



Interest group influence in the European Union

How important is access to the European Parliament for an interest group to successfully lobby at EU level? A comparison of different factors that can influence the EU decision-making process.

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Executive summary

Interest groups play a big role in the functioning of the democracy of the EU. These players that lobby for different interests can make a positive, but also a negative contribution to EU politics. The influence of the interest groups on the EU institutions can vary, and some will always be more influential than others. What this phenomenon exactly is, and how it can be achieved, is not always clear. Therefore, several scholars have tried to analyse influence and have examined what other factors play a role. Scholars such as Jan Beyers, Adreas Dür and Pieter Bouwen, have attempted to measure influence by concentrating on access, resources, external factors, and alternative strategies used by interest groups (Bouwen, 2002). Furthermore they have tried to find methods to measure influence, such as process tracing and assessing the degree of preference attainment (Dür, 2008b). By using different approaches, the scholars in the literature review have all concluded that an interest group needs access to political actors to be successful and influential (Beyers, 2004). Therefore, the objective of this dissertation was to determine if the access is really the most crucial component for interest group influence, and what role other circumstances can play in this phenomenon.

This dissertation concentrated on the different theories by the scholars. After reading the articles by the scholars, four hypotheses was constructed, and a method to measure influence was selected. The hypotheses derived from the literature stated that:

1. Resources are very important to be influential,
2. The organisational structure of interest groups contributes to the strategies used,
3. Access to politicians is crucial for interest groups to successfully lobby at EU level,
4. When interest groups have access, they find it unnecessary to use other strategies.

The influence was measured and the hypotheses were tested by conducting a case study, in which several interviews with three interest groups were conducted. These organisations, FIA, FEMA and ACEM, lobbied the European Commission and the European Parliament, during the decision-making process of the regulation on the type approval and marked surveillance of two and three-wheeled vehicles and quadricycles. The proposal of this regulation was published in 2010 by the European Commission, and the final regulation was adopted in 2012. To detect influence, the preferences of the interest groups were considered and compared with the content of the final adopted regulation. Additionally, the case study

was used to find the reason behind that influence. The combination of the information gained from the case study, the interviews, and more desk research allowed to answering the hypotheses and detect the interest groups' influence.

The findings of the case study confirmed that access is the most critical element for an interest group to successfully lobby at EU level, and especially the European Parliament. The findings showed that resources are important, but when those resources are not used at the right time and the right place, they do not make a difference. Additionally all three interest groups had personal contact with the political actors and have used information from their members Clubs or companies to gain access. Access was also gained because according to the interviewees, the political actors, especially in the European Parliament, were open to discuss the issues with them. Apart from access, the interest groups also used other strategies, but argued that, because they already had direct contact with the political actors, those strategies were considered to be less important. Almost all interest groups were able to gain influence, and edit or keep a certain topic in the regulation. Therefore it could be said that, to a certain extent, the interest groups were successful, and that this success was achieved by having direct contact with the political actors and by knowing at what time and what place other strategies and resources could be used. Because in the end, lobbying is all about knowing the right people, having the right resources and using those at the right time and place in the legislative process.

List of abbreviations

ABS:	Anti-lock Braking System
ACEM :	Association des Constructeurs Européens de Motocycles
CBS:	Combined Brake System
DG ENTR:	Directorate-General Enterprise
DG MOVE:	Directorate-General Mobility and Transport
EP :	European Parliament
EC :	European Commission
FEMA:	Federation for European Motorcyclists' Associations
FIA:	Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile
MS:	Member State
MEP:	Member of the European Parliament
RMI:	Repair and Maintenance Information
UK:	United Kingdom

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1. Introduction

As stated by Jan Beyers, joining a swimming club is rather apolitical, but when that swimming club is trying to lobby the local government to improve or maintain the swimming pool, this swimming club can be seen as a political actor (Beyers, Eising, & Maloney, 2008). Interest groups in that sense are political actors but do not participate in elections. Interest organisations represent interests of different kinds, in different sectors, and at different levels of government. Interest groups in the EU play an important role in the functioning of the EU democracy, and represent the interests of EU citizens and businesses in Europe. Interest groups can make a positive contribution to EU politics, and can inform and help politicians with their work (Dür & De Bièvre, 2008). On the other hand, lobbying can also negatively influence the EU decision-making process, when these interest groups prevent the political actors from working honestly and efficiently (Dür & De Bièvre, 2008). By using different strategies, interest groups try to influence the decisions made in EU politics, according to their interests. At the same time, there are always interest groups with more influence than others.

Few have tried to measure and explore this influence. This dissertation will concentrate on several theories of influence by scholars such as Jan Beyers, Pieter Bouwen and Andreas Dür, who all have studied influence in the EU. These scholars have sought to clarify the phenomenon of influence, by focussing on access and the exchange of access goods, and by considering voice strategies and public ways of lobbying. Others have tried to investigate how influence can actually be measured and have defined a method that could be used for this dissertation. After these theories have been considered, they will be applied to a case study on interest groups. These groups represent interests in the transport sector at EU level, and lobbied the European Commission and the European Parliament, during the process of the regulation on the approval and market surveillance of two- or three- wheel vehicles and quadricycles. The interest groups in the case study represent consumers, and manufacturers at EU level. With the case study, the dissertation will concentrate on three interest groups, and will firstly consider their preferences and lobbying goals. Additionally, the strategies of the interest groups will be considered and finally, their preferences will be compared with what the final regulation contained. By interviewing the three interest groups, FIA, FEMA and ACEM, it will be possible to have a look at what influence strategy could be the most effective to influence the European Parliament. By combining the information from the theory and the findings of the case study, this dissertation will determine if access, or

maybe another strategy, is the most critical to influence the decision-making process in the European Commission, and especially in the European Parliament. It will also define what other factors play a role in the influence of interest groups. Finally, the research should lead to an answer to the research question: How important is access to the European Parliament for an interest group to successfully lobby at EU level?

2. Literature Review

In this chapter the literature on the subject of measuring the degree of influence by interest groups¹, will be discussed. Several scholars have researched influence on the decision-making procedure of the EU, and have determined how influence can be measured. Firstly, they have tried to find the right methods for measuring influence, such as case studies and quantitative research. With the three ways of measuring influence by Andreas Dür as a basis, different scholars have attempted to measure influence. Additionally, others have sought to explain influence by looking at specific strategies such as access and voice. Pieter Bouwen concentrated on access, how access can be gained, by which interest groups, and to which institutions (Bouwen, 2002). These theories of access as an exchange of access goods, in turn, have evolved in theories on voice and access. Jan Beyers for example examines more public ways of lobbying, such as protests and press conferences, and considered how these strategies could influence the decision-making process. Voice strategies were later referred to as “outside lobbying” by Andreas Dür (Dür, 2008b), or “outsider strategies” by Reiner Eising (Eising, 2007). While not all of the existing literature are as clear and concrete on what the exact outcomes of using the proposed strategies are, they do have in common that they each attempt to clarify why certain interest groups can have more influence than others. Based on the literature, several hypotheses will be constructed, to summarize the main points of the scholars.

2.1 Lobbying in the EU

At the beginning of the EU integration, interest groups did not play a big role in politics. The only interest groups present at that time, were mainly economically motivated (Beyers, Eising, & Maloney, 2008). Only in the most recent years, interest groups with different kinds of interests are playing a role in decisions made at EU level (Beyers, Eising, & Maloney, 2008). Today, interest groups are essential for EU citizens to represent their needs and opinions in EU politics. In different ways, these interest groups can improve EU politics, when their interests are equal to the citizens’ needs and prevent domination of the governing elite

¹ The term “interest group” can be defined as a group that tries to influence policy makers and the policy-making process without being a member of a political group.

(Dür & De Bièvre, 2008). Simultaneously, interest groups' pressure on policy-makers can also negatively influence the efficiency of the decision-making process, because there are many trying to lobby for different purposes, or because some groups are more dominant than others (Dür & De Bièvre, 2008). According to Rainer Eising, interest representation benefits from the EU political system, because its cultural and regional differences allow for a big variety of interest groups to be represented at different levels (Eising, 2008). Additionally, interest groups have different opportunities to represent their interests in the multi-level system of the EU (Eising, 2008). Over the years, the power of the different institutions has developed (Eising, 2008). The European Parliament for example, has changed from an institution with no substantial power, to an important legislative actor in the EU (Eising, 2008). These shifts also force interest groups to adjust their lobbying strategies, in order to influence the decision-making process (Eising, 2008). Many say that EU politics is biased, because resources are unequally distributed among interest groups. Interest groups that represent companies for example, have more resources than organisations representing refugees or the disabled (Beyers, Eising, & Maloney, 2008). It is also argued, that the system is biased towards specific and economic interests, rather than diffuse interests (Beyers, Eising, & Maloney, 2008). However, according to Beyers, the growth of groups with more diffuse interest, has contributed to a more democratic system (Beyers, Eising, & Maloney, 2008). To examine if the biases and other statements about interest groups are true, several scholars have firstly attempted to consider what influence is, and how it can be measured.

2.2 Influence

According to Andreas Dür and Dirk de Bièvre, the most common statement made about interest group influence is that the more resources are the organisation or company has, the more influence it will be able to have on the policy-makers (Dür & De Bièvre, 2008). However, a small interest group with little resources probably has less people to represent the organisation (Dür, 2008b). On the other hand, a large interest group might have more layers and a bigger variety of interests within the organisation (Dür, 2008b). Resources can be money, information on citizens' interests, or expertise on policy-issues and technical subjects (Dür & De Bièvre, 2008). Additionally, influence can also depend on the type of organisation, and the interest it represents, such as diffuse interest, or concentrated interest (Dür & De Bièvre, 2008). It appears that organisations with diffuse interest have less influence, but when the subject of the issue is more salience, interest groups with this type of interest, can actually benefit (Dür & De Bièvre, 2008). On the other hand, the more technical

the issue is, the more influence interest groups with specific interests can have, since they can provide expert information on these issues (Dür & De Bièvre, 2008). Finally, the strategy can change with the issue, and interest groups have to choose the right strategy at the right time (Dür & De Bièvre, 2008). Irina Michalowitz, relates influence to power, and argues that influence could be seen as a form of power (Michalowitz, 2007). Using the term “conflict” to determine influence, she states that it depends on what the interest group wants to change (Michalowitz, 2007). According to her, if it wants to change the core of a legislation, a conflict may arise (Michalowitz, 2007). If an interest group wants to change certain details of a legislation, that do not have big resistance of other stakeholders, the interest group could be able to be influential without any conflicts (Michalowitz, 2007). She identifies the adjustment of details, as ‘technical influence’ (Michalowitz, 2007). As argued by Michalowitz, it is also important, to consider the interest of the policy-makers, because the more similar interests they have with a certain interest group, the more influence an interest group will have (Michalowitz, 2007). Additionally, an interest group might not even need to have that much influence, because their position is already represented by the policy maker. In that case, there is a low degree of conflict, and therefore, there is a high degree of influence. So the less conflict there is, the more influence can be gained by an interest group (Michalowitz, 2007). Influence stays a vague concept, and it is difficult to know what influence exactly is, and how one can find out why one interest group has more influence than the other. Therefore, some have addressed methods that could measure influence and have examined how influence can be characterised.

