brussels by NIGs' nature of interest (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' nature of interest (right).



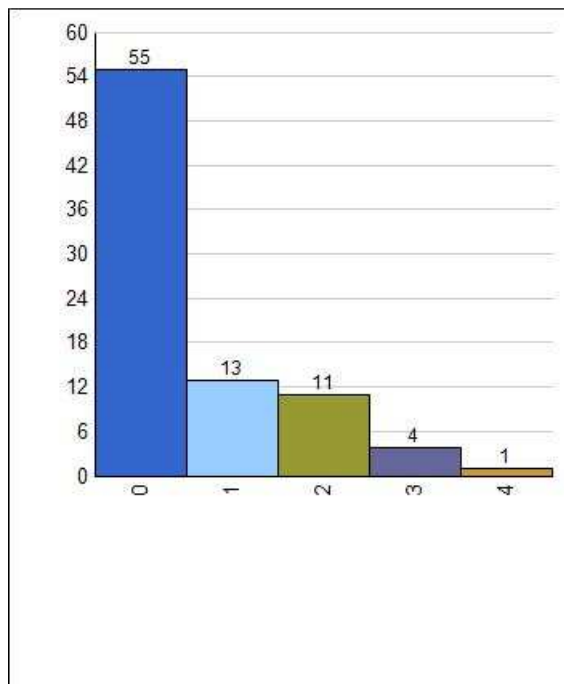
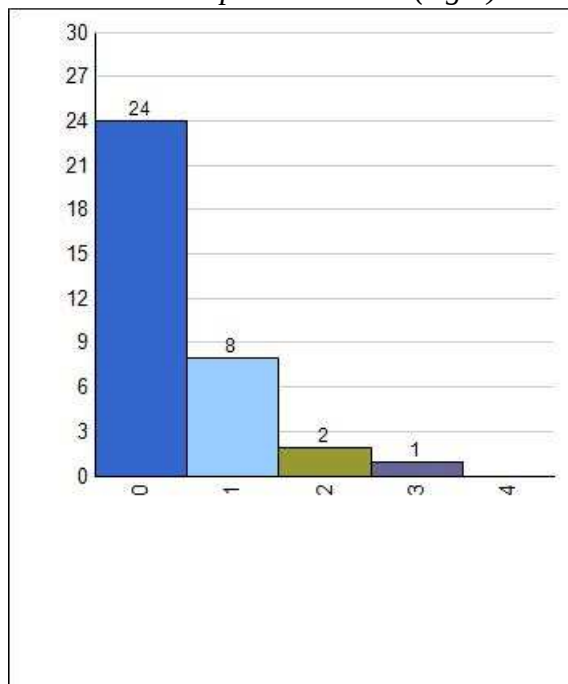
Figures a.4.150 and a.4.151 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about status in Brussels by NIGs' saliency of EU issues (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' saliency of EU issues (right).



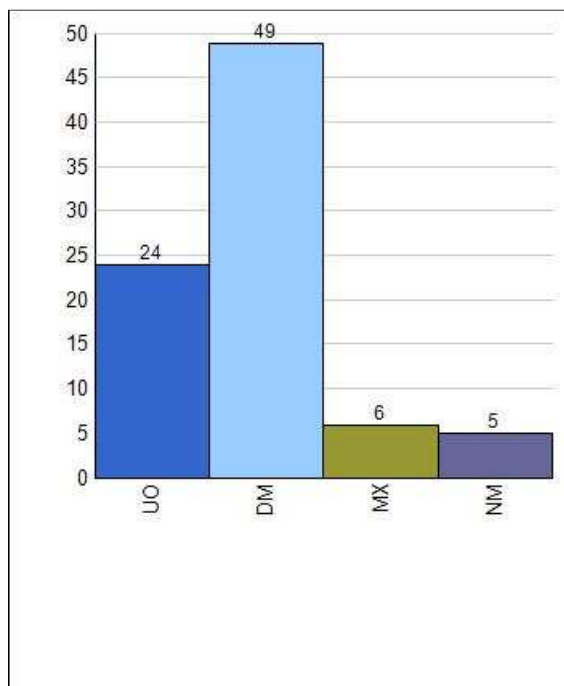
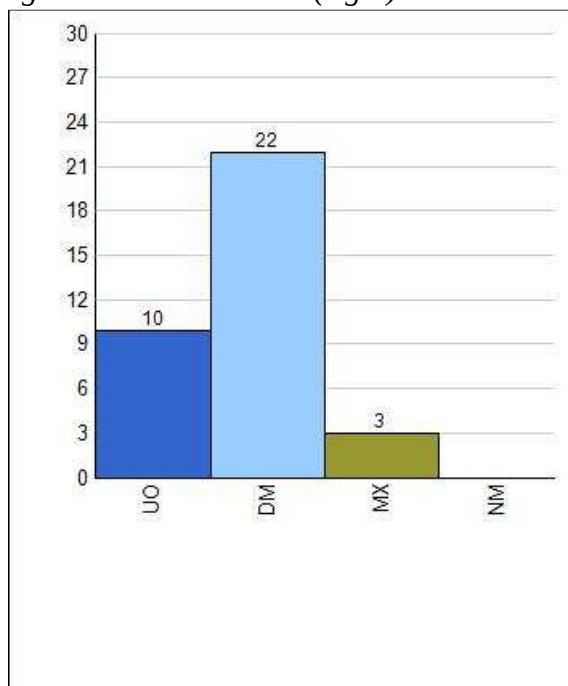
Figures a.4.152 and a.4.153 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about status in Brussels by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' EU-related lobbying activities (right).



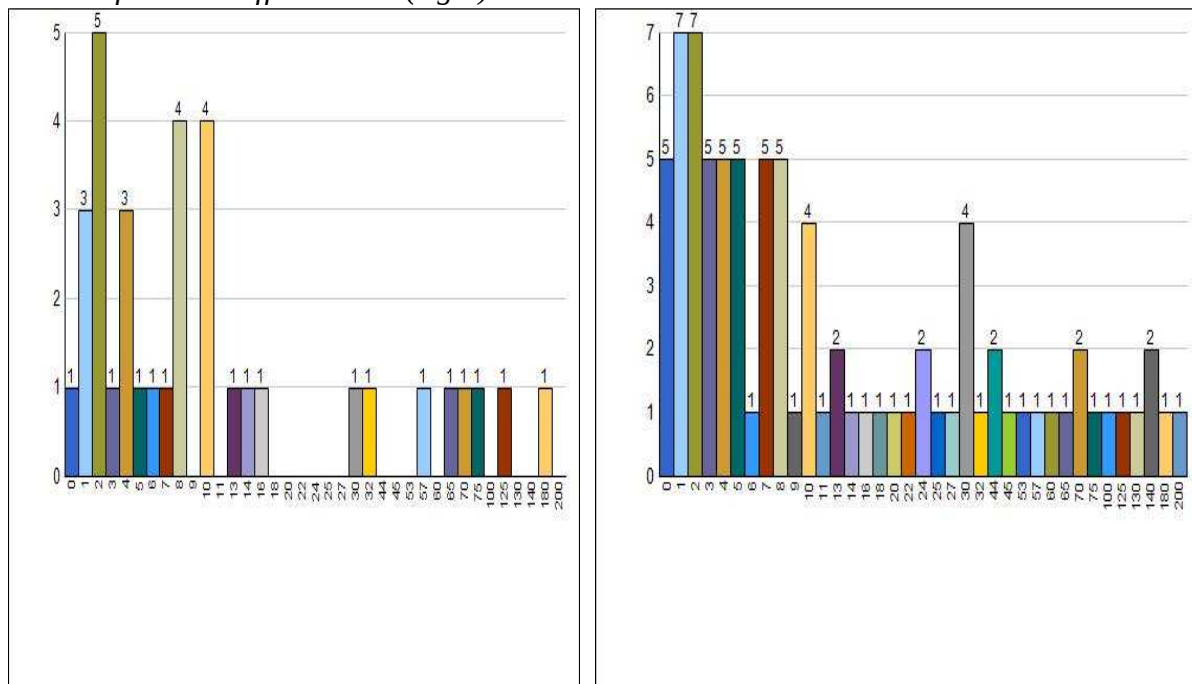
Figures a.4.154 and a.4.155 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about status in Brussels by NIGs' membership to other EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' membership to other EIG (right).



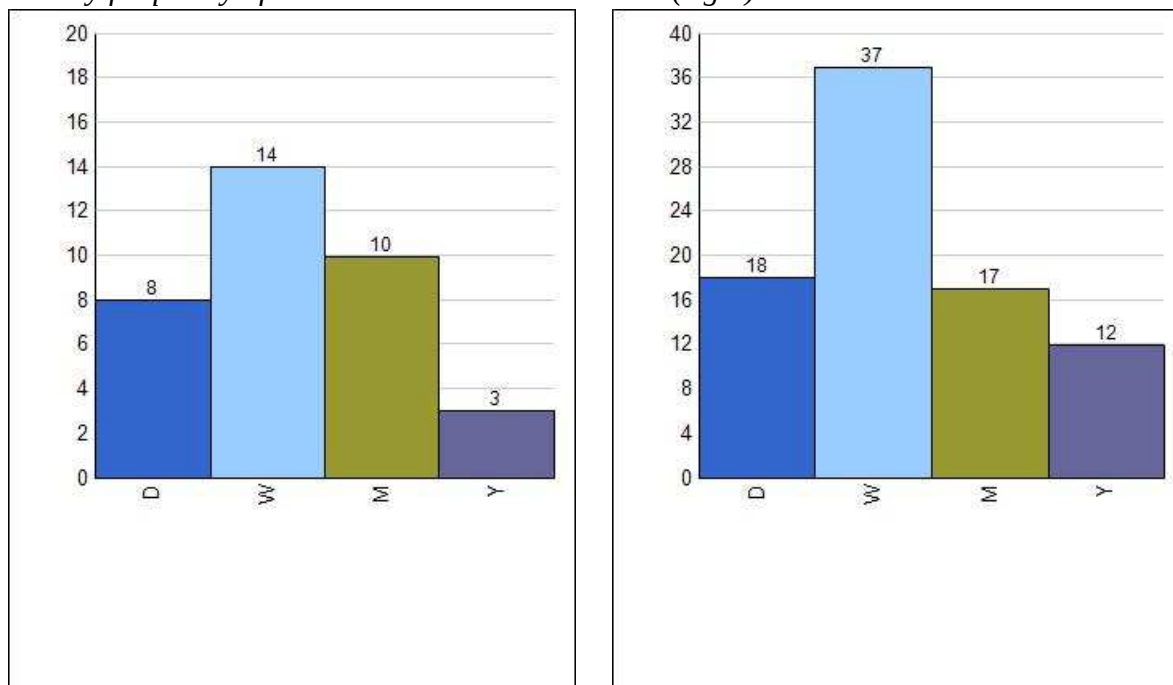
Figures a.4.156 and a.4.157 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about status in Brussels by NIGs' organisational structure (left) and distribution of all cases by NIGs' organisational structure (right).



