EUROPEANIZATION AND THE CHANGES IN INTEREST-GROUP TYPES IN THE POST-COMMUNIST CONTEXT

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Abstract

This article contributes to the literature on the impact of Europeanization on national interest groups in general, and in a post-communist context in particular. We analyse the data from two surveys of Slovenian interest groups active in eleven policy fields, conducted in 1996 and in 2012 within the framework of the INTEREURO project. This data offers an insight into (1) the dynamics of interest-group types, and (2) the interrelation of Europeanization and the typology of interest groups based on the characteristics of interest-group activities. Our key finding is that there is some evidence of a causal link: ‘the more Europeanized interest groups are the more active they are’. Although there may be clear domestic reasons why interest-group activity evolves over time in the national milieu, it is important (particularly in the post-communist context) to understand that EU links with interest groups do make a difference to the national interest-group politics.

Keywords: interest groups, typology, post-communist context, Europeanization,

Introduction

The view that the multi-level political system of the EU can be treated as a ‘domestic versus international dichotomy’ has long been held to be false (Cowles, 2003). Research reveals that national interest groups have in many ways shifted to the supranational level of the EU political system, and European integration processes have been observed to have impacted on the characteristics and dynamics of interest-group systems within EU member states (Eising, 2008). There are, however, many methodological challenges in
researching the Europeanization of interest groups which still need to be systematically addressed (Sedelmeier, 2011).

Although some authors have conducted research in the field, particularly into the empowerment of domestic civil society in the context of EU conditionality (Fagan, 2005; Forest, 2006; Iankova, 2009; Parau, 2009 and 2010; Pérez-Solórzano Borragán, 2004 and 2005; Börzel, 2010; Börzel and Buzogány, 2010a and 2010b; Carmin and Fagan, 2010; Fagan, 2010; Kutter and Trappmann, 2010), there remains a lack of systematic insight into the development of interest-group types in the national milieu that would take account of their involvement in the European integration processes. Additionally, there persist methodological problems on the research agenda. According to Saurugger (2005), the key methodological issues faced by researchers include: (1) the question of measuring the change induced at the national level; and (2) a long-term analysis. Addressing the lack of long term comparisons would be a particularly valuable contribution – preferably if it included research both prior to European integration as well as afterwards (Peters, 1998; Saurugger, 2005).

The aim of our research is to take some steps towards filling both the gaps in the research and in the methodology. Firstly, this article adds to the emerging findings on what kind of impact the EU has been having on the development of domestic civil society organizations. This is particularly important when studying interest groups in the post-communist countries in which the EU has been attempting to strengthen the domestic civil society (Sedelmeier, 2011:21). In this article, we present evidence of a shift in domestic interest-group activism relating to the processes of Europeanization. We offer a general insight into the dynamics of interest groups in the context of a post-communist country joining the European integration processes since the mid 1990s, and we also offer a close-up insight into the political activities of interest groups in such a country. While we are interested in the impact of Europeanization on the evolution of types of national interest groups, we will
only briefly consider the question of how the EU influences national interest groups and its all-encompassing impact on the politics of national interest groups. Rather, our focus concerns the much narrower question of the impact of Europeanization on the characteristics of the activism of national interest groups at the national level. More precisely, the results of a typologization of interest groups according to their activism are taken as an indicator of both the selected interest-group characteristics (activities) and of their change over time. Secondly, a longitudinal panel view on interest-group types according to their category of activism (which is identified using the empirical data gathered in 1996 and 2012 as part of the INTEREURO project – see Beyers et al, 2014-forthcoming; www.intereuro.eu) provides a dynamic insight into the changing type of interest group over time; this corresponds to the particular country’s evolving European integration process. In our case, that particular country is Slovenia. We can assess the impact of Europeanization on the interest-group typology on the basis of the relationship between the typology and the level of Europeanization of the interest groups which we have examined based on the 2012 data. For the purpose of our analysis, ‘Europeanization’ was operationalized as the extent to which interest groups network with their European counterparts, national interest-group contacts with EU decision-makers, and the level of resources received from the EU; and it was measured according to the related Europeanization index.

