Effective interest representation in the EU

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Agenda

1) The EU political playing field
2) Influencing the institutions: tips and tricks
3) Assignment: make a stakeholder analysis
EU Political Market Characteristics

- Interesting staple market (with interests) lawmaking, financial, commercial, institutional

- Attracting many different interested stake-holders highly divided/strong competition and often well organized

- The miracle of consensus/majority formation whealing and dealing – negotiate-compromise

- Political market with:
  - low predictability
  - high complexity
  - high dynamics
EU Institutions/major centre of political decision-making

Interest groups

Industry/Corporate centre

Largest Press Corps in the World

NGOs & Consumer Groups

Think Tanks
Roles of interest representatives

– **Monitor** - what is happening in the institutions? What are the new policy trends, legal proposals?

– **Analyse** - what could this mean for us nationally or regionally, for specific groups in society? What actions are needed - passive monitoring or active lobbying?

– **Inform** - explain the background of the issue, basic elements of the proposal, the timeframe for action

– **Raise awareness** - ensure that our firm agency or other interest groups understand the implications for them and their issues of this policy or legislation

– **Engage** - encourage debate, exchange of ideas, brainstorm on what should be the goals of the lobbying effort
Roles of the government sector

- **Consult** - gather viewpoints from communities and target groups - particularly those affected by the policy proposal

- **Challenge** - EU policy-makers and other stakeholders to address concerns or provide evidence and arguments for their positions

- **Empower** - provide the tools to influence, e.g. draft letters, briefing documents, attend meetings with policy-makers, etc.

- **Represent** - bringing forward the diversity of voices of civil society, local industry, public interests, improving visibility through the media, etc.

- **Follow-up** - keep up the momentum, follow the policy through to implementation, evaluation and review
Changing landscape for lobbying

Findings from recent ECPA Survey

- Parliament seen as having a 'strong civil society bias'
- Council in particular is not transparent and inaccessible
- Commission and think tanks highly trusted, lawyers not
- Media a legitimate but 'dangerous' lobbying channel
- Effective lobbying requires a more integrated approach involving several stakeholders, including the media
- Rise of new social media, such as blogs, Wikipedia and social networking sites such as Facebook
Influencing the EU: tips and tricks

Influencing by TRIPLE P

PROCEDURES

POSITIONS

PEOPLE
Influencing the Commission

- Kennis van proces en personen
- Feiten en expertise op orde
- Tijdige inzet in voorfase
- Voorstel in voorbereiding
- Gebruik voorkennis-kanalen (andere DGs, kabinet)
- Coalities (andere LS, stakeholders)
- Ambtelijke lobby niet schuwen
- Politieke signalen (doen) afgeven

Weet op tijd wat je wilt van of bij wie!
European Commission

Framing

Formulation stage or evaluation stage

Influence curve: when and where to act
Technical and political issues

Is EC strong or weak? MS / EP support

Rôle is ongoing (withdraw, redraft, opinions)
How does the Commission work?

- **Leidend DG**
  - **ontwerp + impact assessment**
  - **verantwoordelijk Commissaris / Kabinet**

- **interne coördinatie**
  - *(c. 200 interservice groups)*
  - *en Juridische dienst*
  - *Interservice Consultation (ISC)*

- **externe consultaties consultatie documenten, expert groepen, hoorzittingen, seminars etc.**

- **Kabinet Chefs**
- **Secretariaat-Generaal**

**College van Commissarissen**
Proposal in EC

- Competent DG services
- All DGs + Legal Service
- Conflict arbitration
- Cabinets
- Adoption of proposal
- College of Commissioners
- Interservice Consultation
- Drafting

Technical → Political
Guéguen: EC Influence Curve

- Draftsman
- Responsible unit
- DG
- College of Commissioners

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Influencing Commission: tips and tricks

• Commission develops policy but majority of legislation emanates from national level via industry, NGOs, interest groups & EP pressure
• Increasingly, policy dictated by Member States
• Member States will “use and exploit” EU for national interests
• The earlier the better: during their « thinking » stages & during stakeholder dialogue
• Don’t just focus on the obvious DG – other DGs & Services can pull strings
• Play the technical & the politics: bottom-up & top-down approach
• Prepare your dossier extremely well & plan ahead for compromise solutions
• Do you have backing from certain Big Member States (UK/DE/FR/IT/SP/PL) – Commission needs Member State support
Influencing the European Parliament