Figures a.4.158 and a.4.159 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about status in Brussels by number of NIGs' staff members (left) and distribution of all cases by number of NIGs' staff members (right).



Figures a.4.160 and a.4.161 Distribution of cases with NIGs using elements of discourse about status in Brussels by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (left) and distribution of all cases by frequency of contact between NIG and EIG (right).



7.3. Appendixes of Chapter 5

Table a.5.1 Cases, conditions and outcome for QCA: raw data (ordered by cases id)

#condition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	OUTCOME
condition	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverage]	[ms_corporatism]	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	[per_congruence]
Cases id ↓	Adhesion	Votes Council	Index of interest group pluralism	Type of interest	Staff members	Type of membership	Saliency of EU issues	EU lobbying	Other EIG	Contact EIG	EIG's member	Perceived congruence
1	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	16	UO	6	No EU	0	Less	39	3
2	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	180	UO	10	Direct EU	0	Daily	39	7
3	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	7,5	DM	8	Direct EU	0	Weekly	87	8
4	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	2	MX	8	No EU	0	Less	66	10
5	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	7	UO	9	National~EU	0	Weekly	19	9
6	1957	29	2,9	Cause	44	UO	8	Direct EU	4	Daily	140	6
7	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	30	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Weekly	25	7
8	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	2	DM	9	No EU	0	Monthly	66	7
9	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	11	MX	6	No EU	1	Monthly	66	7
10	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	25	UO	9	Direct EU	0	Weekly	36	5
11	1957	29	2,9	Cause	10	MX	7	No EU	1	Weekly	140	9
12	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	5	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Daily	24	7
13	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	4	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Weekly	14	7
14	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	70	UO	10	Direct EU	2	Weekly	68	7
15	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	70	UO	10	Direct EU	2	Daily	67	7
16	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	30	UO	10	Direct EU	0	Daily	39	7
17	2004	3	3	Sectional	3	DM	10	Direct EU	3	Less	14	6
18	2004	3	3	Sectional	3	DM	10	Direct EU	3	Weekly	67	8
19	2004	3	3	Cause	0	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Daily	190	10
20	2004	3	3	Sectional	8	DM	10	Direct EU	1	Weekly	39	7
21	2004	3	3	Cause	32	DM	10	No EU	0	Monthly	48	9
22	2004	3	3	Cause	2,5	DM	8	National~EU	0	Weekly	35	8
23	2004	3	3	Sectional	1	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Less	25	7
24	2004	3	3	Sectional	7	UO	10	Direct EU	2	Weekly	39	8
25	2004	3	3	Sectional	7	UO	10	Direct EU	2	Monthly	33	10
26	2004	3	3	Cause	1	DM	10	No EU	0	Weekly	140	8
27	2004	3	3	Sectional	1,5	DM	9	National~EU	1	Weekly	36	8
28	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	18	DM	8	Direct EU	0	Daily	34	6
29	1957	29	2,9	Cause	8	UO	6	National~EU	0	Weekly	35	5
31	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	20	UO	1	No EU	0	Less	35	3
32	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	24	UO	10	Direct EU	0	Weekly	33	8
33	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	24	DM	9	No EU	0	Daily	27	9
34	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	10	DM	10	Direct EU	1	Daily	50	7
35	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	10	DM	10	Direct EU	1	Monthly	67	7
36	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	2,5	MX	10	No EU	0	Weekly	18	9
37	1957	29	2,9	Cause	4	DM	10	No EU	2	Daily	140	10
38	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	13	UO	9	Direct EU	0	Weekly	190	5
39	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	4	UO	8	No EU	0	Weekly	14	9
40	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	0	UO	7	No EU	1	Less	25	9
41	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	5	DM	9	No EU	0	Less	33	7
42	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	14	DM	10	No EU	0	Monthly	39	10

#condition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	OUTCOME
Related condition	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverage]	[ms_corporatism]	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	[per_congruence]
Cases id ↓	Adhesion	Votes Council	Index of interest group pluralism	Type of interest	Staff members	Type membership	Saliency of EU issues	EU lobbying	Other EIG	Contact EIG	EIG's member	
43	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	1	DM	8	Direct EU	0	Monthly	27	8
44	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	7	UO	6	Direct EU	0	Weekly	36	9
45	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	3	DM	7	No EU	0	Monthly	34	7
46	2004	4	~0,5	Cause	7	DM	9	Direct EU	2	Weekly	35	9
47	2004	4	~0,5	Cause	4	NM	1	No EU	0	Less	140	10
48	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	1	DM	6	No EU	0	Less	35	5
49	2004	4	~0,5	Cause	0	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Monthly	140	9
50	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	13	DM	8	Direct EU	0	Monthly	67	7
51	2004	4	~0,5	Cause	22	DM	6	Direct EU	0	Weekly	48	9
52	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	53	DM	3	National~EU	2	Weekly	67	4
53	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	57	DM	8	National~EU	0	Monthly	39	8
54	2004	4	~0,5	Cause	5	NM	8	Direct EU	2	Weekly	190	9
55	2004	4	~0,5	Cause	5	NM	8	Direct EU	2	Weekly	140	9
56	2004	4	~0,5	Sectional	0	DM	6	No EU	0	Less	19	5
57	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	45	DM	9	Direct EU	0	Weekly	14	7
58	1995	10	0,35	Cause	3,5	UO	10	Direct EU	2	Weekly	140	9
59	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	9	DM	9	National~EU	0	Weekly	21	7
60	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	30	MX	7	Direct EU	1	Weekly	190	6
61	1995	10	0,35	Cause	2	UO	4	No EU	1	Monthly	140	10
62	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	60	DM	10	Direct EU	1	Weekly	33	9
63	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	65	DM	10	Direct EU	1	Daily	34	7
64	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	8	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Monthly	24	5
65	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	0	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Monthly	68	9
66	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	6	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Daily	32	8
67	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	125	DM	8	Direct EU	0	Daily	67	8
68	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	0,5	DM	8	No EU	0	Monthly	25	6
69	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	75	MX	9	Direct EU	0	Daily	39	7
70	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	1	DM	8	No EU	0	Monthly	87	7
71	1995	10	0,35	Cause	8	DM	7	Direct EU	0	Weekly	35	8
72	1995	10	0,35	Cause	10	DM	6	No EU	0	Weekly	48	9
73	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	1,5	UO	8	Direct EU	1	Less	68	10
74	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	5	UO	10	Direct EU	2	Daily	19	7
75	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	3,5	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Weekly	190	7
76	1995	10	0,35	Cause	140	DM	10	National~EU	3	Daily	140	8
78	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	30	DM	8	No EU	1	Weekly	33	8
79	1995	10	0,35	Cause	100	NM	10	National~EU	0	Daily	23	7
80	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	130	UO	8	Direct EU	0	Weekly	39	7
81	1995	10	0,35	Sectional	200	DM	10	Direct EU	0	Daily	39	9
82	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	1	DM	10	National~EU	0	Weekly	19	7
83	1957	29	2,9	Cause	27	NM	8	No EU	0	Monthly	50	8
84	1957	29	2,9	Sectional	1,5	UO	10	No EU	0	Weekly	25	7

Appendixes related to Chapter 5, section 5.7: “QCA step 1: partial models”

This section of the appendixes of Chapter 5 provides all the details about partial models (including the truth tables and Venn diagrams) presented in point 5.3.2 and section 5.7. These appendixes aim to present all the steps of the analyses of the first models of the exploratory QCA presented in this dissertation. It also participates in the transparency of the analysis by providing details about each different sequence. As a reminder, all the operations are processed with TOSMANA (Cronqvist, 2017). The box 5.3 in Chapter 5 provides indications on how to read truth tables and Venn diagrams presented in the following pages.

7.3.1. Model 1: Domestic environment of NIGs

This model includes three conditions (conditions 1, 2 and 3) related to “member states features” (see point 5.3.2). These conditions concern the domestic environment in which NIGs work. The condition 1 (ms_old) concerns the establishment of NIGs in an old EU member state. The condition 2 (ms_eu_leverage) concerns the establishment of NIGs in a member state which has an important institutional leverage at the EU level. The condition 3 (ms_corporatism) concerns the establishment of NIGs in a corporatist member state. These conditions are contextual and are thus relatively distant from cases.