In the following section, we will firstly present an overview of interest-group typologizations within the framework of the Europeanization literature with a special focus on the literature on civil society in post-communist EU member states. In the empirical section, we will present the typologies of interest groups in Slovenia according to interest-group activities based on the 1996 and 2012 data together with the findings on the relationship between the Europeanization of interest groups and the typologization of interest groups in 2012. Our research findings are summarized in the conclusion.
Typologies of Interest Groups in the Europeanization Literature

So far, the typologizations of interest groups in the Europeanization literature have been neither comprehensive nor value-free – especially when considering the research on interest-group politics in those post-communist countries joining the European integration processes.

Types of Interest Groups in the EU Political System

It is not only the multiple sources and methodological issues that make typologies of interest groups within the framework of the EU extremely difficult – particularly so in the case of large N research (Berkhout and Lowery, 2008). There are also considerable variations among the types of interest-groups that are referred to in the various sets of Europeanization literature and in the European institutional sources, with specific discourses and focuses on particular mobilization and organizational phenomena, such as social movements, civil-society organizations, business interest groups, and NGOs (for an overview of the literature, see Finke, 2007; della Porta, 2007; Berkhout and Poppelaars, 2009; Heidbreder, 2012 and Cox, 2014). All these segments of literature use their particular discourse, including their naming of non-state actors, to attempt to influence policy processes without actually trying to gain power. When undertaking empirical research on the involvement of these actors in policy processes, many authors who simply refer to interest groups do not bother to create interest-group typologies. Rather, such research is often based on a presumption of particular types of interest groups, such as the distinction between economic and non-economic interest groups (Fink-Hafner, 2000), diffuse and specific interests (Beyers, 2002), NGOs, social partners – employers’ associations and trade unions (Pleines, 2010), social movement organizations
according to the industry-sector – environmental, women’s rights, gay and lesbian, civil rights, agrarian, social services and radical left and right groups (Cíšar and Vráblíková, 2013).

Increasingly, classifications emerge beyond the *a priori* categorization of interest groups. They may be both detailed and pragmatic (as in the case of Mahoney and Beckstrand’s 2011 study of the EU funding of interest groups) or systematically based on a particular classification criteria.

Typologies may be based on *ideological* criteria that exists in the actual functioning of the EU political system. When analysing state and interest-group activity in the European Union, Mahoney (2004: 462) identifies the types of groups that the Commission selects and magnifies their influence according to the extent to which these groups align with the Commission’s own agenda: business groups traditionally fostering European integration; EU-level citizen groups supportive of EU programmes beneficial to European citizens; groups speaking for a broad range of nations; groups committed to supranational politics (having a permanent representative in Brussels); older groups proving their commitment to EU politics in the past.

To some extent, interest groups have also been studied in the *context of the political contestation* in Europe and have been differentiated according to both (i) their interest domain (such as communication, agriculture etc.) and European-wide presence (the proportion of interest groups within a domain representing all fifteen member states at the time of research), and (ii) their involvement in the triangular structure of the conflict based on labour, capital and the environment (Wessels, 2004).

Among the newly emerging classifications, there are also those that examine *interest-group strategies* in the EU multi-level political system. Classifications may be based on combining organization theory, the nature of political conflicts and organizational format (Beyers, 2008), or on policy involvement and the organizational means of interest groups
The new research strategy in classifying interest groups and the multi-level insight into interest-group politics tend to examine both the individual EU member state and the EU level, enabling a differentiation between the two (See, for example, the work of Berkhout and Poppelaars, 2009).

Researchers are also increasingly interested in interest-group professionalization leading to the typologizations of interest groups in the European Union according to their professionalization patterns (Klüver and Saurugger, 2013).

Furthermore, Sánchez-Salgadoz (2007) offers a typology based on the intensity of the relationships that these organizations have with the EU. Her analysis of voluntary organizations in the field of humanitarian aid, development, human rights and social exclusion has revealed three categories of interest groups (Sánchez-Salgadoz’s 2007:256): exclusivists (organizations with EU links only); pluralists (organizations linking with several international funding sources); and opportunists (organizations with a few sporadic links to the EU).