Hypothesis 1: The organisation or company with the most resources will have the most influence.

2.3 Measuring influence

Dür defines three methods to measure influence: process tracing, assessing attributed influence, and assessing the degree of preference attainment (Dür, 2008c). Two of these approaches are based upon qualitative research, and the other, on quantitative research. The first method, process tracing, attempts to find the relationship between interest groups’ access to decision-makers, and the outcome of the final decisions made (Dür, 2008a). This technique, can be used to identify the influence of a specific interest group (Dür, 2008c). The benefit of using this kind of method is, that the outcome will determine if the interest group had influence (Dür, 2008c). Furthermore, the best way to execute process tracing is by

interviewing the interest groups, which gives more detailed information on different developments (Dür, 2008c). Secondly, assessing attributed influence, by using surveys, can provide more general information and quantitative data (Dür, 2008c). Finally, assessing the degree of preference attainment focusses on the political outcomes and the distance between the outcome legislation, and the ideal result for the interest group (Dür, 2008c). The outcome of the wants of the interest group and the final outcome of the process can show the degree of influence (Dür, 2008c). This method enables researchers to find influence even if nothing really visible happened, but the outcome is still visible and can therefore be analysed (Dür, 2008c). Taking the theory of Dür into account, Michalowitz, in her research on different cases in the transport sector, uses assessing the degree of preference attainment, by concentrating different interest groups, what their lobby aim was, what they have done to achieve it, and what the final outcome of the legislation was (Michalowitz, 2007). Adam Chalmers measures influence by concentrating on the information processing ability of interest groups (Chalmers, 2011). By conducting interviews and surveys, Chalmers has tried to specify how influence can be measured best (Chalmers, 2011). According to him, the problem with measuring influence could be solved, not by concentrating on how it can be measured, but by re-evaluating the nature of influence (Chalmers, 2011). Therefore he focusses on influence as a “function of an interest group’s information processing capacity” (Chalmers, 2011, p. 483). Just as Michalowitz, Heike Klüver recognises the methods for measuring influence identified by Dür, and in her research, assesses the degree of preference attainment (Klüver, 2011). According to Klüver, this method offers several advantages (Klüver, 2011). According to Klüver, this technique allows to objectively compare the influence of interest groups by focussing on preferences and the policy outcomes (Klüver, *Lobbying in the European Union*, 2013). As stated by Klüver, this method measures perceived influence, instead of actual influence (Klüver, 2011).

2.4 Access and inside lobbying

Pieter Bouwen argues that, the power of lobbying lays in the exchange of “access goods” (Bouwen, 2002). Bouwen claims that, access goods of lobbying organisations contain valuable information for EU decision-making process (Bouwen, 2002). In order to gain access to the EU institutions, such as the European Parliament, interest organisations need to have the access goods that are required by the key politicians (Bouwen, 2002). Access however, does not always mean that an interest group is successful at lobbying, but access does play a significant role in many of cases (Bouwen, 2002). According to Bouwen, there

are three access goods: technical expertise, information about European Encompassing Interests (EEI), and information about the Domestic Encompassing Interests (DEI) (Bouwen, 2001). All the three access goods are related to information, because that is identified as the most valuable access good for politicians (Bouwen, 2001). On the contrary, Jan Beyers, sees operational and technical information as the most substantial access good in the decision-making process, and does not really define other access goods (Beyers, 2004). To measure influence, Beyers concentrates on two types of methods, voice and access (Beyers, 2004). Additionally, Andreas Dür also argues the importance of technical information over other information (Dür, 2008b). On the other hand, he also describes the importance of the information by domestic actors, which in the eyes of Bouwen, could be seen as information about Domestic Encompassing Interest (Dür, 2008b) (Bouwen, 2002).

Hypothesis 2: The organisational structure of the interest group determines which strategy is used.

Backing his theory on the three access goods, Bouwen claims that the organisational structure of an interest group plays a critical role in determining which access good can be offered (Bouwen, 2002). Bouwen defines three main organisational forms: individual firms, associations, and consultants at national or EU level, which each can provide one of the access goods (Bouwen, 2002). Just like Bouwen, Beyers, while less specific, also defines organisational forms, but in this case to determine which interest groups, are more likely to use voice strategies and which interest groups use access strategies (Beyers, Eising, & Maloney, 2008). Dür, similarly to Bouwen and Beyers, states that the kind of resources an organisation has, depends on the type of the organisation (Dür, 2008b). Aspects, such as the amount and the type of members of an interest group, the size, and the and the monetary resources play a role in the degree of access, negatively or positively (Dür, 2008b). The capacity to supply the resources and the demand of the resources by the policy makers determines the degree of influence an interest group can have (Dür, 2008b). However, unlike Bouwen and Beyers, who are concreted on the degree of influence, and access an interest group can have (Bouwen, 2002) (Beyers, 2004), Dür is more vague, and argues that it is difficult to really determine the exact degree of influence that can be gained (Dür, 2008b).

Apart from the type of access goods, Bouwen argues that the quality, quantity and efficiency of the provision play very important roles in the degree of access (Bouwen, 2002). The last is also argued by Jan Beyers, who states that, "actors seeking access (...) have to deliver

credible and valid expertise” (Beyers, 2004, p. 213). He, just as Bouwen, sees access as something that relates to an exchange of some kind (Beyers, 2004). Beyers defines, “access as the exchange of policy-relevant information with public officials through formal or informal networks” (Beyers, 2004, p. 213). Moreover, Rainer Eising, also expresses the importance of the type of exchange good to gain access (Eising, 2007). Additionally, Dür argues that access does not always mean influence, and only looking at access as a proxy for influence, would not be enough (Dür, 2008b). Eising states as well that access cannot be seen as equal to influence (Eising, 2007). However, he does argue that contact with key players is crucial to at least have input in EU policies. In his text, he concentrates on how important access is by looking at the institutional context, resources dependencies and associational structures and strategies (Eising, 2007). Finally, after conducting a survey among public organisations, businesses and professional associations, Dür and Mateo, advise especially businesses, to use inside strategies over voice strategies, while for public organisations and professional associations they recommend using voice tactics as well as inside lobbying (Dür & Mateo, 2013).

Hypothesis 3: Access is the most important strategy for influencing the decision-making process at EP level, therefore the interest groups will mostly rely on access strategies to gain influence.

2.4 Voice and outside lobbying

Apart from access, Beyers additionally discusses voice strategies, such as demonstrations and press conferences (Beyers, 2004). According to Beyers, even if voice tactics are not always ignored by all players, access strategies should be a priority of interest groups (Beyers, 2004). Hence, as argued by Beyers, most established interest organisations use access strategies over voice strategies. Only when they are not listened to, these interest groups use voice strategies (Beyers, 2004). Similar to Beyers, Dür defines voice as a way to have influence on the decisions made (Dür, 2008b). He claims that apart from trying to influence the process with information and other resources, there are also interest groups that use their resources to shape the public opinion, and the public actors’ opinion in that case as well (Dür, 2008b). They do this by arguing instead of bargaining, in which information or other resources are not exchanged to access but to convince (Dür, 2008b). However, the most important aspect of resources is that they have to be used at the right place and the right time, when decision-makers need it the most (Dür, 2008b). According to Eising, voice,

or outsider strategies are not used a lot by European organisations, since most of them have inside relations with politicians, and do not want to jeopardise any of those relationships (Eising, 2007)s. Nonetheless, he states that when used at the right time, outsider strategies can be effective and could even improve access and influence (Eising, 2007). Nevertheless, these strategies should not be used too frequently, and thus it could be difficult for lobbying organisations to find a balance between using insider and outsider strategies (Eising, 2007).

As stated by Beyers, interest groups that lack a well-defined and concentrated constituency, and represent general and diffuse interests, are more likely to use voice strategies, because they are “disadvantaged in the policy process” (Beyers, 2004, p. 216), while organisations with ‘specific’ interests tend to use access strategies, because they are more competent to acquire resources and expert information (Beyers, 2004). However, it still depends on the subject and the salience of policy subject to determine which strategy would be more effective (Dür, 2008b) (Dür & Mateo, 2013). Moreover, there are several outside strategies that can be seen as relatively cheap when compared to some inside strategies (Dür & Mateo, 2013). According to Dür and Mateo, citizen groups and public representations should benefit more from voice strategies when comparing these groups with business associations and companies (Dür & Mateo, 2013). Yet, overall, in EU politics, it seems that voice strategies are less popular than access strategies (Dür, 2008b). This might be because most of the time voice strategies are more expensive than inside lobbying for example (Dür, 2008b).

Hypothesis 4: Interest groups that can easily access the political actors will not use voice strategies

2.5 Influencing the European Parliament

On the side of the political actors, Bouwen looks at three institutions, the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission in his theory (Bouwen, 2002). Since this dissertation only concentrates on access to the European Commission, but especially to the European Parliament, only his theory on that last institution will be addressed. According to Bouwen, for the European Parliament, information on European Encompassing Interests is the primary dependency, followed by Information on Domestic Encompassing Interests and finally Expert Knowledge (Bouwen, 2002). So after analysing the three access goods, the supply of the access goods by interest groups, and the demand of the access goods by the institutions, Bouwen concludes that in the case of the European Parliament, associations

that can offer EEI, in theory will most likely have most access to this institution (Bouwen, 2002). On the contrary, according to Beyers, after conducting interviews with different interest groups, diffuse or specific interest groups, it seems that in practice, most interest groups seek mostly contact with the European Parliament (Beyers, 2004).

When concentrating on influencing the European Parliament, it can be stated that because the MEPs can be elected, their ability to be influenced by interest groups might be limited, since they have to follow a certain position that was stated during the elections, for which they can later be punished by the voters, if they do not keep the same position (Dür, 2008b). Beyers acknowledges that every institution demands a different kind of access good and political strategy (Beyers, 2004). According to Beyers, the European Parliament seeks for technical expertise, but is most importantly interested in a pretty broad range of interests, since it represents all citizens of the EU, and thus gives access to organisations with diffuse interests (Beyers, 2004). Although, Beyers does argue, that institutions, in this case the European Parliament, in practice, does not only rely on one kind of interest representation, but on a variety of interest groups (Beyers, 2004). By comparing the received information, the MEPs try to avoid uncertainty about the information they obtain from the interest groups (Beyers, 2004). Nevertheless, both Beyers and Bouwen also recognise that organisations or companies with a broader interest, such as associations or diffuse interest groups, are most likely to have access to the European Parliament (Beyers, 2004) (Bouwen, 2002).