Table a.5.2 Model 1: Truth table

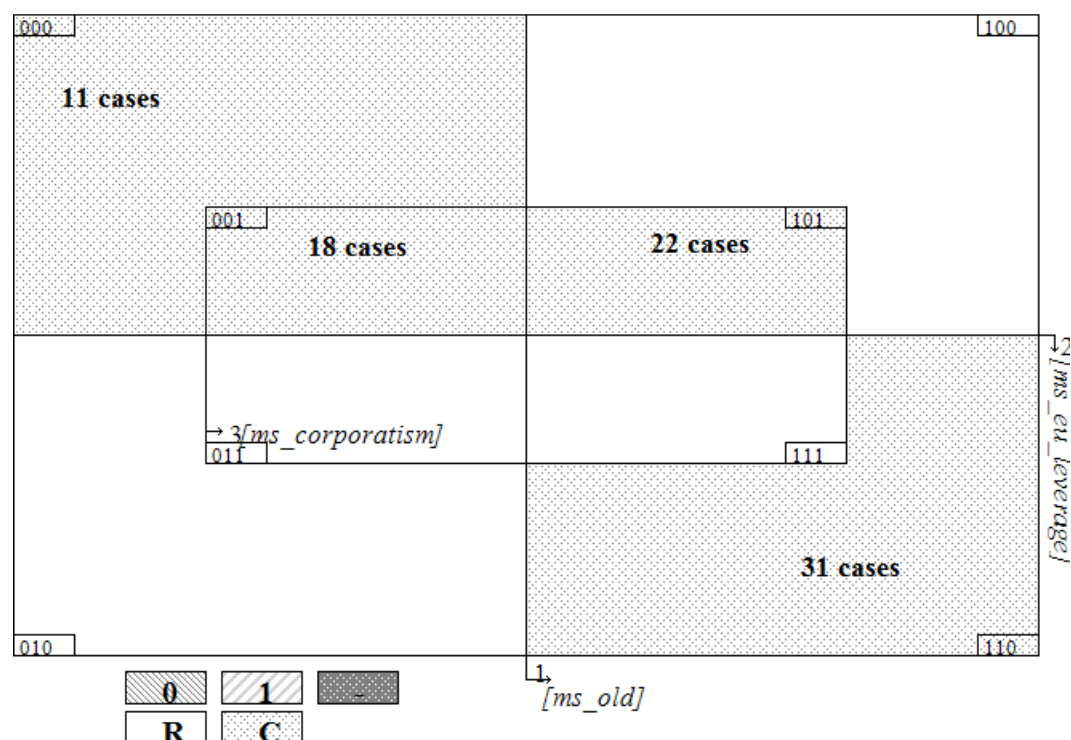
<i>n</i> (82)	[ms_old]	[ms_eu_leverage]	[ms_corporatism]	Outcome	Details: cases id(outcome)
11	0	0	0	C	17(0), 18(1), 19(1), 20(1), 21(1), 22(1), 23(1), 24(1), 25(1), 26(1), 27(1) [OUTCOME 1 = 10; OUTCOME 0 = 1]
18	0	0	1	C	39(1), 40(1), 41(1), 42(1), 43(1), 44(1), 45(1), 46(1), 47(1), 48(0), 49(1), 50(1), 51(1), 52(0), 53(1), 54(1), 55(1), 56(0) [OUTCOME 1 = 15; OUTCOME 0 = 3]
22	1	0	1	C	57(1), 58(1), 59(1), 60(0), 61(1), 62(1), 63(1), 64(0), 65(1), 66(1), 67(1), 68(0), 69(1), 70(1), 71(1), 72(1), 73(1), 74(1), 75(1), 76(1), 79(1), 81(1) [OUTCOME 1 = 19; OUTCOME 0 = 3]
31	1	1	0	C	1(0), 2(1), 3(1), 4(1), 5(1), 6(0), 7(1), 8(1), 9(1), 10(0), 11(1), 12(1), 13(1), 14(1), 15(1), 16(1), 28(0), 29(0), 31(0), 32(1), 33(1), 34(1), 35(1), 36(1), 37(1), 38(0), 78(1), 80(1), 82(1), 83(1), 84(1) [OUTCOME 1 = 24; OUTCOME 0 = 7]

Source: Retrieved from TOSMANA Version 1.54

The table a.5.2 provides the truth table resulting from the QCA for model 1. The first column provides the number of cases showing a given conditional configuration. Conditional configurations are presented in columns 2, 3 and 4 (sequence of 0 and/or 1 corresponding to absence or presence of each condition). The fifth column (“Outcome”) provides information about the presence (1) or the absence (0) of the outcome for the cases concerned by a conditional configuration (in this table, all configurations are contradictory, which means that for a same conditional configuration, some cases show a presence of the outcome and other the absence; this situation is represented by the letter ‘C’, for ‘contradiction’). The sixth column provides details (id) about the cases concerned by a configuration. In the event of contradiction, the related outcome of each case is in the brackets following directly the case’s id. As an illustration, the first row means that: “11 cases are established in member states that are not old (absence of condition *ms_old*) which have no institutional leverage at the EU level (absence of condition *ms_eu_leverage*) which are not corporatist (absence of *ms_corporatism*). A C is written in the fifth column because amongst the 11 cases concerned, some cases show an outcome 1 while another shows an outcome 0 (contradiction). The last column tells us that the cases 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26 and 27 show the presence of the outcome while the case 17 shows the absence of the outcome”. Such a detailed explanation will not be provided for each row neither for each truth table (in the following models), but it provides here an illustration helping to understand how to read truth tables.

Similarly, this paragraph aims at explaining how to read the Venn diagram (see the figure a.5.1). Each space represents a potential conditional configuration. The blank spaces represent configurations that are possible but which were not observed empirically in the current analysis (the related ‘R’ presented in the figure’s key means ‘remainders’). The ‘non-blank’ spaces represent observed conditional configurations or in other words, rows of the truth table (see, above). The figure’s key shows the status of each configuration\space (as regards to the outcome of concerned cases). 0 means the configuration leads to the absence of outcome for the concerned cases, while 1 means the presence of the outcome for the concerned cases. Again, “C” means the configuration leads to contradictory results. In the Venn diagram hereafter, out of the eight potential configurations, four are empirically observed (4 ‘non-blank’ spaces). These four configurations are contradictory (see the ‘colour’ of these spaces in the key).

Figure a.5.1 Model 1: Venn diagram



Source: Created with TOSMANA Version 1.54

The first observation is that there is a relative diversity of cases (four observed configurations, see the Venn diagram, figure a.5.1). However, because the research design covers ‘only’ four countries, more empirical diversity cannot be covered. This constitutes a limitation of this research. All configurations are contradictory (for each configuration, at least one case has a different outcome than the others)¹⁷⁷. This is not surprising due to the ‘remote character’ of the factors under scrutiny. Moreover, one should note that the dichotomisation of the three conditions is ‘safe’. The distinction between corporatist and pluralist member states is very clear, as well as the identification of new versus old member states. Moreover, concerning the institutional leverage member states enjoy at the EU level, the privilege position of France compare to the three other countries is indisputable.

One configuration deserves special attention. This configuration is the “000→1”. This configuration concerns Maltese interest groups. While these groups evolve in a ‘new’, small and pluralist member state, they perceive their positions as congruent with their EIGs’ ones (at the exception of one sectional group, the case 17: “000→0”). This may be explained by some particular features of the Maltese context.

¹⁷⁷ It was also the case with an outcome dichotomised with a 7,5 threshold.

For instance, their ‘late’ entry into the EU; and the low level of European socialisation for Maltese NIGs it was expected to induce; must be put in perspective. Several elements may explain these unexpected results. First, Maltese’s knowledge of foreign languages is strong and this factor significantly facilitate interaction with other Europeans who speak English but also other languages (Vassallo, 2016). This is also confirmed in the interviews conducted with Maltese representatives who all speak Maltese and English but also often Italian, French or another European language¹⁷⁸. Moreover, “*Maltese interest groups are interested in adapting their organisations and strategies to profit from the multilevel power structure of the EU but, at the same time, gradual change is also transforming the mental framework of their leaders through the construction and diffusion of innovative ideas stemming out of the EU and its members states*” (Vassallo, 2016, p. 228). Vassallo notes that Maltese interest groups do not have more contacts with EU institutions (compared to the early post-accession period) because of lack of human, financial and expertise resources and easy access to national politician. Despite this, Maltese groups show ‘*significant Europeanisation marks*’ in their internal organisation structure and culture “*wherein they have strived to induce a European dimension within their corporate vision, coordination of EU affairs, participation in training and funding opportunities, as well as the internalization of European norms and values*” (Vassallo, 2016, p. 228). These points may explain why Maltese groups, despite working in a ‘new’, small and pluralist member state, perceive their positions as congruent with their EIGs’ ones.

To summarise, the first model produces configurations which are all contradictory. This means that model 1 is not sufficient to explain the outcome under scrutiny. Consequently, other models need to be tested. The ‘deficiency’ of model 1 may be explained by the contextual character of the conditions under scrutiny. The next models will thus look at more proximate factors.

7.3.2. Model 2: NIGs’ organisational features

This model includes three conditions (conditions 4, 5 and 6) related to national groups’ organisational features (see point 5.3.2 in Chapter 5). These conditions concern characteristics of NIGs. Condition 4 (cause) concerns the nature of interest advocated by NIGs (advocating a cause has been identified as a necessary condition that leads to high perceived congruence). Condition 5 (small_staff) concerns the limited resources of NIGs in terms of staff members. Condition 6 (no_direct_mem) concerns the absence of ‘individual members’ (compared to

¹⁷⁸ In the third part of the interviews (dedicated to the profile of the interviewee), the interviewees were asked to give the number of languages they speak (and which ones).

‘associational members’, which are themselves umbrella organisations). These conditions are proximate factors and concern structural characteristics of national groups. The table a.5.3 provides the truth table resulting from the QCA for model 2.