Additionally, European institutions provide their particular typologies of interest groups. For example, the European Economic and Social Committee (ESC) tends to use the term ‘civil society’ as an umbrella term that includes social partners, non-social partners, social and economic organized interests, NGOs, the community-based organizations pursuing the objectives of grass-roots level member-oriented organizations - e.g. representing the interests of particular social groups (Smismans, 2003: 482). By contrast, the European Commission primarily employs a discourse about voluntary organizations and NGOs (Smismans, 2003:475–481). Based on their institutional interests, the ESC and the EC in fact also promote the use of the term ‘European civil society’ (Smismans, 2003: 489–490). All these terms have also found their way into certain segments of the academic literature.
Typologies Related to the EU’s (External) Impact on the Interest Groups of the post-2004 New EU Member States

With the end of the Cold War, research into political phenomena in post-communist contexts has been normalizing and increasingly leading toward comparative research where modernized segments of post-communist political reality have been more or less directly compared to those in older democracies. However, the remains of the ideological lenses may still be evident in the apparent geographic characterizations of ‘civil society in Central and Eastern Europe’ and in ‘post-communist civil society’ – comparable to the use of the term ‘Southern civil society’ (Heidbreder, 2012). Holding such an attitude in research nurtures the stereotype that civil society in post-communist states is ‘weak’; this ignores the empirically evident variations among interest groups and among countries (Howard, 2002; Sissenich, 2010).

Similarly, we can observe a typologization based on the Westernization ideology. Seen through the lenses of researchers from the older democracies, the basic typology of Western and non-western civil society in times of democratic transition in post-communist countries was at the time considered acceptable. However, the Western (including the West European) assumption that prevailed in the 1990s, that externally-funded civil society would produce ‘westernized’ civil societies from post-communist countries, has been increasingly abandoned and its scientific validity challenged (Quigley, 2000; Wedel, 2001; Cellarius and Staddon, 2002; Mandel, 2002; Fagan, 2006).

Nevertheless, with the evolution of empirical research, ‘normal’ political science concepts have produced typologizations of interest groups in the post-communist context influenced by European integration, as the following examples will illustrate.
Organizational characteristics and interest-group types: Carmin (2010) - when considering only environmental NGOs in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia two types of organizations can be identified: (i) those with a small cadre of highly professionalized and internationalized organizations engaged in policymaking both in the international and national arenas, and (ii) NGOs which sponsor activities and take action on behalf of their members as well as provide environmental and government support services at the local level. Furthermore, research in Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic has shown that not only does the EU strongly influence the agendas of environmental activists, but it also ‘shapes how these movements do what they do and, therefore, how they organize – in effect, what these movements are becoming’ (Hicks, 2004:224). The main effects are: (i) internal organizational change - the funding requirements may also impact on the internal characteristics of the environmental organization so that its internal power structure is altered and the organization becomes more formal and predominantly guided by its own initiatives and priorities (Hicks 2004:226); and (ii) the characteristics of the national interest group system change – for instance, certain major groups and organizations in the environmental movements in the post-communist countries strengthen (Hicks, 2004: 227). Similar trends have been observed in the field of women’s groups, where the links with the EU have led to the evolution of two types of group – formalized (women’s) NGOs (closely linked to the EU) and informal (women’s) groups (Hašková, 2005).

Externally-fostered interest-group activism and interest-group types: So far, the EU has not only evolved as a locus of power targeted by interest-group activism, but also as an external agency that shapes interest-group activism within EU member states. Variations in the EU input have been particularly apparent with regard to different policy fields (Kutter and Trappmann, 2010). For instance, the EU is particularly proactive in the field of environmental policy (Hicks, 2004). In relation to the ‘Eurocratization’ of NGOs in the field
of the environment, Hallstrom (2004) has observed a shift among NGOs in central and eastern countries, from more political and policy-oriented interest groups towards smaller scale, more localized and often preservation-based project-oriented interest groups. Similarly, Císar (2010) identifies EU funding as a decisive factor in the emergence of a new type of environmental advocacy interest group without mass mobilization in the Czech Republic. Meanwhile, Börzel and Buzogány (2010a) have identified a domestic consultancy-oriented professional sector of environmental organizations in Central and Eastern Europe while studying biodiversity governance.