After conducting a survey among different associations, European and national, Eising, unlike Bouwen, states that the European Parliament, as a target for lobbying, is not as important as the European Commission for European associations (Eising, 2007). The European Parliament however, is obtaining more power, and thus becomes more important (Eising, 2007). According to Eising, when considering the institutional context of the European Parliament, it seems that these politicians are more open to diffuse interests, such as representations of the environment and consumer protection, which is also stated by Bouwen and Beyers (Bouwen, 2002) (Beyers, 2004). As argued by Eising, the most important actors for lobbyists to address, are the chairs, rapporteurs and shadow rapporteurs of the standing committee on a particular subject (Eising, 2007). Dür emphasises the complexity of EU politics, as difficult for interest groups and their lobbying strategies, because they have so many different institutions they can address and, times when they can lobby (Dür, 2008b). Hence, he similarly finds it important, that besides trying to actively influence the EU institutions, it is also important for an interest group to enlarge the group

and draw new members, especially when addressing the European Parliament (Dür, 2008b). However, Eising on the other hand, claims that density of memberships influences the degree of access negatively, especially at the European Parliament. According to Eising, resources are crucial, and for example spending resources and specialising in interest representation, would improve the degree of access to the European Parliament (Eising, 2007).

2.6 Conclusion

When considering the theories on lobbying in the EU, concentrated on access and voice, or in other words inside and outside lobbying, it can be concluded that access seems to be more effective and therefore mostly used by interest groups. The difference is that not all scholars agree on how much influence can be gained through access. While Bouwen's arguments seem very certain and clear, on which kind of organisations has access to which kind of institution (Bouwen, 2001), Dür and Eising for example, argue that access does not always mean influence (Dür, 2008b) (Eising, 2007). Most scholars agree that the interest groups with the most resources will have the most influence. Yet, they also emphasise that resources are not effective, if they are not the right resources, and if they are not offered at the right time, to the right person (Dür, 2008b) (Eising, 2007). In the attempt to measure influence, it seems that there are three ways influence can be measured (Dür, 2008c). As identified by Dür, assessing the preference attainment of an interest group would be the most appropriate to measure interest group influence (Dür, 2008a). In terms of the European Parliament, where the most essential goal for lobbyists is to alter the existing legislation and to try to influence those crucial politicians or assistants, interest groups can use access strategies and voice strategies at the same time (Eising, 2007). Unlike the European Commission, which concentrates more on technical information, the European Parliament is much more interested in interest groups with broad interests and that have information on domestic and European issues (Bouwen, 2002). It can be argued that the theories have evolved, this can be seen by the fact that later the scholars do not only define access as influence, but also voice strategies or outside lobbying. So on the whole, when considering the research question, it can be concluded that resources play an important role in interest group influence, that the organisational structure decides which strategy is used, but most importantly, that access in theory, is critical for an interest group to influence the decision-making process, especially at European Parliament level, but when well-balanced that both access and voice can be effective.

3. Methodology

This chapter will focus on the methods that have been applied to find the information necessary for answering the research question: How important is access to the European Parliament for an interest group to successfully lobby at EU level? A comparison of different factors that can influence the EU decision-making process. In this chapter the different research methods that have been used, will be explained. Furthermore, this section will justify why certain methods such as interviews, desk research and a case study have been used to answer the research question, and the hypotheses drawn from the desk research. For the methodology chapter, several books and articles have been used to explain why certain methods have been applied. Additionally, the research methods will also be linked to the literature and the scholars from the literature review who have used the same methods as have been applied to this research.

The subject of this dissertation was interesting, because this is such an little known subject for a lot of people. Furthermore, many do not understand what interest groups exactly do, and what role they play in EU politics. When talking about interest group influence many think that only the big companies with a lot of money and resources are always the ones to be the most influential. Furthermore, not many have analysed interest group influence. Therefore, it seemed interesting to concentrate what those scholars find the most important element for influence and ask interest groups what, according to them is critical to be successful. By looking at the theory, the interviews and the case study, it was possible to determine the most important factor for influence, and why one interest has more influence than others.

3.1 The research

The aim of the research was to know how interest groups that lobby for a particular purpose are able to have an effect on the decision-making procedure of the European Union, how they do it, and what methods they use to finally reach their goal. Because influence is a broad term, the dissertation focussed on different theories of influence, what it is, and how it can be measured, and defined, by focussing on access and voice strategies. In the first stage of the research, desk research, was the most important method. Additionally, after reading the different academic articles and books, and all the information about the different methods for influencing the decision-making process was obtained, the case study could be

conducted. To conduct the case study, the Regulation on the approval and market surveillance of two- or three- wheel vehicles and quadricycles was researched. This regulation was proposed by the European Commission in 2010, and was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council in 2012. The case study concentrated on the decision-making process in the European Commission and the European Parliament. To see which methods have been used by the interest groups, several interviews with the interest groups involved in the process of this regulation had to be conducted. The best way to see if their methods have been successful was by assessing the degree of preference attainment. With this technique, the process of the legislation, from the proposal by the European Commission until the adoption of the regulation was assessed, to see where the interest groups have been able change or not change the legislation according to their preference. In the event of the case study in this dissertation, only the process in the European Commission and the European Parliament could be addressed.

3.2 Methods to analyse influence

While lobbying and interest group influence is important for the democracy of the European Union, not many have tried to measure the influence of the interest groups. Among the few who have tried to measure influence, Andreas Dür identifies three methods for measuring influence: process tracing, assessing attributed influence, and assessing the degree of preference attainment (Dür, 2008c). For this dissertation, only the last method for measuring influence has been applied. Therefore, the influence of the interest groups has been measured by following the decision-making process of the European Commission and the European Parliament and by comparing the preference of the interest groups with the content of the final regulation. This method has been chosen because it would be the most appropriate method, taking the time and the length of this dissertation into account. Furthermore, this method has also been used by others to measure influence in the transport sector. Irina Michalowitz for instance, concentrates on interest group influence in the transport sector. As stated by Michalowitz, the road transport sector knows a variety of interest representations, such as small and medium enterprises, small public interest representations and big powerful associations (Michalowitz, 2007). Assessing the degree of preference attainment is a method that could be used in many cases and helped with objectively measuring the influence by the organisations. According to Heike Klüver, certain problems around this method may occur and it could be difficult to really determine the preference of the interest groups and their final influence (Klüver, 2013). However, as stated

before, after conducting the interviews and personally asking the organisation about their preference, the preference of the interest groups could be determined.

3.3 Hypotheses

From the literature on influence and measuring influence, four hypotheses have been constructed that would help with answering the research question. Hypotheses have also been used by Dür and de Bièvre in their text on measuring influence (Dür & De Bièvre, 2008). After almost each subject in the literature review a hypothesis has been created. The first hypothesis was: *The organisation or company with the most resources will have the most influence*. It is argued by many scholars, that the organisation or company with the most resources will likely have the most influence (Dür & De Bièvre, 2008). This topic was interesting to look at, since the interest groups the case study was based upon, have different sources. As stated by Bouwen and Beyers in the literature, the organisational structure of an interest organisation or company, affects the type of “access goods” that can be offered, or what kind of strategy can be used by the organisations (Bouwen, 2002). Therefore, the second hypothesis mentioned that: *The organisational structure of the interest groups decides what influence strategy is used*. The most important hypothesis and related to the main research question, was drawn from the different arguments of the researchers in the literature review. All the scholars from the literature argue that in the end, access is the most crucial strategy for an interest group to be influential. Hypothesis three therefore stated that: *Access is the most important strategy for influencing the decision-making process at EP level, therefore the interest groups will mostly rely on access strategies to gain influence*. The last hypothesis argued that: *Interest groups that can easily access the political actors, will not use voice strategies*. This last hypothesis was based on the theory of the scholars on how voice strategies are used by interest group. All these hypotheses drawn from the literature were tested by conducting a case study that involved different kinds of interest groups, with different resources and lobbying activities. The research of the hypotheses was based on desk research, the interviews and the case study.

Hypothesis 1: The organisation or company with the most resources will have the most influence.

For the first hypothesis, concentrated on the resources of the organisations, their budget, the members and the size of the interest groups involved. By using the transparency register of the European Union, in which all interest groups that have access to the European institutions are registered, the resources have been examined. This register provides information on the budget, the type of organisation and other information on the interest groups. Subsequently, the interest groups were interviewed about their influence and what resources they have used to gain influence, such as technical, domestic and European information from their member, money and other resources. The most important source of information that was used to answer this hypothesis was desk research, and the interviews with the interest groups.

Hypothesis 2: The organisational structure of the interest group determines which strategy is used.

It has been argued by the scholars in the literature, that the organisational structure of the interest groups plays a big role in what strategy is used by the interest group and how interest groups work. To see if this theory can be confirmed, the organisational structures of the interest groups have been analysed, through desk research and by asking the interviewees about their organisational structure and their members, and how it influences the decisions made by the interest groups.

Hypothesis 3: Access is the most important strategy for influencing the decision-making process at European Parliament level, therefore the interest groups will mostly rely on access strategies to gain influence

For the third hypothesis, the importance of access for interest groups was the central issue. The literature clearly stated that access and contact with politicians is crucial for an interest group to be successful. To see if this can be confirmed, interest groups have been asked in the interview what their most important lobby activity was and how effective it was. They furthermore were asked if they had any contact with political actors, especially in the European Parliament. To obtain the answer to this hypothesis, the interview was the most important source.

Hypothesis 4: Interest groups that can easily access the political actors will not use voice strategies

According to the scholars of the literature review, when an interest group already has access, it will not use other strategies such as voice. This is because voice strategies are more expensive, or it could disadvantage interest groups with close contacts. Interviewees were asked what strategies were the most important, which other strategies were used by the interest group during the process, and what the motivation was for the interest group to use certain strategies over others. For this hypothesis, interviews with the interest group have been utilised and were the central source.

3.4 Qualitative approach

This dissertation was based upon qualitative research, which allowed to have a qualitative approach to the issue of influence, and to interpret what the most important factors are, to influence the decision-making process of the EU at EP level. Different from quantitative research, it is argued that qualitative research looks for the “*why*” or “*what*” in the issue, rather than “*how many*” for example (Patton & Cochran, 2002). In this case, the central method for influencing the decision-making process at EP and EC level had to be assessed, by using a case study. Furthermore, qualitative research looks at the different circumstances that influence a certain issue. It tries to explore a certain phenomenon (Patton & Cochran, 2002). A qualitative approach emphasises the conditions, such as political and historical, that can influence the phenomenon. In this case, the phenomenon that has been explored was influence of interest groups in EU politics.