Table a.5.3 Model 2: Truth table

<i>n</i> (82)	[cause]	[small_staff]	[no_direct_mem]	Outcome	Details: cases id(outcome if C)
15	0	0	0	C	7(1), 28(0), 33(1), 42(1), 50(1), 52(0), 53(1), 57(1), 60(0), 62(1), 63(1), 67(1), 69(1), 78(1), 81(1) [OUTCOME 1 = 12; OUTCOME 0 = 3]
10	0	0	1	C	1(0), 2(1), 10(0), 14(1), 15(1), 16(1), 31(0), 32(1), 38(0), 80(1) [OUTCOME 1 = 6; OUTCOME 0 = 4]
27	0	1	0	C	3(1), 4(1), 8(1), 9(1), 12(1), 13(1), 17(0), 18(1), 20(1), 23(1), 27(1), 34(1), 35(1), 36(1), 41(1), 43(1), 45(1), 48(0), 56(0), 59(1), 64(0), 65(1), 66(1), 68(0), 70(1), 75(1), 82(1) [OUTCOME 1 = 22; OUTCOME 0 = 5]
8	0	1	1	1	5, 25, 39, 40, 44, 73, 74, 84
3	1	0	0	1	21, 51, 76
3	1	0	1	C	6(0), 79(1), 83(1) [OUTCOME 1 = 2; OUTCOME 0 = 1]
9	1	1	0	1	11, 19, 22, 26, 37, 46, 49, 71, 72
7	1	1	1	C	24(1), 29(0), 47(1), 54(1), 55(1), 58(1), 61(1) [OUTCOME 1 = 6; OUTCOME 0 = 1]

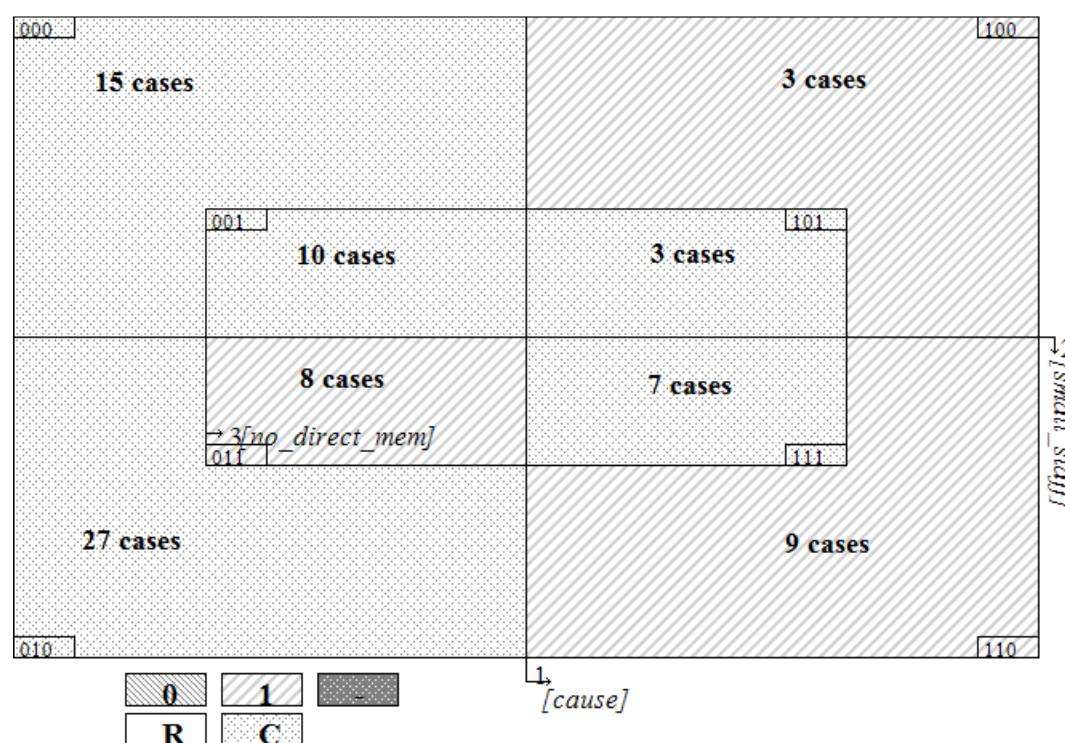
Source: Retrieved from TOSMANA Version 1.54

This model indicates much more diversity amongst the cases compared to model 1. All logically possible configurations are covered by empirical (observed) cases (see the Venn diagram, figure a.5.2). This empirical diversity is interesting for the purpose of QCA. Five configurations are contradictory and three are not. Hence, this model 2 is already more convincing than model 1. In fact, it means that a look at ‘more proximate’ factors better explain NIGs’ perceived congruence than ‘contextual’ factors (related to the domestic environment of national groups).

While two of the non-contradictory configurations go somehow in the expected direction (110→1 and 011→1), another one offers a more unexpected result (100→1). This last configuration concern cause groups, with a large staff and direct members. These groups perceive their EIGs’ positions as congruent with their own (cases 21, 51 and 76). This may be explain by the fact that their membership is composed of supporters, not much involved and

not interested about policy issues (and even less regarding EU policy issues). Consequently, even if they have direct members, these groups are definitely not tied to their grassroots memberships' demands, as the last are absent (at least on EU issues). Their positions may thus consequently be easier to align with the one of the EIG. Moreover, and maybe more importantly, two of these groups are member of an EIG, which is actually part of international network with a strong 'family affiliation' amongst the members of the network. While being independent at the national level, these two groups (cases 21 and 51) rely on their EIGs (which is a 'regional branch' of the international network) to tackle EU issues. Given this situation, this may explain their positions alignment and perceived congruence.

Figure a.5.2 Model 2: Venn diagram



Source: Created with TOSMANA Version 1.54

Moreover, the case 29 is totally deviant from what was expected ($111 \rightarrow 0$; while for all other cases of this conditional configuration, the outcome is 1; see the last row of the truth table). This case deserves also a special attention. While the EIG and the NIG are also part of a non-governmental international network (as for the cases 21 and 51, but both are members of another network), the NIG does not perceive its positions as congruent with the European umbrella's positions. In fact, even if the NIG is a cause group with a small staff and no direct members, perception of non-congruence is observed. This may be explained by the mode of governance of the NIG and the EIG in question. The representative from the NIG compare their situation

with the one of another international network, Greenpeace (which is not studied in this dissertation):

C'est peut-être ça qui nous distingue notamment de Greenpeace, où en fait c'est l'aile internationale qui décide ce qui va être fait aux niveaux nationaux et ça se décline même au niveau local. [Dans notre mouvement,] c'est complètement l'inverse ; c'est-à-dire que de la base va venir le mandat politique, qui va se répercuter aux niveaux nationaux, ensuite aux niveaux régionaux, et ensuite aux niveaux internationaux. Donc, au niveau de la France, la façon dont on décide des sujets, donc y'a des processus démocratiques au sein de l'organisation avec notamment une assemblée stratégique par an qui va permettre de faire remonter les différents sujets et de dresser le cadre pour l'année. [...] il est construit sur la base d'une consultation à la fois des groupes locaux, mais aussi des groupes transversaux à l'organisation. Donc, ce sont des groupes thématiques. Mais, également avec consultation des partenaires les plus proches, notamment de certains mouvements sociaux avec lesquels on travaille beaucoup et à qui on demande ce qu'ils attendent [de notre organisation]. Et enfin, une consultation [des groupes européens] et internationaux pour savoir ce qu'eux attendent dans le périmètre [...] (interview, case 29)

This NIG is an umbrella organisation with a bottom-up mode of governance. This mode of governance leads to a perception of incongruence between their positions and the ones of the EIG (*“eux ils sont beaucoup plus formels et institutionnels, nous on est beaucoup plus grassroots et militants”*). This mode of governance and this ‘grassroots spirit’ create oppositions within the EIG (and the international network) on some crucial issues. These divergences appear between the different levels of the network but also horizontally, between the different European NIGs from different member states. The mode of governance may explain the apparition of a contradictory configuration in this ‘model 2 QCA’ (analysis of organisational features).

Other cases necessitate a detailed analysis: the cases with a configuration 000→1 (see first row of the truth table). The NIGs concerned are sectional groups with direct members (which are in here, mainly farmers, SMEs or companies) and numerous staff members. The expected consequence of the absence of [no_direct_mem] was that having direct members would ‘tie’ NIGs and lead them to hold their position and be intransigent in front of their European colleagues. However, for those cases, their direct membership, being mainly self-entrepreneurs, farmers or companies, may not constrain much their national groups. Moreover, the importance of their resources (reflected here by their large number of employees) may also explain a greater engagement within the EIG compared to some their counterparts from other member states.

One interviewee from a sectional French group describes this situation. He explains that its NIG is “*très insatisfait du non-travail fait par un certain nombre des organisations membres [...] Ils viennent [aux réunions du groupe européen], on se demande pourquoi. C’est hallucinant ! Incroyable ! Aucune prise de parole dans n’importe quel sens*” (interview, case 7). This greater engagement may induce a greater influence on the positions of the EIG and thus a perceived congruence which is also greater.

In brief, the model 2 offers more diversity amongst cases than the previous one. A first local regularity has been identified (6 cases with a configuration 111→1). However, many conditional configurations produce contradictory results. Model 2 is thus not sufficient to explain the outcome under scrutiny. Moreover, some of the configurations produce unexpected outcome. A look at other “proximate” factors and the enlargement of the model are necessary.

7.3.3. Model 3: NIGs’ EU-related activities

This model includes four conditions (conditions 7, 8, 9 and 10) related to national groups’ EU-related activities (see point 5.3.2). These conditions concern the saliency of EU affairs and NIGs’ involvement on EU issues. Condition 7 (*non_eu_sal*) concerns the level of importance given by NIGs to EU issues. Condition 8 (*non_eu_lob*) concerns the (absence of) lobbying activities of NIGs directed to EU institutions. Condition 9 (*no_oth_eig*) concerns the (multiple) memberships of NIGs to EIGs. Condition 10 (*freq_contact*) concerns frequency of contacts NIGs have with their European umbrellas. These conditions are proximate factors and concern directly the relations between NIGs and their EIGs.