The EU input has also varied over time, particularly during the transition from the accession stage to the full EU membership stage (Kutter and Trappmann, 2010:50). In some countries, such as Poland, EU structural funds have both reinforced policy-related activities and the position of regional authorities as ‘governmental interest groups’ in their relation to the central state (Dabrowski, 2007). Moreover, the inclusion of civil society organizations in managing the structural-funds-related processes has to some extent also granted these organizations a more prominent role (Gąsior-Niemiec, 2007). In addition, foreign integration (e.g. the trans-nationalization of Hungarian interest groups) - and not only European integration - has been shown to contribute to the distinction among participatory, embedded and associative types of interest groups (Stark et al, 2006).

**The EU strategy of interest-group empowerment and interest-group type differentiation:** From the overview of the literature it is evident that EU conditionality is associated with domestic civil society empowerment. There is also some evidence that Europeanization has primarily empowered those interest groups which already enjoyed sufficient capacities (Sedelmeier, 2011). Nevertheless, the differential empowerment has been revealed based on favouring the Europeanization of some interest groups (especially environmental groups) and ignoring others (especially interest groups interested in social
partnerships, such as trade unions) (Kutter and Trappmann, 2010:62), effectively leading to the differentiation of EU-empowered and EU non-empowered interest groups.

**The Key Characteristics of the Existing Typologies and the Contribution of this Article**

In the overview of the Europeanization literature, we identified several of the main criteria types used so far in interest-group typologization: (i) ideology, whether the ideological criteria of the EU institutions or the ideological standpoints of researchers, has led to a differentiation of Western/non-Western civil society; (ii) the context in which interest groups are active - as a segment in a multi-level political system, as a policy domain, and geographical context etc.; (iii) the EU’s targeting of interest groups, for instance the EU-empowered/ not empowered national interest groups; formalized NGO/informal groups; (iv) the interests represented, e.g. economic/non-economic, diffuse/specific; (v) interest-group strategies; and (vi) the intensity of European connections within an interest group, i.e. whether exclusivists, pluralists or opportunists; (vii) the organizational characteristics of interest groups, e.g. types according to interest-group professionalization, various internal power distribution; as well as (viii) interest-group activism, which so far has been limited to the study of a particular segment of interest groups, particularly environmental.

Our research reveals a ‘real-life’ typologization of interest groups according to their political activity. It goes beyond a single policy field. It also reveals changes in interest-group typology over time (the stages of Slovenia’s integration with the EU). And finally, our research analyses the relationship between types of national interest group and the extent of their European links.

**The Analytical Framework for the Slovenian Case Study**

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In this article, the term ‘Europeanization’ is used to refer to the way in which interest groups re-define their activities in the national context by their engagement with various EU links: assistance from interest organizations from EU member states or EU-level interest groups, the funding of interest organizations from European structural funds, the support given by interest groups to candidates in European elections, interest groups’ contacts with EC officials and with members of the European parliament. On the basis of these dimensions (and using the 2012 data) an index was developed to measure the level of Europeanization of interest groups. The index is used for drawing comparisons among the different types of interest groups identified in 2012. The ‘dynamic’ nature of Europeanization is taken into account in several ways. Firstly, typologies of interest groups are revealed separately at two points in time (1996 and 2012) – eight years prior to Slovenia’s full EU membership and eight years after gaining membership. Secondly, it exposes shifts from one interest-group type in 1996 to another (or several other types) in 2012.

**Data and Measurement**

In our analysis we used data from two face-to-face surveys with representatives of fifty-two interest groups which had participated in both waves of our survey, in the spring of 1996 and between March and May 2012. In both surveys, we essentially used the same measurement instrument - a survey questionnaire. The population consisted of the most active interest groups from eleven policy fields: economic, social, housing and agricultural policy, policy towards the disabled, environmental protection, health, education, culture, sports policy and policy in the field of marketing/public relations. The interest groups were those which had been identified by previous empirical research as well as by consulting scholars - experts in a particular policy sector in Slovenia. The 1996 survey questionnaire was slightly adapted in
2012 to take into account the circumstances of Slovenia’s full EU membership. To allow cross-time comparison, both data-sets from 1996 and 2012 were merged into one data-set.