Even though the dissertation is based upon measuring something, which is mostly seen as quantitative, the methods used for measuring influence were qualitative (Patton & Cochran, 2002). Because the positions and views of the different interest groups had to be understood, it was not appropriate to use quantitative research, since more in depth information was needed, rather than a number of answers for example. Qualitative research generally includes small samples of cases (Gilbert, 2008). This dissertation was based upon one case with different stakeholders and examined their lobbying goals and activities, by interviewing them, and by researching their degree of preference attainment in relation to the European Parliament and the European Commission. A difficulty related to using a qualitative approach, is when used on a small scale, it might not be able to provide a general answer to

the issue. However when theory that has already been tested is used, qualitative research can provide a good answer to a question (Patton & Cochran, 2002).

3.5 Research methods

3.5.1 Desk research

The basis of the research was desk research. Desk research provided background information, for the case study and the interviews. Both the case study and the interviews have been based on the theory from the desk research, from methods to measure influence to theory on influence strategies. This theoretical background was gained by reading several academic articles and books that concentrated on the influence of interest groups on the decision-making process of the EU, through access to key-players or voice strategies. The theory additionally focussed on how the influence can be measured. Apart from that, to gain more information on the positions, strategies, and methods of the interest groups, different non-academic articles written by the interest group, on the regulation, such as position papers and press releases have been consulted. Other important documents that have been used to successfully answer the research question were the proposal by the European Commission, and the final regulation on the approval and market surveillance of two- or three- wheel vehicles and quadricycles. The proposal and the final regulation were used to find evidence of interest group influence, by comparing the European Commission proposal with the final adopted regulation. These documents furthermore provided background information on the legislation, which could be used for the interviews with the interest groups. Desk research was one of the most essential research methods. A weakness of these methods was that theories on influence and measuring influence were discussed in great detail by the scholars, and because this dissertation could not be too long only a few aspect could be selected.

3.5.2 Case study

To test the theory presented of the scholars in the literature review, a sample case has been used. The case study concentrated on one piece of legislation, a recently adopted regulation on the approval and market surveillance of two- or three- wheel vehicles and quadricycles (European Parliament, 2012). By following the legislative process of the regulation, and combining theory on influence with the information gained from the different interest groups,

this case study has proven how important access is as a method for influencing the decision-making process. Especially following the interest groups' role, methodology, and degree of access during the legislative process, and comparing those factors with the final piece of legislation, was crucial to measure the influence and answer the hypotheses in the case study.

The case study allowed combining theory on access and influence, and the data of the interviews on using these methods in practice. For the case study different kinds of methods were presented to the interest groups, with access as the most prominent method. Additionally, the interest groups were asked which methods have been proven to be most effective to influence of the regulation. Moreover, the organisational structure of the interest groups, the members they represent, and their resources were considered. According to the literature, those aspects have an impact on the strategies interest groups choose and what kind of information they can offer political actors (Bouwen, 2002) (Beyers, 2004). One weakness of the case study subject of the regulation contained technical information that was sometimes difficult to understand. Also, not every detail of the regulation could be discussed, but just the most important subjects for the interest groups.

3.5.3 The case

The case researched in this dissertation was based upon the regulation on the type approval and marked surveillance of two and three-wheeled vehicles and quadricycles and the interest groups involved in this issue. This case concentrated on the decision-making process in the European Commission and the European Parliament, and the interest groups from the motorcycle, or automotive sector. This subject was suitable for the case study because it involves different kinds of interests that are interesting to compare. The amount of lobbyists on the topic of motorcycles is much less than on a topic such as healthcare or other topics that concern a broader audience. However, the interest groups involved in this subject are very different, not only in the kind of interests they represent but also in the amount of resources they have. Therefore the subject of this case study was interesting to look at because it allowed comparing three very different interest groups and their resources, organisational structure, strategies and influence.

3.5.4 Semi-structured interviews

A semi-structured interview is an interview that follows major questions asked by the interviewer, but what differentiates a semi-structured interview from a structured interview, is that it is open to changes during the interview and the interviewer can go into more detail when a certain topic is interesting (Fielding & Thomas, 2008). A semi-structured interview is the best method when using a qualitative research approach. A semi-structured interview has been conducted, because the important questions could be asked, but there was also the freedom to go deeper into a certain topic when it seemed interesting or when clarifications were needed. Because the research was based on a sample case, a semi-structured interview was the best approach to interview the organisations. With the semi-structured interviews, the perspectives of the different interest groups of the case could be identified. A weakness of a semi structure interview was, a variation could be found between the times of the different interviews, from twenty minutes to one hour and a half. Furthermore, when using a semi-structure interview, it is easier to deviate from the central topic. Nevertheless, all the necessary information was attained, because the central questions were followed.

3.5.5 The interview sample

The sample case for this dissertation comprised of three interest groups representing different kinds of interests at EU level. As a part of the case study, three interviews with interest groups in the transport sector were conducted. These interest groups were involved in the legislative process of the Regulation on the approval and market surveillance of two- or three- wheel vehicles and quadricycles. The interviews and the case study were concentrated on the transport sector because there are different kinds of interest representations active in this field, such as car manufacturers, and different kinds of rider representations. These organisations were FEMA, the organisation of European motorcycle riders, FIA the federation of European Automobile drivers, and ACEM, the organisation of European motorcycle manufactures.

3.5.6 Operationalization

The interviewees were asked what their position was during the process of the Regulation and what their most important topics were concerning the regulation. Additionally the

questions were concentrated on what was done by the interest groups to lobby the institutions, and especially what has been done to influence the European Parliament. Most importantly, to determine if access as stated in the literature, is the most important strategy to gain influence, the interest groups asked if they had any contact with MEP's or assistants, how many, and how many times they had contact with these players. Furthermore, to see if other strategies were also used and why these strategies were used, the interviewees were asked if they had used different strategies than direct contact with political actors, such as events, protests and demonstrations, press releases and position papers. To verify if resources play an important role in the success of an interest group, a few of the interviewees were asked what they thought about resources in relation to influence. Furthermore, the interest groups were asked about the role of the organisational structure in deciding their strategies, and creating a position. Finally, to determine the result of the interest groups' lobbying activities and the effectiveness of these activities, the interviewees were asked if interest groups' position was taken over by the final adopted legislation.

3.6 Ethical considerations

For the research, there are some ethical aspects that had to be considered, since the research involved participants that were interviewed to obtain information on the sample case. The rules of informed consent have been applied, therefore the voluntary participants of the interview were informed about what would happen with the information (Bulmer, 2008). Before the interview, the participants were informed about why they were chosen to do the interview and what would be asked ("Ethics in Research", 2006). The interviewees were not asked to sign a consent form, but after the interviews the participants were sent an e-mail asking if their names could be mentioned in the interview, since the dissertation would be published on the website of the HHS library. In terms of confidentiality, the participants were told in the e-mail that if they wanted to stay anonymous something would be arranged to make sure their names would not become public, or certain things they have mentioned. However, one of the interviewees asked to go over the text, to see into how much detail would be mentioned regarding the position of the interest group, since it could affect the work of the organisation. The interviewees asked to take out certain names of organisations and other persons. One of the interviewees was not available for a personal interview, therefore an interview through e-mail was conducted. Even though an interview in person would have been better, almost all the information needed was acquired. For the interviews conducted in person, the interviewees were told that the interview would be recorded. Finally, the

interviewees were asked read the interview transcript, so that they could indicate what they did not want to be included in the appendix.

4. Findings

This section will present the findings of the sample case of this dissertation and the context of the case study that was conducted. Firstly, this chapter will explain the subject of the case, the proposal by the European Commission, the situation in the European Parliament and the positions of the different interest groups. This chapter will present the interview data of the interviews with the different interest groups about their resources, strategies, influence and positions in accordance with the EU legislation this case evolved around. The interview data will be structured according to the four hypotheses that have been drawn from the literature review.

4.1 Case study

4.1.1 The case

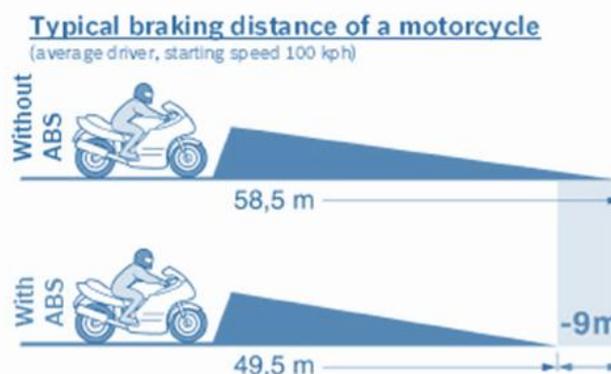
To determine the influence of interest groups in the EU, a case study was conducted, based on the Regulation on the approval and market surveillance of two-or three wheel vehicles and quadricycles, proposed by the European Commission in 2010, and adopted in 2012. The aim of the case study was to look at the initial proposal by the European Commission, the initial position in the European Parliament, and the position of the organisations. Additionally the interview data gave more insight on the positions of the interest groups, their strategies and helped to compare the interest groups' positions with what was adopted in the final legislation. Because in the literature concentrated mostly on influence to the European Commission and the European Parliament, this dissertation has been concentrated on influence by the interest groups to these two institutions.

The legal basis for the establishment of the legislation was the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, TFEU 114-p1 (European Parliament, 2014). The decision-making process of the regulation was based upon the Ordinary Legislative Procedure, previously referred to as the codecision Procedure ("Legislative procedures," 2010). When the Ordinary Legislative Procedure is used, the European Parliament and the Council are co-legislators and have the same amount of power, after a legislative proposal is published by the European Commission. This procedure is the most commonly used legislative procedure in the EU ("Legislative procedures," 2010).