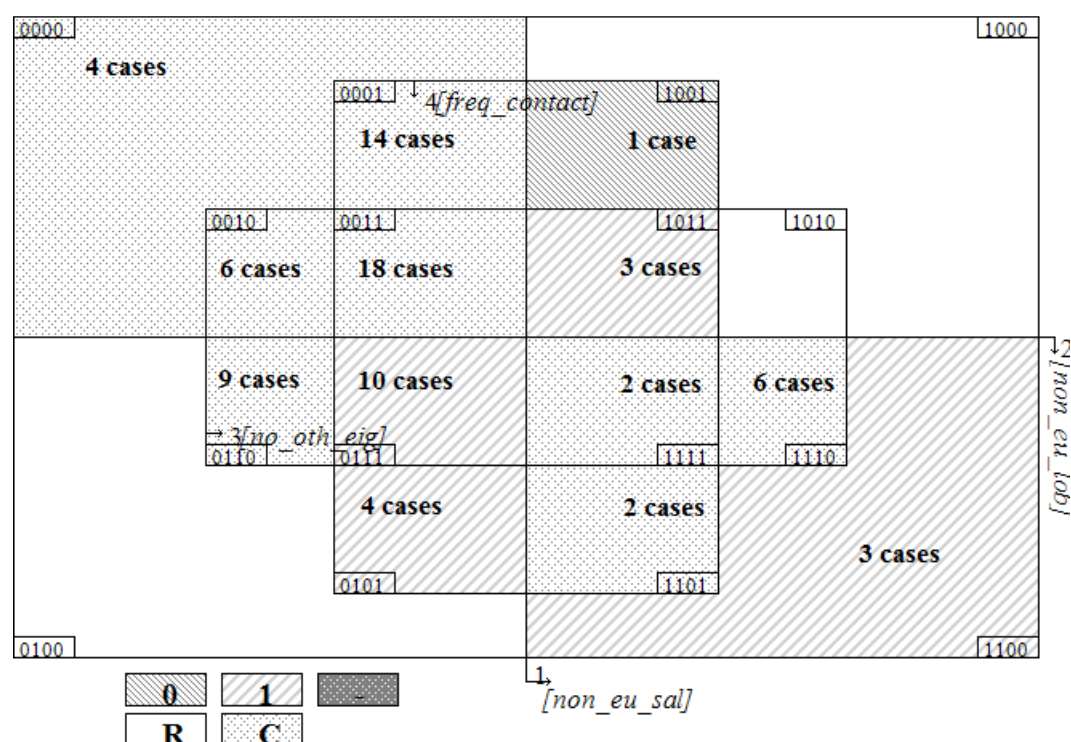
Table a.5.4 Model 3: Truth table

<i>n</i> (82)	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	Outcome	Details: cases id(outcome if C)
4	0	0	0	0	C	17(0), 25(1), 35(1), 73(1)
14	0	0	0	1	C	6(0), 14(1), 15(1), 18(1), 20(1), 24(1), 34(1), 46(1), 54(1), 55(1), 58(1), 62(1), 63(1), 74(1)
6	0	0	1	0	C	23(1), 43(1), 49(1), 50(1), 64(0), 65(1)
18	0	0	1	1	C	2(1), 3(1), 7(1), 10(0), 12(1), 13(1), 16(1), 19(1), 28(0), 32(1), 38(0), 57(1), 66(1), 67(1), 69(1), 75(1), 80(1), 81(1)
4	0	1	0	1	1	27, 37, 76, 78
9	0	1	1	0	C	4(1), 8(1), 21(1), 41(1), 42(1), 53(1), 68(0), 70(1), 83(1)
10	0	1	1	1	1	5, 22, 26, 33, 36, 39, 59, 79, 82, 84
1	1	0	0	1	0	60
3	1	0	1	1	1	44, 51, 71
3	1	1	0	0	1	9, 40, 61
2	1	1	0	1	C	11(1), 52(0)
6	1	1	1	0	C	1(0), 31(0), 45(1), 47(1), 48(0), 56(0)
2	1	1	1	1	C	29(0), 72(1)

Source: Retrieved from TOSMANA Version 1.54

All configurations are not observed for this model (see the Venn diagram, figure a.5.3). Three configurations, out of 16, are not empirically observed (1000, 1010 and 0100). However, the empirical diversity is still rich. Eight configurations are contradictory and five are not (see table 5.60). This model provides for the first time a conditional configuration explaining absence of congruence ($1001 \rightarrow 0$, case 60). While some of these non-contradictory configurations go somehow in the expected direction (0110 and 0011 for instance; as presence of two conditions out of four being observed), two others offer more unexpected results ($1110 \rightarrow$ many 0; and $1111 \rightarrow 0$ for case 29).

Figure a.5.3 Model 3: Venn diagram



Source: Created with TOSMANA Version 1.54

The cases offering an unexpected outcome, given their configurations, deserve a particular attention. The case 29 is again identified as ‘deviant’ (as in model 2). A closer look at its European activities may explain this unexpected non-congruence (given the particularly favourable conditional configuration: 1111→0). This group for which EU issues are not particularly salient, which does not lobby directly the EU, has frequent contact with its EIG and is not member of another European umbrella, perceive its positions as not congruent with the positions of its EIG. If this group is not member of another EIG that would provide another path to be active on EU issues, it appears that this NIG uses another national umbrella to be active on EU issues. This group is member of a French umbrella (which is member of a European umbrella) very active on EU issues:

[l’organisation parapluie nationale] travaille pas mal sur du plaidoyer européen. Donc, en fonction de tel et tel sujet, on va suggéré tel ou tel truc [à l’organisation parapluie nationale] en tant que membre de la fédération [...].
(Interview, case 29)

Despite not being active directly at the EU level and not being member of another EIG, this NIG uses another path to make its voice heard at the EU level. This means that this NIG will not be encouraged to ‘fight’ within its unique EIG to align the EIG’s positions with its own (or has no incentive to adapt its positions to the positions of a single European counterpart). This

particular situation may explain why this group perceives its positions as not congruent with positions of its EIG despite of not lobbying directly the EU or not being member of any other European umbrella.

The cases with a configuration $1110 \rightarrow 0$ (cases 1, 31, 48 and 56) are also interesting to look at (no saliency of EU issues, no EU lobbying, no membership to another EIG and no frequent contact with the EIG). For case 1, the NIG is in open conflict with its European group (especially for a financial dispute). Moreover, this NIG plans to hire a European affairs officer to manage EU issues, start to lobby EU institutions and bypass its EIG. For cases 31 and 48, NIGs do not perceive the actual relevance of their EIG's action and existence (the EIG is the same for both cases). In the current situation, this EIG is very weak (no financial or human resource) and does not undertake concrete and structural activities. This EIG is a platform of (rare) exchanges between NIGs and its lobbying actions are only exceptional meetings with EU officials (followed by no results). The situation of the sector is such (competition between countries but also high pressure from an international 'web' actor on the market) that the different national groups do not particularly wish to create an effective European group. For case 56, the NIG is a newcomer within the EIG and this may explain the non-congruence: the absence of frequent contact with the EIG is thus reinforced by the NIG's recent membership (no socialisation process).

Other cases deserve a particular analysis: cases with a configuration $0000 \rightarrow 1$ (see first row of the truth table: cases 25, 35, 73). In these cases, NIGs seem not concretely involved within their EIGs for different reasons. For instance, in case 25, the NIG does not expect any results from its EIG because of EU institutions' attitude. According to the interviewee, the economic sector he is representing is perceived as not important by EU institutions (and not deserving particular policies). While the NIG perceives EU issues as salient, it considers that EU institutions do not perceive their economic sector as salient (which explains the contradictory effect of the $[non_eu_sal]=0$). Because of this, the NIG disengaged itself from its EIG. For case 35, the NIG is not the 'main French partner' of the EIG (which is a big and influential EIG at the EU level). This may explain a 'follower' attitude (and a high perceived congruence), while showing a conditional configuration that was expected to lead to non-congruence. In all these cases, NIGs seem to trust their EIGs and follow their positions without any important involvement.

One configuration is particularly promising as regards to the expected effect of conditions. The configuration 0111→1 (10 cases concerned: 5, 22, 26, 33, 36, 39, 59, 79, 82 and 84). For these cases, NIGs do not lobby directly the EU institutions, do adhere to only one EIG and have frequent contact with it. These conditions were indeed expected to lead to a high perceived congruence. However, all these groups do perceive EU issues as salient (not expected in the model). At the same time, empirically, this configuration is coherent. These groups are involved on a regular basis in a single European interest groups, which can be easily linked to a perception of high saliency of EU issues¹⁷⁹. This configuration may thus be considered as empirically founded.

To sum up, the model 3 offers much diversity amongst cases. A conditional configuration appeared to be interesting (10 cases with 0111→1) but many others produce contradictory results (8 “C”). Model 3 is consequently not sufficient to explain the outcome under scrutiny. Moreover, several configurations produce unexpected outcome. This model 3 is thus enriched with a fifth condition concerning directly EIGs. Adding a condition to the truth table is a possible strategy to tackle contradictory configurations: *“If those cases in the contradictory row that display qualitatively different outcome membership scores also show qualitatively different membership scores in the new condition, then the contradiction is resolved”* (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012, p. 120). While models 1, 2 and 3 include different conditions (to observe different sets of analogous conditions), the model 4 is actually the model 3 enriched by an additional condition. The strategy of adding a condition belongs to the standards of good QCA practice (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, pp. 48-49; Schneider & Wagemann, 2012) represents part of what is meant by *“going back and forth between ideas and evidence”* (C. Ragin, 2000).

7.3.4. Model 4: EU related model

This model includes five conditions (conditions 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11) related to EU lobbying (see point 5.3.2). This model includes all conditions of model 3 plus the condition 11. Condition 11 (few_mem_eig) concerns the number of members that compose EIGs’ membership. It is the only condition concerning directly EIGs. This set of conditions includes proximate factors and

¹⁷⁹ One may also suggest that saliency of EU issues must lead to direct lobbying at the EU level. Actually, half of these cases (5, 22, 59, 79 and 82) are in touch with MEPs from their countries or their national governments (concerning EU issues). This absence of direct involvement at the EU level is also explained by their will not to hamper the message of their EIG. For instance, a NIG does not lobby directly at the EU level “pour garder cette unité de point de vue par rapport au [groupe européen]. Pour ne pas mettre le [groupe européen] dans des positions qui permettraient à la Commission de jouer un peu sur des dissonances qu’on pourrait...”. Interview, case 5).

concerns directly the relations between NIGs and their EIGs, with an additional information about the scope of EIGs' memberships.