In the first step, we established the typology of interest groups based on political behaviour/activity using hierarchical cluster analysis and K-means cluster analysis. In our second step, we performed a comparison of mean values and an analysis of variance (ANOVA) to describe the characteristics of clusters in 1996 and 2012 and to identify any possible changes that had resulted during the sixteen-year interval. Finally, a one-way ANOVA and a post-hoc Bonferroni test were performed to observe how the 2012 typology of interest groups related to Europeanization.

Two main variables were used in this study to test our hypothesis: the typology of interest groups based on the political behaviour/activity of interest groups and the Europeanization index.

Political behaviour/Activity was measured using nineteen indicators of time spent on the following activities: (1) internal organization, (2) representing the organization in the mass media, (3) organizing actions to solve internal problems and (4) to solve broader social problems, (5) organizing conferences of experts and (6) for the interested general public, (7) fundraising, (8) publishing, (9) informing members, (10) organizing professional training, (11) organizing training for successful lobbying, (12) drafting legislation, (13) providing pre-election support, (14) networking with organizations from abroad and (15) in our country, (16) searching for relevant information, (17) contacts with decision makers, (18) commissioning research and (19) performing contract services for government. The time spent on each individual activity was measured on a five-point scale (from 1, indicating no time at all, to 5, a lot of time). We used cluster analyses to develop a typology of
organizations. Firstly, we used hierarchical cluster analyses for both years (1996 and 2012) to establish the most appropriate number of clusters (see Figure 1 and Figure 3 in the Appendix). Based on these analyses, we reclassified cases using a K-means cluster analysis. In this way, we were also able to obtain information on the distance between clusters. In other words, how different clusters are between each other. As a result of the cluster analyses, we obtained four meaningful clusters of interest groups for each of the years the surveys were carried out (1996 and 2012).

Furthermore, we prepared our second variable, *Europeanization*, as a composite index. Complete operationalization of the concept of Europeanization (interest groups networking with their European counterparts, national interest-group contacts with EU decision-makers, and resources received from the EU) was possible only for the 2012 data. Several questions from our 2012 survey could be taken as indicators of networking with foreign interest organizations and Europeanization. In order to form the index of Europeanization, we conducted principal component analyses of the following indicators (based on the survey questions): (a) whether the interest group gains the majority of its support or assistance from interest organizations, from EU member states, or from EU-level interest groups (binary); (b) whether EU structural funds are a key source of funding for the interest group (3-point scale); (c) whether the interest group supports candidates at elections to the European Parliament (5-point scale); (d) whether the interest group has contacts with EU officials (5-point scale); and (e) whether the interest group has contacts with members of the European parliament (5-point scale). The analysis confirmed our expectations: only one meaningful component (with an eigenvalue above 1) was extracted and loadings for all five indicators were high enough to include all of them in the composite index of Europeanization.
In the remainder of the article, we will first describe the four clusters that we obtained from the 1996 data and the four clusters from the 2012 data. We will conclude our report with a comparison of both analyses and by identifying where the changes occurred. We will assess the possibility that any change may have been a consequence of the Europeanization process over the last sixteen years.

A TYPOLOGY OF INTEREST GROUPS BASED ON THEIR ACTIVISM AND EUROPEANIZATION

Interest group types in 1996

Based on the average amount of time allocated to the activities analysed (Figure 2 in the Appendix), we applied the following labels to the four clusters from 1996: the ‘active group’, the ‘passive group’, the ‘training group’ and the ‘government contract group’ \(^7\). While the active and the training groups on average spent more time on these activities, the passive and the government contract groups invest less time in all of these activities. Let us take a closer look at the differences between the four groups.

1. **The active group** (21 organizations) invests above average time in all of the activities and at the same time dedicates more time to most of the activities compared to other groups. A feature of this group is its generally high level of activity.

2. **The training group** (9 organizations) is also considerably active. Organizations from this group invest more time in specific activities directed towards educating members of the organization (organizing training activities for members and training members in successful lobbying). The focus on members in this group can be explained by the trade union organizations and the chambers that are part of this group. These types of
organizations are normally financed through membership fees and represent the interests of their members.

3. **The passive group** (14 organizations) is an extremely inactive group. It is also the only group without the highest mean value for any of the activities. Furthermore, in most of the activities this group scored below average values.