- Co-legislator
- Elected every five years
- Committees and political groupings
- Political bodies (bureau of the president, etc.)
A Group must have at least 25 members from at least 7 Member States

*As of 1 September 2013
Influencing EP: tips and tricks

- Multilingual (tower of babel)
- Make yourself relevant to them (tick their boxes)
- Build trust, be honest, offer solutions
- Acknowledge MEPs own priorities
- Why should I see you? What needs to be done? How?
Influencing EP: tips and tricks

- MEPs are accessible/need good info/very busy/also have home base politics. MEPs are VERY receptive to good lobbying
- Very political – so know their preferences, voting records etc (www.votewatch.eu)
- Lobby at the right time – your window of opportunity is often only a matter of weeks
- You have 10 minutes to win over an MEP – make it count!
- Play the politics – what is in it for them?
- Who are the key MEPs on the dossier?
- Party Politics - who calls the shots in a political group?
- Political Groups – where is the majority to be found?
- Who are their masters back home?
Council of the EU

• Complex institution
• PermRep offers access to ongoing data
• MS offers influence on positions
• Think QMV
  – Rank issue importance for MS and focus accordingly
• Use, coordinate and manage national networks
• Acknowledge cultural differences
Influencing the Council: tips

• National officials and Ministers in the Council have loyalties to home
• National officials are “invariably” part of the whole decision-making process from pre-proposal stage to adoption by Ministers
• Most difficult institution to lobby as the Administration is closed/un-transparent/PermReps are the voice of national interests/need to lobby in country (use Embassy and/or personal contacts??)
• Remember that they are involved in the process from start to finish and, hence, can be lobbied at all stages
• Brussels-based representations are only the antenna – home is where the power is and, hence, lobbying in country is imperative
• Big countries count –but some small MS can be influential on certain dossiers/more open to persuasion
• Use Member States to put pressure on the Commission and MEPs
Influence curve: Actors

- Drafting
- Commissioner(s) & Cabinet(s)
- DG(s)
- Director(s)
- Head of Unit(s)
- Administrator
- Presidency & Large MS
- Rapporteur & Shadow Rapporteur
  - President, VP & Advisor (EP)
  - Leaders of political groups
  - MEPs
- Rapporteur & Shadow Rapporteurs
- Presidency & large MS
- PermRep & small MS ministries
- Ministries
- Presidency & large MS
- Presidency & rapporteur
- Conciliation
- Time
- 1st Reading
- 2nd Reading
- 1ère lecture
- 2ème lecture
- Rédaction
- 1ère lecture
- 2ème lecture
- Conciliation
- Presidency & Large MS
- Rapporteur & Shadow Rapporteur
- Rapporteur & Shadow Rapporteurs
- Presidency & large MS
- PermRep & small MS ministries
- Ministries
Key Actors

- Commission
  - Commissioners
  - Cabinets
  - Director Generals
  - Directors & Heads of Units
  - Desk Officers
- Council
  - Other MS (Ministers; officials)
  - Other Permanent Representations
  - Secretariat Directors & Desk Officers
- Parliament
  - President & Bureau
  - Committee Chairs, Rapporteurs & Group Shadows
  - Political groups / MEPs /Assistants
  - EP secretariat esp. Committee staff
Council Adoption
Commission (amendments)
Parliament (2nd reading)
Council = Common Position
COREPER
Council Working Group
Commission (revision)
Parliament (1st reading)
Council Working Group
Commission proposal
More Machiavelli in Brussels. THE ART OF LOBBYING THE EU
By Rinus Van Schendelen

THE FIRST PRACTICAL BOOK ON EUROPEAN LOBBYING METHODOLOGY!
By Daniel Guéguen (EUR 50.00)

SURVIVAL GUIDE TO EU LOBBYING, INCLUDING THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA
By Caroline De Cock (EUR 14,95, ISBN 9789059724402)

HOW TO WORK THE EU INSTITUTIONS.
Edited By Alan Hardcare
EUR 30,00