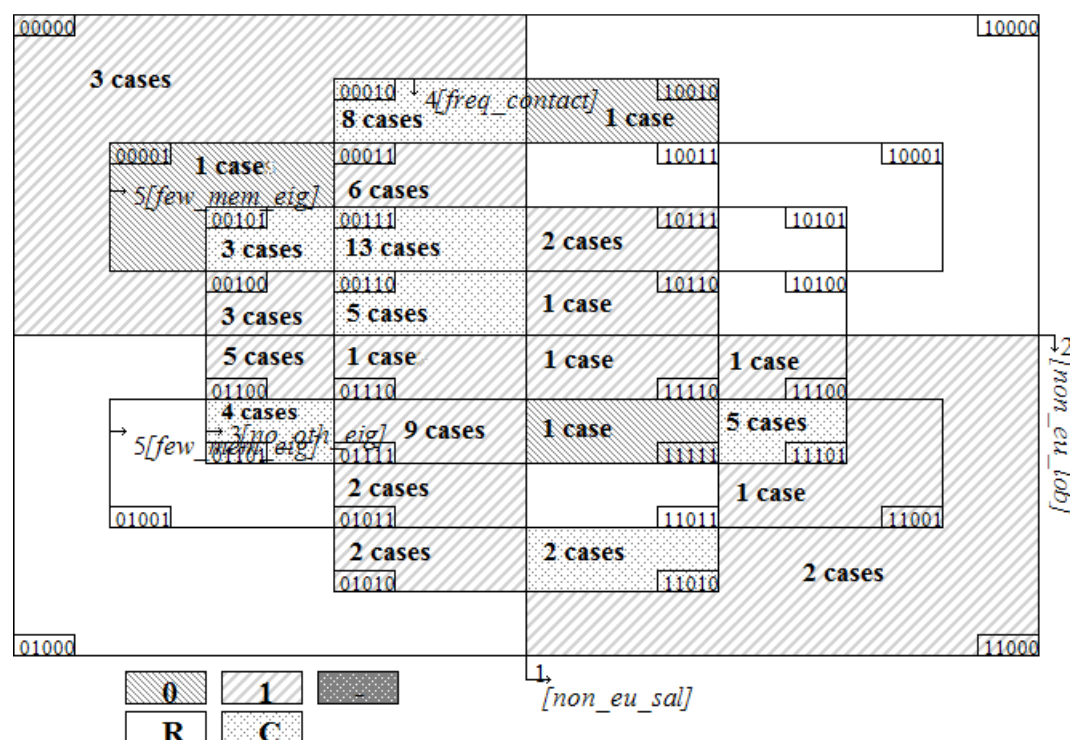
Table a.5.5 Model 4: Truth table

<i>n</i> (82)	[non_eu_sal]	[non_eu_lob]	[no_oth_eig]	[freq_contact]	[few_mem_eig]	Outcome	Details: cases id(outcome if C)
3	0	0	0	0	0	1	25, 35, 73
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	17
8	0	0	0	1	0	C	6(0), 14(1), 15(1), 18(1), 34(1), 54(1), 55(1), 58(1)
6	0	0	0	1	1	1	20, 24, 46, 62, 63, 74
3	0	0	1	0	0	1	49, 50, 65
3	0	0	1	0	1	C	23(1), 43(1), 64(0)
5	0	0	1	1	0	C	3(1), 19(1), 38(0), 67(1), 75(1)
13	0	0	1	1	1	C	2(1), 7(1), 10(0), 12(1), 13(1), 16(1), 28(0), 32(1), 57(1), 66(1), 69(1), 80(1), 81(1)
2	0	1	0	1	0	1	37, 76
2	0	1	0	1	1	1	27, 78
5	0	1	1	0	0	1	4, 8, 21, 70, 83
4	0	1	1	0	1	C	41(1), 42(1), 53(1), 68(0)
1	0	1	1	1	0	1	26
9	0	1	1	1	1	1	5, 22, 33, 36, 39, 59, 79, 82, 84
1	1	0	0	1	0	0	60
1	1	0	1	1	0	1	51
2	1	0	1	1	1	1	44, 71
2	1	1	0	0	0	1	9, 61
1	1	1	0	0	1	1	40
2	1	1	0	1	0	C	11(1), 52(0)
1	1	1	1	0	0	1	47
5	1	1	1	0	1	C	1(0), 31(0), 45(1), 48(0), 56(0)
1	1	1	1	1	0	1	72
1	1	1	1	1	1	0	29

Source: Retrieved from TOSMANA Version 1.54

All configurations are not observed for this model (see the Venn diagram, figure a.5.4). Eight out of 32 (potential) configurations are not empirically observed. However, the empirical diversity is rich. Seven configurations are contradictory and 17 are not. This model provides also three conditional configurations explaining absence of congruence.

Figure a.5.4 Model 4: Venn diagram



Source: Created with TOSMANA Version 1.54

The addition of condition 11 (compared to model 3) allows to solve many contradictions of the previous model (see table a.5.4 and a.5.5). While model 3 ‘explains’ only 26% of cases (21 cases with non-contradictory configurations), model 4 ‘explains’ 56% of cases (46 cases with non-contradictory configurations). The addition of one condition has an important impact of the model performance. Amongst the contradictions that have been solved, one will be presented as a clear example.

Model 3 presents this configurations: 0001→C (n=15). The addition of condition 11 allows these two configurations to appear: 00011→1 (n=6) and 00010→C (n=9). The configurations of both models are presented the following tables a.5.6 and a.5.7.

The cases 20, 24, 46, 62, 63 and 74 are thus explained with the addition of condition 11. This suggest that for these cases, the restricted number of EIGs’ members (combined with absence and presence of other conditions) explains perceived congruence. These cases concern, NIGs for which EU issues are salient, which do lobby EU institutions and have multiple memberships to EIGs and have frequent contact with these EIGs (in which the number of members is limited).

Table 4.5.6 Configuration 0001 $\rightarrow$ C in model 3 (extracted from truth table)

<i>n</i>	<i>c7</i>	<i>c8</i>	<i>c9</i>	<i>c10</i>	<i>O</i>	Details: cases id(outcome if C)
14	0	0	0	1	C	6(0), 14(1), 15(1), 18(1), 20(1), 24(1), 34(1), 46(1), 54(1), 55(1), 58(1), 62(1), 63(1), 74(1)

Table a.5.7 Configurations 00011 $\rightarrow$ 1 and 00010 $\rightarrow$ C in model 4 (extracted from truth table)

<i>n</i>	<i>c7</i>	<i>c8</i>	<i>c9</i>	<i>c10</i>	<i>c11</i>	<i>O</i>	Details: cases id(outcome if C)
8	0	0	0	1	0	C	6(0), 14(1), 15(1), 18(1), 34(1), 54(1), 55(1), 58(1)
6	0	0	0	1	1	1	20, 24, 46, 62, 63, 74

On the whole, model 4 is the partial model ‘explaining’ the greater number of cases (51% of them, corresponding to 42 cases with non-contradictory configurations). The table a.5.8 compares the 4 partial models. The closer the factors are (factor related directly to NIG-EIG relations) the better the model (in terms of number of non-contradictory configurations). This is also due to a greater empirical diversity and variations between cases observed in models 2, 3 and 4 compared to model 1. The strategy of adding a condition to dissolve contradictions (from model 3 to model 4) proved to be effective. However, because of the presence of contradictory configurations, model 4 is not sufficient to explain the outcome under scrutiny. Consequently, the section 5.8 in Chapter 5 presents inclusive models that combines conditions included in model 1 to 4 (with the objective of dissolving previous models’ logically contradictory truth table rows).

Table a.5.8 Comparison of partial models

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
% of ‘explained’ cases	0%	24%	26%	51%
Number of ‘explained’ cases (<i>n</i> =82)	0	20	21	42
Observed configurations / potential configurations	4/8	8/8	13/16	24/32
Non-contradictory configurations / Observed configurations	0/4	3/8	5/13	17/24
Configurations explaining outcome 1	0	3	4	14
Configurations explaining outcome 0	0	0	1	3
Contradictory configurations / Observed configurations	4/4	5/8	8/13	7/24

Source: author’s own elaboration

Document a.5.1 Outcome of the minimisation process computed with the R package QCA (Duşa, 2018, forthcoming)

NB some of the conditions' labels in the following pages differs from the labels used in the dissertation (labels were modified afterwards for more readability). The concerned cases are the following (dissertation's labels are in brackets): ms_eu_power (=ms_eu_leverage); non_large_staff (=small_staff); non_eu_sal_raw (=non_eu_sal); non_eu_lobb (=non_eu_lob); no_oth_eig_dic (=no_oth_eig) and few_mem_eig_dic (=few_mem_eig). Moreover, in order to read the table, it must be noted that for conservative solutions, “~” signify the absence of a condition, while for parsimonious solutions, conditions written with uppercases are present and conditions written with lowercases are absent. Finally, “+” correspond to “logical OR” (=union\disjunction: it creates the union between two or more sets) and “*” correspond to logical AND (=intersection/conjunction: it creates the intersection between two or more sets).