4. **The government contract group** (8 organizations) is also a considerably inactive group that scores several of the lowest mean values compared to the other three groups. In contrast to the passive group, the government contract group scores the highest mean value in one particular category, namely performing services on the basis of contracts with ministries or public agencies. It consists of some professional groups and groups that represent public interests, such as environmental organizations and charitable organizations.

**Interest-group types in 2012**

To compare the change in the typology of activism, we also classified interest groups according to their activities in 2012. We cut the classification tree at the same point as in the 1996 analysis (Figure 3 in the Appendix) and obtained four groups. Based on the mean values of each cluster for all of the activities (Figure 4 in the Appendix) we named the clusters: ‘active group’, ‘membership group’, ‘public group’ and ‘passive group’.

1. **The active group** (19 organizations) has an above-average mean value for most of the activities (except for organizing conferences for experts) and invests more time than other groups in many of them. More than half of the organizations in this group represent economic interests.

2. **The membership group** (14 organizations) has the highest mean value for activities focused on membership (for instance, solving internal problems and organizing
conferences for experts). At the same time, this group has the lowest mean values for supporting candidates at elections (all of the organizations in this group spent no time at all supporting electoral candidates) and performing activities on the basis of contracts with government or public agencies. With two exceptions, all organizations in this group represent economic interests. Indeed, all trade unions included in our survey fall within this cluster.

3. **The public group** (12 organizations) has the highest mean value for training members, and at the same time the lowest mean value for solving internal problems. Organizations in this group spend an above-average amount of time on publishing, fundraising, supporting electoral candidates, government contract activities and organizing conferences for experts. This group consists primarily of organizations which represent situational and public interests, such as associations of persons with disabilities and some environmental groups.

4. **The passive group** (7 organizations) has the lowest mean values for most of the activities and at the same time also below-average values for all activities. All organizations within this group represent public interests or a particular cause, such as environmental groups, charitable organizations and single-issue groups.

**Changes in Interest-Group Types from Slovenia’s Accession Stage to Slovenia’s Full EU Member Stage**

Over the last sixteen years, we can observe changes in interest-group types (according to their activity). This involves three steps: (1) the identifying a change in typology; (2) revealing the organisations’ shifts between the two typologies (1996, 2012); and (3) comparing the distances between the 1996 typology clusters with distances between the 2012 typology
clusters. At both time points, our analyses reveal the same three types of interest groups: an active group, a passive group, and a group that is oriented towards its members (the training group in 1996 and the membership group in 2012). In fact, at first sight, the typologies appear similar, even the association between the membership of interest groups in the 1996 typology and the membership in 2012 typology is fairly strong (Contingency Coefficient = 0.484; Cramer’s V = 0.319; p < 0.1). More than half of the organizations that were placed in the active group in 1996 also fall into the active group in 2012 (Table 3 in the Appendix). Most of the remaining organizations which were placed in the active group in the 1996 set can be found in either the membership group or the public group in 2012, but only one is found in the passive group. This means that active organizations in 1996 retain their activity in 2012. As expected, most of the organizations from the training group in 1996 fall into the membership group in 2012 - maintaining their orientation towards their own members. And finally, the interest groups from the government contract group in 1996 are almost evenly distributed among the passive group, the public group and even the active group in 2012 (while no organization from the government contract group in 1996 moved to the membership group in 2012).

However, we can also observe some changes over the last sixteen years (Table 3 and Figure 3 in the Appendix). Even though there are fewer organizations in the active group in 2012 compared to 1996, the number of organizations in the passive group is much smaller in 2012 compared to 1996. This is even more evident if we take into account the fact that, in 1996, organizations from the government contract group also behaved passively. However, only two organizations from the passive group in 1996 remain in the passive group in 2012. The passive group in 2012 mostly includes organizations which were already registering a low performance in 1996 (two organizations from the passive group and three organizations from
the government contract group) but most of organizations with a low level of activity in 1996 became more active in 2012 (five organizations moved to the membership group, four to the active group and three to the public group). At the same time, the organizations are more evenly distributed among the groups in 2012 compared to 1996. While we observed a single large active group in 1996, we can see that in 2012 our typology is more diversified - including variously active groups and a small passive group.

