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Virtual Special Issue

European Interest Groups

Guest editor:

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European interest groups have been at the heart of the integration process and the establishment of a distinct European public policy process. As a result there has been a huge number of empirical studies describing the mobilization of economic and social interests at the EU level. However, while the early interest group literature attempted to describe the institutional pull of various Treaty reforms and the Europeanization of interest groups in Brussels from qualitative case studies, in recent years we have observed an explosion of large 'n' confirmatory theory testing.

These new studies have attempted to grapple with the same theoretical issues as their US cousin in exploring the measurement of interest group eco systems, degree of interest group influence, and access of different interest groups across the EU legislative process and between different policy domains. Contributing to these debates, a number of JEPP papers have been seminal in developing our understanding of how the EU multi level and institutional pluralist system operates (see JEPP special issue: Empirical and Theoretical Studies in EU lobbying). The papers selected below, as well as assisting in our understanding of the EU legislative process and MLG, raise a number of important research questions about the logic of collective and direct action, the logic of access and influence, and the logic of venue and alliance shopping.

Finally, drawing on a mix of qualitative and quantitative papers the virtual special issue will be useful to academics looking for topical research questions in EU public policy and the application of mixed research methods, as well as to students and lecturers looking for a state of the art review of the key interest group debates.

[The evolution of the large firm as a political actor in the European Union](#)

David Coen

[Corporate lobbying in the European Union: the logic of access](#)

Pieter Bouwen

[Bringing politics back in: rethinking the role of economic interest groups in European integration](#)

Emiliano Grossman

[What determines influence? Assessing conditions for decision-making influence of interest groups in the EU](#)

Irina Michalowicz

[Critical resource dependencies and the Europeanization of domestic interest groups](#)

Jan Beyers and Bart Kerremans

[Counting organized interests in the European Union: a comparison of data sources](#)

Joost Berkhout and David Lowery