#####dataset dich 6.5#####

#conservative solution positive outcome

```
> csOUTCOME <- minimize(ttOUTCOME, details=TRUE, show.cases=FALSE, row.dom=TRUE, all.sol=FALSE, use.tilde=TRUE)
> csOUTCOME
```

```
n OUT = 1/0/C: 62/10/0
Total   : 72
```

```
M1: MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FRE
Q_CONTACT +
~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_
DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT +
~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_
DIRECT_MEMBER*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBE
R*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIR
ECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT +
~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*
FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
```

~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~FRE
 Q_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~FR
 EQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*F
 REQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~
 FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*F
 REQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DI
 RECT_MEMBER*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIR
 ECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT +
 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*FREQ_CON
 TACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FR
 EQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_
 CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 ~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEM
 BER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DI
 RECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_
 DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIR
 ECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIR
 ECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DI
 RECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIR
 ECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIR
 ECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIREC
 T_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +

~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC
 <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

inclS PRI covS covU

1 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT	1.000 1.000 0.097 0.032
2 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT	1.000 1.000 0.032 0.016
3 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC	1.000 1.000 0.032 0.032
4 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC	1.000 1.000 0.032 0.016
5 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT	1.000 1.000 0.032 0.016

6 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*
 FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.032 0.016
 7 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~FRE
 Q_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.048 0.048
 8 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~F
 REQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.032 0.032
 9 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*F
 REQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.081 0.032
 10 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*
 ~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.032 0.032
 11 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*
 FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.032 0.016
 12 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_
 DIRECT_MEMBER*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.032 0.032
 13 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DI
 RECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT 1.000 1.000 0.048 0.048
 14 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*FREQ_CO
 NTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.065 0.065
 15 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*F
 REQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.032 0.032
 16 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_
 CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.032 0.032
 17 ~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_ME
 MBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.048 0.048
 18 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_
 DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016
 19 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_
 DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016
 20 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIR
 ECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016
 21 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIR
 ECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016
 22 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_
 DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016
 23 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DI
 RECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016
 24 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DI
 RECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016

25 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016
 26 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016
 27 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016
 28 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016
 29 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016
 30 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016
 31 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016
 32 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016
 33 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016
 34 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.032 0.032
 35 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.032 0.032
 36 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016
 37 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.016 0.016

M1

1.000 1.000 1.000

#parsimonious solution for positive outcome

n OUT = 1/0/C: 62/10/0

Total : 72

M01: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (ms_eu_power*CAUSE + NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_corporatism*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M02: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (ms_eu_power*CAUSE + NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M03: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (ms_eu_power*CAUSE + MS_OLD*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic + cause*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*few_mem_eig_dic) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M04: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (ms_eu_power*CAUSE + MS_OLD*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M05: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (ms_eu_power*CAUSE + ms_corporatism*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic + cause*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*few_mem_eig_dic) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M06: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (ms_eu_power*CAUSE + ms_corporatism*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M07: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (CAUSE*non_direct_member + NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M08: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + MS_OLD*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*FREQ_CONTACT + non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M09: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + MS_OLD*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M10: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*non_large_staff + ms_corporatism*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB + NON_LARGE_STAFF*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M11: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*non_large_staff + ms_corporatism*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB + non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M12: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*non_large_staff + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M13: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT + ms_corporatism*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB + non_eu_lobb*NON_LARGE_STAFF*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M14: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT + ms_corporatism*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB + non_eu_lobb*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M15: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT + ms_corporatism*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB + NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M16: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT + ms_corporatism*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB + NON_LARGE_STAFF*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M17: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT + ms_corporatism*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB + non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M18: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M19: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M20: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M21: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_LARGE_STAFF + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M22: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*FREQ_CONTACT + ms_corporatism*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M23: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*FREQ_CONTACT + CAUSE*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB + non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M24: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*FREQ_CONTACT + CAUSE*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M25: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*FREQ_CONTACT + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*non_large_staff + non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M26: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*FREQ_CONTACT + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M27: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*FREQ_CONTACT + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M28: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*NON_LARGE_STAFF*FREQ_CONTACT + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M29: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + ms_corporatism*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M30: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M31: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + MS_CORPORATISM*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M32: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + MS_CORPORATISM*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_LARGE_STAFF + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M33: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + CAUSE*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB + non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M34: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + CAUSE*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M35: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*non_large_staff + non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M36: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_large_staff*non_direct_member + NON_LARGE_STAFF*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M37: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_large_staff*non_direct_member + non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M38: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT + NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_LARGE_STAFF*non_direct_member) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M39: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT + non_eu_lobb*NON_LARGE_STAFF*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

M40: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT + non_eu_lobb*fREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M41: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT + NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_direct_member*fREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M42: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT + NON_LARGE_STAFF*non_direct_member*fREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M43: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT + non_direct_member*fREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M44: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*few_mem_eig_dic + non_direct_member*fREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M45: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*fREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_direct_member*fREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M46: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (freq_contact*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*fREQ_CONTACT + ms_corporatism*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB + NON_LARGE_STAFF*non_direct_member*fREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M47: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (freq_contact*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*fREQ_CONTACT + cause*fREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + NON_LARGE_STAFF*non_direct_member*fREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M48: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (freq_contact*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*fREQ_CONTACT + non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*fREQ_CONTACT + NON_LARGE_STAFF*non_direct_member*fREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M49: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (freq_contact*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*fREQ_CONTACT + non_eu_sal_raw*fREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + NON_LARGE_STAFF*non_direct_member*fREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M50: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (freq_contact*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*fREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + NON_LARGE_STAFF*non_direct_member*fREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M51: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (MS_OLD*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic + ms_eu_power*NON_LARGE_STAFF*fREQ_CONTACT + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*fREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE
M52: ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC + cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER + (MS_OLD*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*few_mem_eig_dic + non_eu_sal_raw*fREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + non_eu_lobb*NON_LARGE_STAFF*fREQ_CONTACT) <=> PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

	inclS	PRI	covS	covU	(M1)	(M2)	(M3)	(M4)	(M5)	(M6)	(M7)	(M8)	(M9)	(M10)	(M11)	(M12)				
1	ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC		1.000	1.000	0.242	0.048	0.129	0.113	0.081	0.097	0.081	0.097	0.113	0.113	0.129	0.097	0.097	0.081		
2	cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER				1.000	1.000	0.113	0.048	0.097	0.097	0.081	0.081	0.081	0.081	0.097	0.065	0.065	0.097	0.097	0.097
3	ms_eu_power*CAUSE		1.000	1.000	0.258	0.000	0.032	0.016	0.097	0.065	0.129	0.097								
4	CAUSE*non_direct_member		1.000	1.000	0.194	0.000						0.016								
5	NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic				1.000	1.000	0.355	0.000	0.081	0.113				0.161	0.129	0.113	0.129	0.226	0.274	
6	freq_contact*few_mem_eig_dic		1.000	1.000	0.210	0.000														
7	MS_OLD*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic				1.000	1.000	0.161	0.000			0.048	0.048				0.032	0.032			
8	ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*non_large_staff		1.000	1.000	0.194	0.000								0.129	0.048	0.032				
9	ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT				1.000	1.000	0.387	0.000												
10	ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*few_mem_eig_dic				1.000	1.000	0.242	0.000												
11	ms_eu_power*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC					1.000	1.000	0.081	0.000											
12	ms_eu_power*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_LARGE_STAFF					1.000	1.000	0.097	0.000											
13	ms_eu_power*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*FREQ_CONTACT					1.000	1.000	0.258	0.000						0.032					
14	ms_eu_power*NON_LARGE_STAFF*FREQ_CONTACT					1.000	1.000	0.306	0.000											
15	ms_eu_power*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC					1.000	1.000	0.274	0.000											
16	ms_corporatism*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB				1.000	1.000	0.226	0.000	0.048							0.081	0.048			
17	ms_corporatism*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic				1.000	1.000	0.129	0.000				0.048	0.048							
18	MS_CORPORATISM*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC					1.000	1.000	0.081	0.000											
19	MS_CORPORATISM*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_LARGE_STAFF					1.000	1.000	0.097	0.000											
20	cause*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC					1.000	1.000	0.339	0.000			0.274		0.274						
21	CAUSE*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB				1.000	1.000	0.113	0.000												
22	CAUSE*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic				1.000	1.000	0.145	0.000												
23	non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*non_large_staff				1.000	1.000	0.129	0.000												
24	non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER					1.000	1.000	0.081	0.000		0.048				0.065				0.048	
25	non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*FREQ_CONTACT					1.000	1.000	0.226	0.000											
26	non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic				1.000	1.000	0.129	0.000												
27	non_eu_sal_raw*non_large_staff*non_direct_member				1.000	1.000	0.210	0.000												
28	non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT					1.000	1.000	0.419	0.000	0.177	0.258				0.258					
29	non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*few_mem_eig_dic				1.000	1.000	0.274	0.000			0.113	0.113	0.129	0.129						
30	non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC					1.000	1.000	0.371	0.000				0.274		0.274		0.210	0.145		
31	NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_LARGE_STAFF*non_direct_member					1.000	1.000	0.065	0.000											
32	non_eu_lobb*NON_LARGE_STAFF*FREQ_CONTACT					1.000	1.000	0.274	0.000											
33	non_eu_lobb*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC					1.000	1.000	0.226	0.000											

34	NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT	1.000	1.000	0.306	0.000	0.032	
35	NON_LARGE_STAFF*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT	1.000	1.000	0.323	0.000	0.113	
36	non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC	1.000	1.000	0.290	0.000	0.113	0.194

M1	1.000 1.000 1.000
M2	1.000 1.000 1.000
M3	1.000 1.000 1.000
M4	1.000 1.000 1.000
M5	1.000 1.000 1.000
M6	1.000 1.000 1.000
M7	1.000 1.000 1.000
M8	1.000 1.000 1.000
M9	1.000 1.000 1.000
M10	1.000 1.000 1.000
M11	1.000 1.000 1.000
M12	1.000 1.000 1.000
M13	1.000 1.000 1.000
M14	1.000 1.000 1.000
M15	1.000 1.000 1.000
M16	1.000 1.000 1.000
M17	1.000 1.000 1.000
M18	1.000 1.000 1.000
M19	1.000 1.000 1.000
M20	1.000 1.000 1.000
M21	1.000 1.000 1.000
M22	1.000 1.000 1.000
M23	1.000 1.000 1.000
M24	1.000 1.000 1.000
M25	1.000 1.000 1.000
M26	1.000 1.000 1.000
M27	1.000 1.000 1.000
M28	1.000 1.000 1.000
M29	1.000 1.000 1.000
M30	1.000 1.000 1.000
M31	1.000 1.000 1.000
M32	1.000 1.000 1.000
M33	1.000 1.000 1.000
M34	1.000 1.000 1.000
M35	1.000 1.000 1.000