A greater diversification of the 2012 typology can also be noticed from the classification (joining) tree (Figure 1 and Figure 3 in the Appendix). To obtain the same number of clusters (groups) in 1996 and 2012 we cut the classification tree for both years approximately at point 8 (on the scale from 0 to 25, which measures the relative distance between groups joined at a particular level). If we were to move our cut-off point just slightly more to the right, let’s say at point 10, we would obtain only two category groups in 1996 (with the two inactive groups merging together and the two active groups together); while in 2012 the number of groups would remain the same (four groups). To obtain fewer groups in 2012 we would have to cut the classification tree even further to the right. At point 13 we would obtain three groups. To obtain just two groups in 2012, we would have to cut the classification tree at a value above 15. To show that the typology in 2012 is more diversified compared to the typology in 1996, we compared the distances between clusters in both years (Table 4 in Appendix). The distance between clusters (groups) in 2012 (the greatest difference is 7.392; the average difference is 4.919) is much bigger compared to 1996 (the biggest difference is 4.921; the average distance is 4.262). By joining the typology in 1996 into two distinct groups, the difference between the two clusters is 4.011, while the greatest difference between the three clusters for 2012 remains high (6.945- between the active and the passive group) and it becomes smaller and comparable to the 1996 situation, when we only retain two clusters (the distance is 4.279).
This means that the groups revealed in 2012 are much more diversified and more different from each other than groups revealed in 1996.

**The Europeanization of Interest Groups in 2012**

In 1996, Slovenia entered the negotiations for EU accession which were concluded in 2003, and on 1st May 2004 Slovenia became a full EU member state. However, building on previous economic relations (when Slovenia was part of the former Yugoslavia) as well as based on the EU’s official recognition of the Republic of Slovenia as a new independent state on 15 January 1993, cooperation with the EU had been dynamically evolving ever since. Thus we can say that, during the sixteen-year period between the first and second survey, Europeanization was one of the crucial processes that influenced the characteristics of Slovenian society. But can we use the Europeanization process to explain the more diversified typology of interest groups according to their activity in 2012 (compared to 1996) and the more active clusters in the typology of interest groups in 2012? In order to obtain at least a preliminary answer to this question, we formed the following hypothesis which we tested on our empirical data: ‘Different types of activities (as presented by the typology of organizations) are related to differing levels of interest-group Europeanization’. To test this hypothesis, we compared the mean values of the Europeanization index between the four groups from the 2012 typology 2012.10

The results were in line with our expectations. The active group shows the highest mean value of the Europeanization index (Table 5 in the Appendix) while the passive group has the lowest mean value for the Europeanization index. The public group falls near the total average while the membership group is somewhere between the total average and the passive group.
Indeed, groups (activity types) in 2012 differ among themselves in their level of Europeanization. But, are these differences between clusters significant? In general (at the level of the whole typology) we can speak of a statistically significant difference between groups in terms of Europeanization ($F= 3.348; p<0.05$). A more detailed analysis (post-hoc Bonferroni test) reveals two substantial differences between the groups$^{11}$: (1) between the active and the membership group; and (2) between the active and the passive group. It appears that the main gap in the level of Europeanization occurs between the active and less active types, rather than between the different types according to the level of interest-group activity.

Conclusions

So far, only limited research has offered an insight into both the characteristics and the dynamics of the impact of European integration on the politics of national interest group in general, and on national interest-group types in particular. Our research has revealed that not only are interest-group types based on changes in interest-group activity over time in a post-communist context (notably in Slovenia), but also that these changes may be related to the European integration process. Although there is some evidence of a causal link, that ‘the more Europeanized interest groups are the more active they are’, our research does not explain why some interest groups are more Europeanized than others. Furthermore, we cannot tell whether an increase in interest-group activism due to the Europeanization influence has actually strengthened civil society in the post-communist context (as would be generally expected); therefore, further research for the appropriate qualifications is still required (as Fagan and Jehlička suggest, 2003).

Notes
Five organizations had at least one value missing (and not more than four) for the data analysed in 1996. At the same time, each variable in 1996 had at the most two missing values. Due to the small number of cases, we decided to replace the missing values in our analyses for 1996 with the mean value of each variable.