4.1.2 Proposal by the European Commission

In October 2010 the European Commission, DG Enterprise published its proposal for a Regulation on the approval and market surveillance of two- or three- wheel vehicles and quadricycles. To establish this legislation, DG ENTR had organised a Motorcycle Working group involving several interest groups, such as FEMA, to prepare this legislation. The proposal firstly aimed to simplify the legal framework at that time, by combining different separate legislations into one regulation (European Commission, 2010). Moreover, the European Commission aspired to lower the emissions from motorcycles, and to increase the safety of new two- or three-wheel vehicles and quadricycles (L-category vehicles) entering the EU market (European Commission, 2010). More specifically, as can be found in appendix I of this dissertation, in article 18, safety measures were identified, namely, measures regarding the modification to the powertrain of the vehicles, in which anti-tampering measures were discussed to because this could affect the safety of the vehicles and damage the environment (European Commission, 2010, p. 31)

Secondly, in ANNEX VIII of the proposal, optional Anti-lock Breaking System (ABS) or Combine Breaking System (CBS) for motorcycles and mandatory ABS for larger motorcycles from category L2 was defined, in order to improve road safety (European Commission, 2010, p. 96). ABS would decrease the breaking distance and increase the breaking stability of a motorcycle. CBS would also decrease the breaking distance but controls the rear and the front wheel separately (European Parliament, 2012)

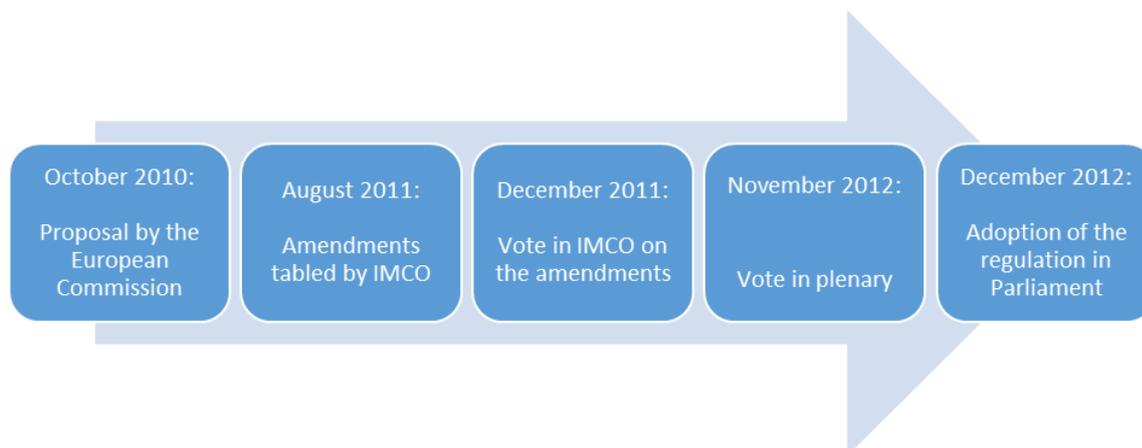


("Vehicle Safety Technologies," 2007)

Furthermore, article 60.1 of the document stated that apart from the manufacturers, the independent operators should have standardised access to Repair and Maintenance Information (European Commission, 2010, p. 62). Additionally, according to ANNEX VIII of the proposal it was required that all motorcycles had to have automatically switched on lights or another type of light (European Commission, 2010, p. 96). Finally, as stated in article 82.1, the application date for the regulation would be from 1 January 2013 (European Commission, 2010, p. 75).

4.1.3 European Parliament

After the publication of the proposal in 2010, it arrived in the European Parliament. The lead Committee in the European Parliament working on this Regulation was the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO), with Wim van de Camp (EPP, NL) as Rapporteur on the Regulation (Decision-making in the EU in Practice, 2012). The committee for opinion was the Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN). According to a press release by the European Parliament, the most important topics were the ABS and CBS for the motorcycles, the timeline of the regulation (Vilkas, 2012). On 30 August 2011, the MEPs of the IMCO Committee submitted their amendments to the proposal, 304 in total. On five December 2011 they voted on these amendments. During the process, in March 2011 the European Parliament held a public hearing in which the relevant stakeholders were consulted and were able to state their positions ("ABS for Motorbikes will save lives now", 2011). The European Parliament had contact with several interest groups that lobbied in this regulation, such as the FIA, FEMA, representing the consumers and ACEM representing the manufacturers such as Honda and Yamaha ("About ACEM," 2014). In November 2012, the European Parliament held the vote in plenary, and in December 2012 the regulation was adopted (European Parliament, 2014).



4.2 The position of the interest groups

The following section presents the information derived from publication from the three interest groups that were involved in the legislative process, such as press release, position papers and other published pieces by the interest groups. The information will refer to the positions of the interest groups, their most important issues and their activities because it is important to know the position of the interest groups before the interview data goes more into detail on the positions and lobbying goals of the interest groups.

4.2.1 Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile

Regarding the proposal of the European Commission, the FIA was in favour of mandatory ABS for motorcycles. According to the FIA, using ABS in the vehicles would result in stability of the vehicle during breaking and a reduction of the breaking distance ("ABS for Motorbikes will save lives now," 2011). The interest group was able to give results showing that using ABS would indeed improve road safety ("ABS for Motorbikes will save lives now," 2011). The interest group found it important that the mandatory ABS would be implemented as soon as possible. Furthermore, still focussing on ABS, the interest group called for more information for consumers on the safety technology available ("ABS for Motorbikes will save lives now," 2011). The interest group mostly had contact with the European Parliament. To declare its position and to convince the European Parliament, the FIA participated in the public hearing by the European Parliament. (Carty, 2012). Another subject concentrated on by the interest group was the access to RMI, which would allow independent operators to access information on repairing and maintaining the motorcycles.

4.2.2 Federation for European Motorcyclists' Associations

FEMA represents the motorcyclists of Europe at EU level. The interest group is small and has few people working in its office ("How we work," 2014). However the interest group has created a strong voice in European politics in the area of motorbike transport. During the process of drafting this regulation, the interest group was very closely involved. According to FEMA, the ABS for motorcycles would not be necessary, and the interest group opposed the mandatory introduction of ABS. The interest group furthermore opposed the in production of mandating automatically switched on headlights. Another topic of interest for FEMA was the introduction of anti-tampering measures that would prevent modifications of the powertrain of

the motorcycle (FEMA position statement, 2011). The interest group was asked for its input in 2007, before the regulation was really proposed by the Commission. The interest group also participated in a public consultation by the European Commission ("New type-approval rules for motorcycles," 2009) and the public hearing by the European Parliament (FEMA position statement, 2011).

4.2.3 Association des Constructeurs Européens de Motocycles

ACEM with its office in Brussels represents the European motorcycle manufacturers. ACEM in first instance contributed to the public consultation by the European Commission. According to the position paper of ACEM, published on 19 January 201, the interest group concentrated mostly on the CO₂ emission requirements. Additionally the interest group had had a position on ABS, namely excluding certain L2-A2 category motorcycles from the proposed mandatory ABS (Perlot, 2011a). Finally, the timeline of the legislation and the implementation of the measures was a very important issue for the interest group. ACEM contributed to the public consultation of the European Commission in 2009, where the interest group also emphasised the importance of the timeline of the legislation ("Contribution to the Public consultation", 2009). ACEM also participated to the public hearing by the IMCO Committee, in European Parliament in 2011 (Perlot, 2011b).

4.3 Interview data

To gain more information on the interest groups' strategies and influence, several interviews have been conducted. The interview data has been structured in accordance to process of the legislation and touches upon hypotheses derived from the literature. Therefore, the interview questions were concentrated on the resources, organisational structure, access to the European Commission and especially the European Parliament, and other strategies. The resources of the interest groups have been researched, by using information from. The interviews were conducted with interviewees from the different interest groups involved, FIA, FEMA and ACEM. The questions of the interview concentrated on the positions of the interest groups, what had been done to achieve their goals and what the result of their lobbying strategies were. The interviewees were asked what their position was, what their strategies were, how much contact they had with the political actors, if they provided the political actors with any information and about the value of certain strategies. Moreover, they

were asked what they thought of the results of their lobbying activities and why they thought they were successful or not.

4.3.1 Interest groups' demands and objectives

In terms of the regulation on the type approval of motorcycles the FIA had three main points which were important for the interest group to be included in the regulation. With the argument that it would improve road safety, the interest group lobbied actively to have mandatory ABS for all motorcycles. On the other side, FEMA opposed mandatory ABS on the motorcycles. The interest group opposed the mandatory introduction of ABS based on a cultural standpoint of the riders, and did not agree with any mandatory implementation of different issues and therefore also opposed mandatory ABS. As stated by the interviewee from FEMA, the interest group worked on the legislation from the beginning even before it was proposed by the European Commission (Personal interview, April 25, 2014).

Apart from promoting ABS, the FIA also concentrated on the safety of the rider, the knowledge of the rider on the systems in the motorcycle and the awareness of the dangers on the road (Personal interview, April 22, 2014).

The FIA lobbied for the Access to Repair and Maintenance Information (RMI) on the motorcycles. RMI is the information on the repair and maintenance of a vehicle, in this case motorcycles. Including access to RMI in the legislation, would allow independent operators to have information on the vehicle by the (European Commission, DG Enterprise, 2013). It would obligate manufacturers to make the technical information available to the independent operators, easy and restriction-free (European Commission, DG Enterprise, 2013). Because this subject was already included in the proposal by the European Commission, the interest group did not have to lobby as actively on this topic as on ABS for instance. On issue of access RMI, FEMA agreed with the FIA. Like the FIA, FEMA as stated by its interviewee, referring to its position paper, argued that the standardised access to the information by the independent operations of the motorbikes would save the riders a lot of time and money (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). However, FEMA did not only want standardised access to information for the independent operators but also for the riders. Since according to FEMA many riders work on their bikes themselves and therefore also need the information (FEMA position statement, 2011)

Another important subject for FEMA, and the initial reason to join the working group set up by the European Commission in 2007 was the limit of 100 HP or 74 kW put upon riders by certain member states such as France (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). According to the interviewee, this measure was unfair and was damaging the whole use of motorcycles (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). Therefore, the interest group strongly supported the European Commission proposal, changing the Directive related to this issue and stating that engine power does not have anything to do with safety (European Parliament, 2012).

Also based upon the cultural motivation of the riders, FEMA maintained an opposing position on the subject of permanently switched on headlights. In the Commission proposal it was stated that all L-category vehicle should be equipped with automatic switch on lights or day-time running lights (European Parliament, 2012, p. 96). According to the interest group, it would unnecessarily increase the costs for the riders (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). One measure that was introduced by the interest group were Durability Requirements. The interest group used its early involvement to introduce this measure to introduce the issue. The Durability Requirements would be a form of a warrantee for riders for the functioning of the motorbike. The Kilometres indicated by FEMA, would be the minimum amount of Kilometres a motorbike should be able to ride under the responsibility of the manufactures (Personal interview, April 25, 2014).

Related to this, the interest group opposed the measure to prevent the modification of the powertrain of the vehicles by the consumers. FEMA opposed this because they wanted to protect the rights of the consumers to modify their own bikes to improve safety and comfort. This was again a cultural element added to the position of the interest group. The interest group used information from their members from Sweden (Personal interview, April 25, 2014).

Finally, representing the manufacturers, ACEM, concentrated more on the technical and economic feasibility of the regulation (Personal e-mail, May 24, 2014). That meant that the costs for the implementation of the measures discussed in the proposal were important for the interest group (Personal e-mail, May 24, 2014). Additionally, the timeline of the regulation was of the interest of the interest group and according to the interviewee from ACEM, the time frame was one of the most crucial issues for the interest group since the production of products had to be planned and the different requirements and time frames would make it

difficult for the manufactures to manage and plan the production. ACEM wanted to postpone the application date with one year (Perlot, 2011a).