M36	1.000 1.000 1.000
M37	1.000 1.000 1.000
M38	1.000 1.000 1.000
M39	1.000 1.000 1.000
M40	1.000 1.000 1.000
M41	1.000 1.000 1.000
M42	1.000 1.000 1.000
M43	1.000 1.000 1.000
M44	1.000 1.000 1.000
M45	1.000 1.000 1.000
M46	1.000 1.000 1.000
M47	1.000 1.000 1.000
M48	1.000 1.000 1.000
M49	1.000 1.000 1.000
M50	1.000 1.000 1.000
M51	1.000 1.000 1.000
M52	1.000 1.000 1.000

(M13) (M14) (M15) (M16) (M17) (M18) (M19) (M20) (M21) (M22) (M23) (M24) (M25) (M26) (M27) (M28)

1 ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC	0.113 0.113 0.113 0.129 0.129 0.145 0.113 0.113 0.129 0.097 0.097 0.097 0.065 0.113 0.097 0.129
2 cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER	0.065 0.065 0.065 0.065 0.065 0.065 0.065 0.097 0.097 0.081 0.097 0.065 0.065 0.065 0.097 0.065 0.065

3 ms_eu_power*CAUSE	
4 CAUSE*non_direct_member	
5 NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic	0.113 0.145 0.113 0.081 0.145 0.194 0.161 0.177 0.161 0.145 0.226 0.194 0.242 0.177 0.177 0.129
6 freq_contact*few_mem_eig_dic	
7 MS_OLD*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic	
8 ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*non_large_staff	
9 ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT	0.145 0.065 0.097 0.129 0.048 0.032
10 ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*few_mem_eig_dic	0.032
11 ms_eu_power*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC	0.016
12 ms_eu_power*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_LARGE_STAFF	0.016
13 ms_eu_power*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*FREQ_CONTACT	0.032 0.032 0.032 0.032 0.016 0.032
14 ms_eu_power*NON_LARGE_STAFF*FREQ_CONTACT	0.016
15 ms_eu_power*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC	
16 ms_corporatism*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB	0.113 0.113 0.065 0.081 0.048 0.048

17	ms_corporatism*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic																		
18	MS_CORPORATISM*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC																		
19	MS_CORPORATISM*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_LARGE_STAFF																		
20	cause*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC																		
21	CAUSE*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB															0.032			
22	CAUSE*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic															0.032			
23	non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*non_large_staff															0.032			
24	non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER															0.048	0.065		
25	non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*FREQ_CONTACT																		
26	non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic																		0.032
27	non_eu_sal_raw*non_large_staff*non_direct_member																		
28	non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT															0.290	0.290	0.113	
29	non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*few_mem_eig_dic																		0.194
30	non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC																		0.210
31	NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_LARGE_STAFF*non_direct_member																		
32	non_eu_lobb*NON_LARGE_STAFF*FREQ_CONTACT																		0.048
33	non_eu_lobb*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC																		0.048
34	NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT																		0.048
35	NON_LARGE_STAFF*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT																		0.048
36	non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC															0.048	0.113	0.274	

(M29) (M30) (M31) (M32) (M33) (M34) (M35) (M36) (M37) (M38) (M39) (M40) (M41) (M42) (M43) (M44)

1	ms_old*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC																		
2	cause*no_oth_eig_dic*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER																		
3	ms_eu_power*CAUSE																		
4	CAUSE*non_direct_member																		
5	NON_LARGE_STAFF*few_mem_eig_dic																		
6	freq_contact*few_mem_eig_dic																		
7	MS_OLD*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic																		
8	ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*non_large_staff																		
9	ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT																		
10	ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*few_mem_eig_dic																		
11	ms_eu_power*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC																		
12	ms_eu_power*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_LARGE_STAFF																		

10	ms_eu_power*non_eu_sal_raw*few_mem_eig_dic	0.081				
11	ms_eu_power*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC					
12	ms_eu_power*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_LARGE_STAFF					
13	ms_eu_power*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*FREQ_CONTACT					
14	ms_eu_power*NON_LARGE_STAFF*FREQ_CONTACT		0.065			
15	ms_eu_power*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC					
16	ms_corporatism*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB	0.065				
17	ms_corporatism*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic					
18	MS_CORPORATISM*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC					
19	MS_CORPORATISM*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_LARGE_STAFF					
20	cause*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC	0.065				
21	CAUSE*non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB					
22	CAUSE*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic					
23	non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*non_large_staff					
24	non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER					
25	non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*FREQ_CONTACT		0.065			
26	non_eu_sal_raw*NON_EU_LOBB*few_mem_eig_dic	0.032				
27	non_eu_sal_raw*non_large_staff*non_direct_member					
28	non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT					
29	non_eu_sal_raw*non_direct_member*few_mem_eig_dic		0.081	0.048		
30	non_eu_sal_raw*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC	0.145	0.065	0.161	0.226	0.226
31	NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_LARGE_STAFF*non_direct_member					
32	non_eu_lobb*NON_LARGE_STAFF*FREQ_CONTACT			0.065		
33	non_eu_lobb*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC					
34	NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT	0.032				
35	NON_LARGE_STAFF*non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT	0.113	0.097	0.113	0.097	0.097
36	non_direct_member*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC					

#conservative solution negative outcome

```
csoutcome <- minimize(ttoutcome, details=TRUE, show.cases=FALSE, row.dom=TRUE, all.sol=FALSE, use.tilde=TRUE)
> csoutcome
```

```
n OUT = 1/0/C: 10/62/0
Total   : 72
```

M1: MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*
~FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_~
DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DI~
RECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIR~
ECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRE~
CT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIR~
ECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT~
_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC +
~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DI~
RECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC
<=> ~PERCEIVED_CONGRUENCE

inclS PRI covS covU

1 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*~
FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.200 0.200
2 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_~
DIRECT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.100 0.100
3 MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DI~
RECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.100 0.100
4 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIR~
ECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.100 0.100
5 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRE~
CT_MEMBER*~FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.200 0.200
6 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*~NON_EU_SAL_RAW*~NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIR~
ECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.100 0.100
7 MS_OLD*MS_EU_POWER*~MS_CORPORATISM*CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*NON_LARGE_STAFF*NON_DIRECT~
_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.100 0.100
8 ~MS_OLD*~MS_EU_POWER*MS_CORPORATISM*~CAUSE*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*NON_EU_LOBB*~NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*~NON_LARGE_STAFF*~NON_DI~
RECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT*~FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC 1.000 1.000 0.100 0.100

M1

1.000 1.000 1.000

#parsimonious solution for negative outcome

```
psoutcome <- minimize(ttoutcome, include=" ?", details=TRUE, show.cases=FALSE, row.dom=TRUE, all.sol=FALSE)
> psoutcome
```

```
n OUT = 1/0/C: 10/62/0
Total   : 72
```

M1: MS_OLD*freq_contact*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + cause*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*non_large_staff + cause*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_large_staff*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER +
(ms_old*no_oth_eig_dic*non_direct_member*freq_contact + MS_EU_POWER*CAUSE*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> perceived_congruence
M2: MS_OLD*freq_contact*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + cause*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*non_large_staff + cause*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_large_staff*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER +
(ms_old*no_oth_eig_dic*non_direct_member*freq_contact + ms_corporatism*CAUSE*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> perceived_congruence
M3: MS_OLD*freq_contact*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + cause*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*non_large_staff + cause*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_large_staff*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER +
(ms_eu_power*no_oth_eig_dic*non_direct_member*freq_contact + MS_EU_POWER*CAUSE*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> perceived_congruence
M4: MS_OLD*freq_contact*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + cause*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*non_large_staff + cause*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_large_staff*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER +
(ms_eu_power*no_oth_eig_dic*non_direct_member*freq_contact + ms_corporatism*CAUSE*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT) <=> perceived_congruence
M5: MS_OLD*freq_contact*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + cause*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*non_large_staff + cause*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_large_staff*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER +
(MS_EU_POWER*CAUSE*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT + no_oth_eig_dic*non_direct_member*freq_contact*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> perceived_congruence
M6: MS_OLD*freq_contact*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC + cause*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*non_large_staff + cause*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_large_staff*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER +
(ms_corporatism*CAUSE*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT + no_oth_eig_dic*non_direct_member*freq_contact*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC) <=> perceived_congruence

	inclS	PRI	covS	covU	(M1)	(M2)	(M3)	(M4)	(M5)	(M6)
1 MS_OLD*freq_contact*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC			1.000	1.000	0.400	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200
2 cause*NON_EU_SAL_RAW*non_large_staff			1.000	1.000	0.400	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200

3	cause*NO_OTH_EIG_DIC*non_large_staff*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER	1.000	1.000	0.300	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100

4	ms_old*no_oth_eig_dic*non_direct_member*freq_contact	1.000	1.000	0.100	0.000	0.100	0.100				
5	ms_eu_power*no_oth_eig_dic*non_direct_member*freq_contact	1.000	1.000	0.100	0.000		0.100	0.100			
6	MS_EU_POWER*CAUSE*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT		1.000	1.000	0.200	0.000	0.200		0.200		0.200
7	ms_corporatism*CAUSE*NON_DIRECT_MEMBER*FREQ_CONTACT		1.000	1.000	0.200	0.000		0.200		0.200	0.200
8	no_oth_eig_dic*non_direct_member*freq_contact*FEW_MEM_EIG_DIC	1.000	1.000	0.100	0.000				0.100	0.100	

M1		1.000	1.000	1.000							
M2		1.000	1.000	1.000							
M3		1.000	1.000	1.000							
M4		1.000	1.000	1.000							
M5		1.000	1.000	1.000							
M6		1.000	1.000	1.000							

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