We used Ward’s method based on squared Euclidian distances between cases.

As an initial cluster centre for K-means cluster analyses, we used a matrix of mean values of variables for each cluster formed with hierarchical cluster analyses.

The distribution of cases in clusters with hierarchical cluster analysis and K-means cluster analysis was highly similar. Only two cases in each year were distributed in other clusters with the K-means cluster analysis compared to hierarchical cluster analysis. When comparing the distribution of cases in clusters with both methods (cross-tabulation was used), Cramer’s V value for 1996 was 0.941, and was 0.959 for 2012.

In 1996, Slovenia was not yet an EU member, and therefore some questions about Europeanization in the first survey were not asked; asking these questions would not have been meaningful.

The component with an eigenvalue above Kaiser’s criterion of 1 explains 51.43 percent of the variance. The index scale is standardized as a deviation from the mean value, so its mean value is 0, and (on the group of 52 organizations in 2012) its minimum value is -1.12 and its maximum value is 3.08.

Differences between the clusters regarding mean values for the activities of solving broader social issues, supporting candidates at elections and establishing contacts with decision makers were not significant. This is why these variables were not taken into account when interpreting results (describing characteristics of clusters).
8 Differences between the groups regarding mean values for the activities of solving the broader social issue and organizing public conferences were not significant.

9 In order to obtain two clusters with K-means methods, we first joined two active and two inactive types based on the hierarchical cluster analysis and used the mean values of these two merged clusters as initial cluster centres when performing the K-means method. A similar procedure has been used for 2012 data.

10 We used One-way ANOVA including a post-hoc Bonferroni test.

11 The significance test returned a value of 0.051. Due to the small sample (which in fact covers almost the entire population of the most active interest groups in Slovenia), we believe that a significance level of up to 0.1 is still acceptable.

References


Appendix

Figure 1: A classification tree (dendrogram) of interest groups based on the time allocated to various activities in 1996
Table 1: A typology of organizations based on the performance of various activities in 1996 (deviations from the total mean value for each activity: sign ‘0’ represents values around the total mean; sign ‘-’ represents values below the total mean; sign ‘+’ represents values above the total mean).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>Active group</th>
<th>Training group</th>
<th>Passive group</th>
<th>Government contract group</th>
<th>Total mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inner organization**</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>+</td>
<td>0+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0-</td>
<td>3.18</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td>+</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<td>++</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2.06</td>
</tr>
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<td>-</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2.92</td>
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<td>0-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking abroad***</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
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<td>--</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>0+</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government contract***</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>2.55</td>
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</table>

*** p<0.01
** p<0.05
* p<0.1
Figure 2: A classification tree (dendrogram) of interest groups based on the time allocated to various activities in 2012.
Table 2: A typology of organizations based on the performance of various activities in 1996 (deviations from the total mean value for each activity: sign ‘0’ represents values around the total mean; sign ‘-’ represents values below the total mean; sign ‘+’ represents values above the total mean).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>Membership group</th>
<th>Active group</th>
<th>Public group</th>
<th>Passive group</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inner organization***</td>
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<td>++</td>
<td>0-</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3.27</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<td>0-</td>
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<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** p<0.01

** p<0.05

* p<0.1
Table 3: The association between classification in 1996 and 2012 (using absolute values)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1996</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>Membership group</th>
<th>Active group</th>
<th>Public group</th>
<th>Passive group</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>Passive group</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<tr>
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<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Chi-square = 15.894; p = 0.069; Contingency Coefficient = 0.484; Cramer’s V = 0.319

Figure 3: The shift in organizations between typologies
Table 4: The distance between clusters (groups) regarding interest-group activities in 1996 and 2012 (the values in the table represent Euclidian distances between cluster centres)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1996</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>training</td>
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</tr>
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<td>active</td>
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<tr>
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</table>

3 clusters

On data for 1996 classification into three groups is not meaningful.

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>6.945</td>
<td>4.483</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 clusters

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1996</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Active/ training</td>
<td>Membership/ public / passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.011</td>
<td>4.279</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: A typology of interest groups in 2012 and the level of Europeanization (standardized mean values of the Europeanization index)

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public group</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership group</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive group</td>
<td>-0.55</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>