	Demands and objectives
FIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mandatory ABS - Access to RMI
FEMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No mandatory ABS - Access to RMI also for riders - No permanently switched on headlights - No restrictions on the modification of the powertrain - Change Directive 95/1/EC - Durability Requirements
ACEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No mandatory ABS - Postpone application date

4.3.1 Resources and the interest group influence

The interest groups involved in the process have a large variety of members. Another difference between the groups are their resources. The interest group with the fewest resources is FEMA. According to the EU transparency register FEMA has an annual budget of approximately €237.000 (EU Transparency Register, 2014). With that budget the interest group can perform its lobbying activities and achieve its goals. On the contrary, FIA has a budget of €1.870.000 per year (EU Transparency Register, 2014) and therefore can do more, for example organise an event, something that FEMA was not able to do. As stated by the interviewee of FEMA, the interest group wanted to do more but simply did not have enough resources (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). The budget of ACEM is not exactly clear but according to the EU transparency register, ACEM has an annual budget between € 2,500,000 and € 3.00000 per year (EU Transparency Register, 2014). ACEM was also able to organise an event, publish documents and do a press conference with its budget.

Apart from the budget the interest groups has other important resources, in particular information. In the interview, FEMA stated that they used information from its member Clubs, on national issues that were of the interest of political actors, and used that as a resource for lobbying the political actors (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). As told by the interviewee, FIA used data from its member Club on ABS to gain access to the political actors (Personal

interview, April 22, 2014). ACEM did the same, the interest group, according to the interviewee, used technical information as a resource to get in contact with politicians (Personal interview, May 24, 2014).

Resources	FIA	FEMA	ACEM
Money	€ 1,870,000	€237, 000	€ 2, 500,000- € 3,000,000
Information	Information from member club on ABS	National information from member Clubs	Technical expertise, sector related information

4.3.2 The organisational structure

The FIA is a federation that represents Clubs from different European Countries. According to the interviewee of the FIA, with this regulation there were not many problems regarding the organisational structure. However, if any of the Clubs would not agree with the position of the FIA, this could negatively influence the lobbying activities of the interest groups and the strength of its position. In the case of this regulation the interest group could maintain a strong position. The interest group could additionally access the political actors because it used data from its Clubs that could be used to gain access (Personal interview, April 22, 2014).

FEMA also a federation representing Clubs in Europe in the interview also showed that sometimes representing clubs can influence the strength of the position and the strategies used by the interest group. The interviewee stated for example that the Clubs FEMA represents operate differently, and that there is a difference in how large Clubs, such as the one in Sweden work and how smaller Clubs operate (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). According to the interviewee the different opinions within the interest group influence the position and the strategies the interest group uses. The different opinions within the federation mostly evolve around details, cultural elements and lobbying strategies. To solve the differences, the interest group tries to stick to a “common denominator” and create basic goals for the interest group. In the case of this regulation, FEMA benefited from its Clubs by using national data that could be exchanged for access and helped to make contact with political actors (Personal interview, April 25, 2014).

ACEM is not a federation but an association representing manufacturer interests. In the interview nothing was discussed about the organisational structure and how it influences the strategy of the interest group. According to one of the interviewees however, and when looking at the theory, within ACEM some problems could be found with regards to the business interest of the different members of the association (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). Therefore the interest group might not always work efficiently or would be able to create strong position. ACEM did however benefit from its members, because they could provide the political actors with technical information on certain issues (Personal e-mail, May 24, 2014).

	FIA	FEMA	ACEM
Organisational structure	Federation with different member Clubs	Federation with different member Clubs	Association representing different companies
Disadvantage	Different opinions by Clubs	Cultural elements, different opinions by Clubs	Possible competing business interests
Benefits	Information from Clubs	Information from Clubs	Technical information from companies
Influence on strategies	Discussions with members on priorities, but can use information	Discussions with members on strategies, but can use information	Can use information on technical issues

4.3.3 Access

The FIA mainly had contact with the European Parliament and in particular the rapporteur and the shadow rapporteurs. By sending letters to the shadow rapporteurs before the informal Shadow meeting, the FIA communicated their position and motivation on why ABS should be mandatory on all motorcycles. The FIA was in contact with ten to fifteen MEPs on a one on one basis. The FIA maintained in particular with one of the shadow rapporteur. According to the interviewee the shadow rapporteur was very open to the position of the interest group. Furthermore, this political actor also relied on the interest group with regards to obtaining information. Especially, the information that came from the study of the FIA’s member club on the safety of ABS was of the interest of the MEP. In return the MEP also provided the interest group with information (Personal interview, April 22, 2014).

Different from the FIA, the FEMA had more contact with the European Commission, since the interest group was already involved before the proposal was published. Within the

European Parliament, the interest group was mostly in contact with the rapporteur and shadow rapporteurs since those MEPs are the most important to access. According to the interviewee, the political actors in the European Parliament were open for to discussions and the interest group was included in the process. This is according the interviewee not always the case with other dossiers. FEMA communicated through press releases and position papers. The interest group provided the political actors with information on national issues derived from its member clubs. Such as information on trailers in Sweden (Personal interview, April 25, 2014).

To achieve the goals of the interest group, ACEM contacted the different European and mainly the European Commission and the European Parliament. Similar to the other interest groups, ACEM contacted the most essential political actors in the European Parliament. The interest group lobbied the IMCO rapporteur, and the shadow rapporteurs. According to the interviewee of ACEM, the interest group had contact with ten key MEPs and their staff in total. ACEM provided the institutions and MEPs with technical information on the market and the information on the background of the motorcycle industry sector (Personal e-mail, May 25, 2014).

	Access
FIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access through exchange of information - Direct contact with MEPs
FEMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access through exchange of information - Involved before the proposal was published - Direct contact with MEPs
ACEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access through exchange of information - Mostly contact with European Parliament and European Commission

4.3.4 Voice strategies

The interest groups stated that voice strategies as in demonstrations in not really what the interest group does. However, apart from personal contact with MEPs and other political actors, the FIA did organised a debate on ABS and invited the important stakeholders and politicians to present a study conducted by the member Club of the interest group. During the debate, the FIA pointed out that mandating ABS would be the best solution for the safety of motorcyclists. This automobile club is a known member of the FIA, therefore the study had an impact on the opinion of politicians and stakeholders. With this event, the interest group

tried to promote their position and make the politicians and other stakeholders aware of the situation. The interest group also published several press releases (Personal interview, April 22, 2014).

Apart from direct contact with the political actors, the FEMA also tried to organise an event but because of its small budget, there was not much room to do that. However the interest group did manage to organise a workshop in the European Parliament (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). Another public strategy the interest group used was a bike ride with several MEPs. ACEM, next to one on one contact, published position papers. Through events, press releases, newsletters, conferences and technical workshops the interest group communicated its position, and the information with the other stakeholders (Personal e-mail, May 24, 2014). For the interest group direct contact with the politicians, meetings with key players' position papers and press conferences were most valuable and effective according to the interviewee (Personal e-mail, May 24, 2014).

	Strategies
FIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Event with debate to present results of a study - Press releases - Letters to shadows
FEMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshop in the European Parliament - Bike ride with MEPs - Press releases
ACEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Event - Press releases and newsletters - Conferences - Technical workshops

4.3.4 The final regulation

On 15 January 2013 the final act was signed and the legislation was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council. The regulation counted 82 articles (European Parliament, 2012). When comparing the final regulation with the proposal of the commission, several changes could be found, but also certain issues that stayed the same. First of all, one of the first topics on the regulation was time line, and the implementation date of the regulation. As a result of the different opinions of the political actors and the continuing

lobbying by interest groups, the implementation date was postponed from January 2013 to January 2014 (Appendix II). The final legislation did indeed have the mandatory ABS the interest group wanted, however it was stated in the legislation that ABS would only be mandatory for motorbikes over 125 cc (European Parliament, 2012). For the rest of the motorbikes there would be either ABS or CBS available (European Parliament, 2012).

4.3.5 The outcomes and success of the interest groups

On the subject of ABS, the FIA managed to have mandatory ABS in the legislation, but had to compromise for mandatory ABS for larger motorbikes. The interviewee thought that the fact that in the end the interest group was successful to have mandatory ABS for one part, was because the European Parliament, like other political institutions was keen on improving road safety and therefore choose to include mandatory ABS in the legislation. On the same subject, FEMA, who opposed the mandatory ABS for the motorcycles from the beginning, did not manage to seclude mandatory ABS from the regulation. As stated by the interviewee, she knew from the beginning that FEMA would lose on this issue, since many in the European Commission and in the European Parliament were in favour of ABS because of safety reasons. ACEM also opposed the mandatory ABS, and therefore did not manage to have what the interest group wanted (Perlot, 2011a)

One the subject of RMI, both FIA and FEMA managed to keep access to RMI in the regulation. However, even though the FEMA asked for access to RMI also for the consumers, the final legislation did not include this measure and the proposed articles by the Commission were unchanged (FEMA position statement, 2011).

With regards to the permanently switched on headlights and the anti-tampering measures, the interest group did manage to take seclude the introduced anti-tampering measures. However, the regulation did contain the measure on the permanent switched on headlights, but, as argued by the interviewee, the interest group was mostly against it for cultural reasons (Personal interview, April 25, 2014).

Finally, ACEM, according to the interviewee, was successful in terms of having its most important topics on the agenda. The interest group managed to postpone the implementation date of the regulation. On topics where the interest of ACEM was not included, technical

complexities of these topics were the reason for the exclusion (Personal e-mail, May 24, 2014).

Overall, the interviewees were satisfied with the results of their lobbying activities. When asking the question if the interviewee of the FIA was successful in the end, the interviewee answered that she was happy with the result, because the interest group did good lobbying work in terms of contacting the different politicians but also the stakeholders, and because in the end everyone wanted safe motorcycles (Personal interview, April 22, 2014). In the end, she was happy that the interest group was able to work well and open with the manufacturers, even if they did not agree on certain subjects (Personal interview, April 22, 2014).

FEMA was already involved in the process before the proposal was even published by the European Commission. Because FEMA was included in the motorcycle working group, it had the benefit of setting the agenda and including its positions in the initial proposal. Therefore, when looking at the details the interest group has been able to influence a great deal of the process. The interviewee of ACEM stated that approximately 80% of the topics of that were lobbied for were successfully adopted (Personal e-mail, May 24, 2014). According to the interviewee, the reasons for this success were the good arguments and data provided by the interest group. In the end, according to the interviewee, the outcome was a “compromise between different stakeholders” (Personal e-mail May 24, 2014).

	Demands and objectives, outcomes
FIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mandatory ABS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (but only for bigger bikes) ✓ Access to RMI
FEMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No mandatory ABS ✓ Access to RMI, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For riders ○ No permanently switched headlights ✓ No restrictions on the modification of the powertrain ✓ Durability Requirements
ACEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No mandatory ABS ✓ Timeline

✓ = Included
○ = Not included

4.4 Conclusion

This case study concentrated on the type approval regulation and the interest groups involved in the process. It could be stated that from the interviews and other information provided by the interest groups, the interest groups in their strategies have tried to access the European institutions and have one to one contact with the key policy makers. The interest groups were successful in accessing these politicians and all stated that contact with policy makers was one of the most valuable strategies the interest group used. To some extent the interest groups used different kinds of approaches. FEMA and ACEM for example, were already involved when the Commission was working on the proposal, while FIA concentrated more on accessing the European Parliament to change the legislation. In the case of the type approval legislation, FEMA was very actively involved in the process. The interest group was not only in contact with the Commission, but also had very good contacts in the European Parliament. Apart from that, the interest group used a few public strategies, such as a small event and a bike ride with the MEPs. However when asking the interviewee, she stated that their success was mainly achieved because of their inside lobbying.

FIA also did strong lobbying and in particular in the European Parliament. The interest group had very good contacts in the European Parliament and in particular with certain shadow rapporteurs. The interest group had less topics on the agenda than FEMA but was able to adjust the legislation to a certain extent. The interest group also used public strategies. FIA organised an event on ABS and presented their study on ABS and how it would save lives. The interviewee stated that the interest group was successful because similar to FEMA, had good contacts with the political actors. Finally, according to the interviewee of ACEM, ACEM was also successful, and managed to have most of its important subjects included in the regulation. As a result of good contacts and meetings with the political actors the interest group, managed to win certain topics, was happy with the final result.

When comparing the three interest groups, FEMA had the most issues on the agenda concerning the regulation. The reason for the difference between the position of FEMA and FIA could be found in the fact that the FIA only represents a few motorcyclists who, as stated by the interviewee from the FIA, "are people that from time to time take a motorcycle for urban mobility or in the summer would take their motorbikes out" (Personal interview, April 22, 2014). On the other hand, FEMA represents only motorcyclists and as can be seen by the opinion, is also very culturally defined.

Therefore, while they both represent bikers, the interest groups had different opinions in this regulation. ACEM evidently represents the interest of the industry and sometimes concentrated on topics than FIA and FEMA. ACEM did however agree with FEMA on the topic of ABS (Perlot, 2011a). In conclusion, the interest groups did not get everything they lobbied for, but were able to influence the institutions and especially the European Parliament to a certain extent. However, it is clear that not every party will be able to achieve all the changes in the legislation it has lobbied for, and all the interest groups represented in this dissertation have stated that in the end, compromises have to be made as it is usually the case in EU politics (Personal e-mail, May 24, 2014).

	FIA	FEMA	ACEM
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mandatory ABS - Access to RMI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No mandatory ABS - Access to RMI also for riders - No permanently turned on headlights - No restrictions on modification of the powertrain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No mandatory ABS - Timeline
Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - € 1,870,000 - Information on national and EU issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - €237,000 - Information on national and EU issues from members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - € 2,500,000- € 3,000,000 - Technical expertise and sector related information
Organisational Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Federation with member Clubs - Use national + European Information - Different opinions of Clubs play a role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Federation with member clubs - Use national + European information - Cultural elements play a role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Association representing different companies - Technical information - Competing business interests might play a role
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access through exchange of information - Access to EP - Direct contact with MEPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access through exchange of information - Access EP and EC - Direct contact with MEPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access through exchange of information - Access to EP and EC
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Event to present results of a study - Press releases - Letters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshop in the European Parliament - Bike ride with MEPs - Press releases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Event - Press releases and newsletters - Conferences - Technical workshops
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mandatory ABS ✓ Access to RMI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No mandatory ABS ✓ Access to RMI ✓ Durability requirements ○ No permanently turned on headlights ✓ No restrictions on modification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No mandatory ABS ✓ Timeline <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ = Included ○ = Not included </div>

5. Discussion

The following chapter will discuss the findings from the literature review and combine that information with the information gained from the case study and the interviews. The information gained from the literature review has been structured in four hypotheses. These hypotheses summarise the central ideas of the scholars discussed in the literature review. To answer these hypotheses, the case study, interviews with the interest groups and more desk research, have been the main sources. The discussion will be organised per hypothesis.

5.1 Hypothesis 1

Interest group with the most resources will have the most influence.

When looking at the different theories from the different researchers in the literature review, it seems that the more resources an interest group has the more influence this interest group will have (Dür & De Bièvre, 2008). In many cases this could be true, since an interest group with many resources will be able to set the agenda instead of following certain issues. This gives the interest group with the most resources more influence (Bouwen, 2002). Many might think of resources as money, but it can also be information on technical issues or national issues. In some cases, it could be that the interest group with the least resources has the right connections and therefore is able to be involved in the process. When considering FEMA for example, the interest group does not have many resources and according to the European Transparency register has a small budget of €237,000 (EU Transparency Register, 2014). Therefore, FEMA follows the agenda of the issues in EU politics (Personal interview April 25, 2014). This interest group, when comparing it with an interest group with more resources, is therefore less likely to be able to put things on the agenda. Therefore it could be stated that an interest group with little resources will have less influence than an interest organisation with more resources. Nevertheless, according to the interviewee of FEMA, when playing smart and acting at the right time, an interest group can achieve a lot (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). As argued by the interviewee of FEMA, lobbying can be seen as a train, “it’s about momentums, if you are capable of taking the momentum, and always reacting at the right moment”, you can be successful (Personal interview, April 25, 2014) This is also stated by Dür, who suggests that the most important aspect of resources is that it is used at the right time (Dür, 2008b). In the case of the type approval regulation, FEMA was already involved in the issue before it was even proposed by the European Commission (Personal interview, April 25, 2014)

Another example, the FIA, has a larger annual budget than FEMA, of approximately € 1,870,000 (EU Transparency Register, 2014). However, when comparing the interest group to other interest groups, the FIA is still a small interest group with less resource. One of the strengths of this interest group lays in the several members that are strong at national level, and can provide the interest group with information, an effective resource that has made the interest group successful in its lobbying activities (Personal interview, April 22, 2014). An example is the study used by the interest group, conducted by a member organisation of the FIA. This member of FIA, one of the most powerful automobile clubs in Europe, provided the FIA with information that could be used in lobbying at EU level (Personal interview, April 22, 2014). With this information, the FIA could contact politicians on the issue and create an event around the study with a debate (Personal interview, April 22, 2014). ACEM has more resources, and has an annual budget of between € 2,500,000 and € 3,000,000 (EU Transparency Register, 2014). Those resources have mostly been used in combination with strong access strategies (Personal e-mail, May 24, 2014).

Additionally, it has to be considered that when an interest group has many resources, it is also more likely that the interest group has a bigger organisational structure, more members or companies to represent and most opinions to consider (Dür, 2008b). Therefore, it is possible, that because there are more layers in the interest group for example, or the different companies or members have different interest, this could negatively influence the efficiency of the interest group (Dür, 2008b). Because when looking at FIA and FEMA, it has become clear that, lobbying is very much a matter of acting fast at the right time, being at the right place and knowing the right people. These things can also be achieved by an interest group with fewer resources, as FEMA demonstrated (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). Furthermore, it is also a matter of having the right resources at the right time, this means that as an interest group you can have all the resources in the world but those resources have to be offered when the political actors need them (Dür, 2008b) (Eising, 2007). Having many resources therefore, is not a guarantee for influence, when the resources are not used the right way.

5.2 Hypothesis 2

The organisational structure of the interest group determines which strategy is used.

Bouwen argues that the organisational structure determines how the interest group works and therefore what kind of access good it can offer (Bouwen, 2002). The FIA as well as the FEMA are both federations that represent member organisations from different European Countries. The interests of these different members are influenced by developments at national level. Because the FIA and FEMA act on behalf of the national members, they first have to consider the opinions of the national members before acting at EU level (Personal interview April 22, 2014). This example would mean that these interest groups might not be able to work efficient and fast when necessary. However, the interest groups can benefit from the information provided by their members and can use their members as a resource. An example in the case of the type approval regulation is the study conducted by the member club of the FIA, or the information from the Swedish member of FEMA (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). Both federations have been able to offer different access goods, technical information and domestic information.

The organisational structure of ACEM, representing manufacturers and businesses is an association with different members. Because the interest group represents manufacturers, it is able to provide technical information. All three interest groups have similar organisational structures have used the same strategies, access strategies. What has influence on the strategy used by the interest group, are the members the interest groups represent, not necessarily the organisational structure. According to interviewee of FEMA, the organisational structure can really have an influence on how an interest group functions because of its members (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). It appears that ACEM has to work with different positions based on business interests, therefore it might sometimes be difficult to come to a common position (Personal interview April 25, 2014). The FIA and FEMA also sometimes face difficulties with their members all having different kinds of interests (Personal interview, April 25, 2014) (Personal interview, April 22, 2014). The FIA for example, might always be able work efficiently and create a strong position, when there are different opinions among the various Clubs. In the case of the type approval regulation however, the interest group's members agreed on the various issues (Personal interview, April 22, 2014). FEMA, an interest group bound by cultural elements, faces some issues with its members as well (Personal interview April 25, 2014). However, the interest group tries to

stick to a common position on basic issues and therefore manages, also in the case of the type approval regulation, to maintain a strong position (Personal interview, April 25, 2014).

5.3 Hypothesis 3

Access is the most important strategy for influencing the decision-making process at EP level; therefore the interest groups will mostly rely on access strategies to gain influence.

Most scholars from the literature review, who have analysed influence and how it can be measured, agree that access can be seen as the most important strategy for an interest group to influence the decision making process. Access, or inside lobbying, allows the interest groups to communicate on their position within the political community. As stated by Bouwen, to gain access, the interest groups need the right access good at the right time (Bouwen, 2002).

All interest groups in the case of the type approval regulation have used access to politicians, and they especially had direct contact with the key political actors in the European Parliament, such as the rapporteurs and the shadow rapporteurs. The FIA was in contact with mainly the European Parliament and several MEPs, especially the rapporteurs and shadow rapporteurs. As stated by Eising, the most important contacts for an interest group are the rapporteurs and shadows (Eising, 2007), which is exactly what the FIA has demonstrated. In this case, the FIA was in constant contact with the rapporteur and shadow rapporteurs in the European Parliament, and especially with a certain shadow rapporteur. This politician provided the interest group with information on the position in the European Parliament, but in return also asked for expert information and information on national issues (Personal interview, April 22, 2014). When comparing this situation with the theory of Bouwen, it can be seen that indeed this was an exchange of access goods. On the one side, information was provided by the interest group and on the other side information was granted from the politician (Bouwen, 2002). The information provided by the FIA was data from the study for example. As can be seen from the interview, another valuable access strategy used by the interest group were letters send right before the informal shadow meetings stressing the importance of the issues the interest group was concentrating on. This form of contact appeared to be effective in influencing the opinion of the shadows (Personal interview, April 22, 2014).

According to the interviewee of FEMA, the interest group was very active in inside lobbying, because from the beginning, the interest group remained close contact with the key political actors during this case (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). The reason for this contact was the involvement of the interest group in the motorcycle working group by the European Commission before the proposal was published (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). Apart from that, regarding the European Parliament, the interest group had contact with the key MEPs, meaning the Rapporteur and the shadow rapporteurs. All MEPs were open for a discussion with FEMA. Even if they did not agree, they were still willing to listen to the interest group (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). ACEM and FIA also had contact with the main political actors, mainly in the European Parliament but also in other institutions (Personal e-mail, May 24, 2014) (Personal interview, April 22, 2014). When comparing this with the theory, it can be confirmed again, as argued by Beyers and other scholars, that access is a crucial strategy in lobbying and almost inevitable when an interest group wants to be successful (Beyers, 2004). The relation between interest groups and the political actors, also confirms Bouwen's arguments on the exchange of access goods (Bouwen, 2002), since the interest groups provided the Commission and the MEPs with information. In return the interest groups were able to have their position discussed in the European Commission and the European Parliament, and face politicians who were open to listen to their opinion (Personal interview, April 25, 2014).

All the interest groups that were interviewed and analysed stated that access as a tool for influence was the most valuable for them. Furthermore, direct contact with the politicians, seemed to be one of the reasons why they were successful in the end. When asking the interviewee from the FIA, about why the interest group was successful in lobbying on this issue, she answered that that they were, because they maintained good contacts with the MEPs and especially the key MEPs (Personal interview, April 22, 2014). These statements from the interviewees confirm that indeed access can be seen as one of the most important means to gain influence when having the right access goods. The three interest groups in this case, had the right access goods, since they all had relevant information for the political actors and therefore were able to influence the political process. However, it must be said that access should not be seen as a proxy for influence, also argued by Dür (Dür, 2008a) and Eising (Eising, 2008), because not in all cases access means that the interest group is able to influence. Nonetheless, when considering the theory and what has happened during the process of the regulation, access can still be seen as the most crucial strategy for interest groups, because personal contact allows an interest group to continue to be influential when

other issues come up (Personal, interview April 25, 2014). Therefore, it can be stated that even though voice strategies can be very effective, access strategies can create long term influence rather than influence on one particular issue.

5.4 Hypothesis 4

Interest groups that can easily access the political actors will not use voice strategies.

As mentioned before, access strategies are very valuable for interest groups to gain influence to the political actors at EU level. However, sometimes an interest group cannot even gain access and therefore has to go back to other strategies, such as voice strategies. The interest groups do use voice strategies as well, even though they were not that prominent. Therefore when considering the theory, it should also be discussed why interest groups use voice strategies apart from access strategies. In terms of voice strategies identified by Beyers, the FIA had used several voice and outside lobbying strategies (Beyers, 2004) (Personal interview, April 22, 2014). First of all, the interest group organised a debate for which all the important stakeholders and politicians were invited, and where the results from the study on ABS were presented to promote the position of the interest group in a more public way. Furthermore, the FIA used this opportunity to really convince stakeholders of the, in their eyes, necessary introduction of mandatory ABS (Personal interview, April 22, 2014). The interest group used this strategy to build up the public opinion of the stakeholders. Because the interest group was able to access the MEPs from the beginning, and to be involved in the process, voice strategies were not necessary. Furthermore, it is also not something the FIA normally does (Personal interview, April 22, 2014).

Apart from access, FEMA also used voice strategies. As stated by the interviewee from FEMA, the interest group in the case of the type approval regulation, did not use a lot of voice strategies since the interest group was already involved in the process from the beginning (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). Because public strategies are more costly than access strategies the interest group only uses voice when they are not heard in the institutions (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). For illustration, the interviewee used another dossier as an example. In the case of this dossier, the interest group was not listened to by the institutions and therefore felt the need to do demonstrations, at European and especially at national level (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). An interesting point made by the interviewee from FEMA is that the strategy they use depends very much on the positions in the institutions and especially in the European Parliament (Personal interview, April 25,

2014). This sounds logical, but she also meant that for certain topics the MEPs follow the position of the political group, which was the case in the type approval regulation (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). In the case where the interest group had to use more voice strategies and had to go back to the national level, the MEPs followed the position of the country and therefore were much more difficult to lobby (Personal interview, April 25, 2014). The fact that FEMA interest group only goes back to voice strategies when there is no other option, confirms the theory of Beyers on voice strategies, saying that indeed, when interest group are not listened, to they use voice strategies (Beyers, 2004). ACEM used several voice strategies, but very importantly used in combination with access strategies. However, the interest group concentrated mostly on access, and voice strategies were less necessary because good contacts were already established (Personal e-mail, May 24, 2014).

Overall, it seems that most interest groups prefer access over voice strategies. The reason for this is that when an interest group already has access it is unnecessary and costly to use voice strategies. However, in some cases, it becomes clear that when interest groups have access, they use voice as a second option to still make the political actors aware of the position of the interest group and influence the decision-making process in another way.

6. Conclusion and recommendation

The political system of the EU leaves a platform for stakeholders to represent the interest of EU citizens and companies that operate within the EU. As a result of the growing power of the EU, more players are lobbying at EU level. Interest groups have proven to be important for the democracy of the EU and can positively or negatively influence the decision-making process of the EU. Few have constructed theories on what influence is, how it can be measured and how it affects the EU interest groups. One of the most important theories by the scholars is that on access to political actors. Access according to Beyers, Bouwen, Dür, and other scholars, is one of the most important components to influence the EU decision-making process. Access to political actors allows interest groups to discuss their position and information on certain issues in person. According to the researchers, gaining access is a matter of exchange. Bouwen for example refers to the exchange of information and other resources as the exchange of “access goods”. The interest group with the “access goods” demanded by the political actors will be the one that will have the most access and is most likely to be influential. Access goods are mostly related to information on technical issues, domestic or European issues. Apart from access, the scholars also identify voice as a tool to influence the decision-making process. Voice includes protests, demonstrations, events and other public ways of lobbying. The scholars argue that voice is important, but not as important as access, and that interest groups are more likely to use access first and only use voice as an alternative when access is not gained.

To see if access is indeed most critical to influence the decision-making process, a case study involving several interest groups was conducted. These interest groups, FIA, FEMA and ACEM have all tried to influence the decision-making process of the regulation on regulation on the type approval and marked surveillance of two and three-wheeled vehicles and quadricycles . The findings of the case study, and interviews with these interest groups, show that for these interest groups access to political actors was the most valuable strategy to gain influence. While the interest groups did have to compromise on certain topics they were satisfied about their lobbying activities and what they have achieved. This was also found by comparing the preferences of the interest groups during the process and the text of the final regulation, which includes several topics that were lobbied for by the interest groups. To achieve this influence, the interest groups made little use of voice strategies, since access to the political actors was gained and therefore it was not necessary to use many other strategies. According to the interviewees, the openness of the political actors made it easy

for the interest groups to lobby. Looking at this example, it can be seen that the position within the EU institutions and especially within the European Parliament is very important for the interest groups.

Finally, the scholars also argue that the amount of influence is also affected by the resources of an interest group. The research has shown that interest groups with more resources are more likely to gain influence because they simply can offer more. However, it must be argued that when looking at the interest groups involved in the process of the regulation. Additionally, small interest groups with less resources can be influential by acting at the right time and offering the right things to the right people.

In conclusion, when possible, interest groups always prefer using access over voice, because it is easier, cheaper, and according to one of the interviewees, better suited for achieving long term influence. Access, as argued by interest groups and the scholars such as Beyers, Dür, Eising and Bouwen, is the most important tool to influence the decision-making process. However, access does first of all not always mean influence, because sometimes other strategies can also be effective. Secondly, the influence of the interest groups also very much depends on the position of the political actors and the openness of these actors towards discussions and changes. Finally an interest group might have many resources and access goods, but when these goods are not used strategically, they will not have any impact on the influence of an interest group. Therefore it can be concluded that access plays a crucial role in the success of lobbying, but that the success is also influenced by other factors. In the end it can be argued that lobbying is very much a game of acting fast, having knowledge and knowing the right people at the right moment.

7. References

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8. Appendices

Appendix I , Critical articles in the European Commission proposal

Repealed directive, “Directive 95/1/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 2 February 1995 on the maximum design speed, maximum torque and maximum net engine power of two- or three-wheel motor vehicles gave the possibility to Member States to refuse the initial registration and any subsequent registration within their territory of vehicles with a maximum net power of more than 74 kW. The anticipated correlation between safety and absolute power limitation could not be confirmed in several scientific studies. For that reason and in order to remove internal barriers to trade on the Union market, this option should no longer be maintained. Other, more effective safety measures should be introduced to help reduce the high numbers of fatalities and injuries among riders of powered two-wheel vehicles in road accidents in the Union” (European Commission, 2010, p. 12).

Article 21.3, “Manufacturers shall ensure that type-approval requirements for verifying durability requirements are met. At the choice of the manufacturer one of the following durability test procedures may be used to provide evidence to the type-approval authority that the environmental performance of a type-approved vehicle is durable” (European Commission, 2010, p. 33)

Article 60.1, “Manufacturers shall provide unrestricted access to vehicle repair and maintenance information to independent operators through websites using a standardised format in a readily accessible and prompt manner. In particular, this access shall be granted in a manner which is non-discriminatory compared to the access granted to authorised dealers and repairers” (European Commission, 2010, p. 62).

Article 18.2, “L-category vehicles shall be equipped with designated measures to prevent tampering of a vehicle's powertrain, to be laid down in a delegated act by means of a series of technical requirements and specifications with the aim:

- (a) to prevent modifications that may prejudice safety, in particular by increasing vehicle performance through tampering with the powertrain in order to increase the maximum torque and/ or power and/or maximum designed vehicle speed as declared by the manufacturer of a vehicle upon type-approval, and/or
- (b) to prevent damage to the environment.” (European Commission, 2010, p. 31)

Article 82.1, “It shall apply from 1 January 2013” (European Commission, 2010, p. 75).

ANNEX VIII, a. “New motorcycles(27) of the L3e–A1 subcategory which are sold, registered and entering into service are to be equipped with either an anti-lock(28) or a combined brake system(29) or both types of advanced brake systems, at the choice of the vehicle manufacturer”. (European Commission, 2010, p. 96).

b. “New motorcycles of subcategories L3e–A2 and L3e–A3 which are sold, registered and entering into service to be equipped with an anti-lock brake system. (European Commission, 2010, p. 96).”

ANNEX VII, “(b) for L3e vehicles: at the choice of the vehicle manufacturer, either lighting and light-signalling devices in compliance with UNECE regulation 53 Rev. 2 and its amendments 1 and 2, or dedicated day-time running lights (DRL) complying with UNECE regulation 87 Rev.2 and its amendments 1 and 2;” (European Commission, 2010, p. 96)