Research Article

Multilevel Strategies for Political Influence: How and Why Do Domestic Civil Society Organisations Seek Political Influence at National and EU Levels?

Håkan Johansson, *Lund University*
Roberto Scaramuzzino, *Lund University*
Magnus Wennerhag, *Södertörn University*

Abstract

This article addresses domestic civil society organisations (CSOs) and their multilevel strategies for gaining political influence in the European Union. Drawing on a theoretical framework identifying different 'routes' that CSOs can take in a multilevel system of EU governance, this article analyses which routes or combination of routes CSOs take and investigates what organisational factors can explain similarities and differences among domestic CSOs' multilevel strategies for political influence. Factors like type of organisation, organisational resources, level of activity and perceived relevance of national and EU political levels are combined. The article shows that CSOs tend to choose a combination of routes and that most of them also participate at the national level when trying to influence EU policy. The article furthermore finds that domestic CSOs seek to influence EU policies above all when they organise around issues that face potential conflicts between national and EU policies, illustrating the analytical significance of how CSOs perceive different political levels.

Keywords

Domestic civil societies and civil society organisations (CSOs) are increasingly embedded in international, transnational and European structures and relations. This is certainly true regarding CSOs in European Union (EU) member states because the influence of the EU has grown considerably and now constitutes a key level for political decisions. The EU holds an ambitious civil society agenda and expresses a clear interest in engaging CSOs – both at the EU and domestic levels – in policymaking and policy delivery (Kohler-Koch and Rittberger 2007; Sánchez-Salgado 2014; 2007; Smismans 2003).[1] The European Commission and other EU institutions provide funding as well as opportunities for access and consultation for domestic CSOs (Ruzza 2006). Besides providing expertise and knowledge, civil society is expected to mediate, or even overcome the distance between the EU and domestic societies by 'bring[ing] Europe much closer to the people' and thereby alleviating the criticism towards the EU of being a project for the elite (European Commission 2000: 4; see also Johansson and Lee 2014; Kohler-Koch 2009; Rodekamp 2014).

Although academic interest in EU and civil society has been thriving (Johansson and Kalm 2015), research has primarily addressed what takes place 'in Brussels' and less attention has been paid to what takes place 'beyond Brussels'. We thus have less knowledge about the relevance of the national context for CSOs' engagements with the EU, what types of CSOs seek to influence EU policies and why some CSOs are heavily engaged in influencing EU policies while others remain embedded in their national context.

This article provides one of the first comprehensive analyses of domestic CSOs' strategies to obtain political influence in a multilevel context. The purpose is to analyse how and to what extent domestic CSOs use strategies to influence policies at the national and/or the EU levels. However, we argue that such an investigation into multilevel advocacy strategies analytically needs to separate between the political *level* domestic CSOs seek to influence and the *locus* where their activities take

place (Ruzza and Bozzini 2008). That is to say, the different routes to political influence. Some CSOs might take a 'European route up', as they seek to influence EU policies at the EU level, while others might take a 'national route' by trying to influence EU policies by being active at national level.

The article combines such an investigation with a novel take on how organisational factors can explain similarities and differences among domestic CSOs' multilevel strategies for political influence. Previous research into these matters tends to focus on one organisational factor such as organisational type, resources or level of activity, or two of these in combination. This article combines all of these and adds an additional factor by paying attention to how CSOs perceive and value the relevance of either the EU or the national level in seeking to pursue their aims. Our analysis opens up debate about whether CSOs' political strategies could best be explained by organisational tangibles or whether there is also a need to include more subjective dimensions of how they value current multilevel political opportunities (Scaramuzzino and Wennerhag 2015).

The article draws on a unique survey among a representative sample of more than 6,000 Swedish CSOs and provides a systematic analysis across a broad spectrum of domestic CSOs. Our investigation thus employed research input from one of the largest surveys addressing the relevance of the EU for domestic CSOs and topics of Europeanization and formed part of the research programme 'Beyond the welfare state: Europeanization of Swedish civil society organisations (EUROCIV)' funded by the Swedish Research Council.

ROUTES AND ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS – TAKING STOCK OF EXISTING RESEARCH

There are different ways to conceptualise the EU as an arena for domestic CSOs' political advocacy strategies. Theories of political opportunity structures are a frequently used framework to explain political mobilisation and social movement activities in both national and European settings. Besides viewing the EU as an additional opportunity structure per se, scholars stress that domestic CSOs' EU engagement provides them with access to new tangible and intangible resources, a wider scope for political representation, and complementary avenues for mobilisation of followers at 'home' and 'away' (Imig and Tarrow 2001; Teune 2010; della Porta and Caiani 2009, 2007). Investigations have however found that although the EU constitutes a new arena, most social movement protest activities continue to be staged at the national level (Imig and Tarrow 2001) and only a small share of domestic CSOs have managed to enter the 'Brussels bubble' (Scaramuzzino and Wennerhag 2015).

The scholarly debate on interest groups has added institutional factors into the analysis, linked to particular EU institutions or policy processes at the EU and national levels. Some argue that it is of importance to analyse the structural access a group has to EU institutions (Marks and McAdam 1996; Rucht 2001), the formal mandate the EU has on a particular issue and the general policy receptivity of the EU to particular issues (Beyers and Kerremans 2007; Binderkrantz and Rasmussen 2015; Dür and Mateo 2012, Princen and Kerremans 2008). Klüver (2010) argues that one needs to take into account the EU and national political institutional factors in conjunction and address the receptivity of the EU and national political system to claims made by domestic CSOs (see also Lundberg and Sedelius 2014).

These analytical perspectives indicate that domestic CSOs have the opportunity to combine advocacy strategies at the national and/or the EU level. Terms like a 'boomerang effect' (Keck and Sikkink 1998), a 'ping-pong effect' (Zippel 2004), and 'dual strategy' (Kohler-Koch 1997) have been used to identify such multilevel strategies. Della Porta and Caiani (2009) use the notion of 'crossed influence' as they argue that current protest activities entail both an element of 'domestication of protest' as social movements continue to approach national governments but with a European

agenda and 'externalisation of protest' as domestic actors mobilise at the EU level in an attempt to put pressure on national governments. While these perspectives have their benefits, following Ruzza and Bozzini (2008), we argue that it is of importance to differentiate between the 'locus' and 'target' of a political advocacy strategy, particularly when addressing strategies for political influence in a European context (Table 1).

Table 1: Routes to Europe (source: Ruzza and Bozzini 2008)

		Territorial level targeted	
		Influencing national policies	*Influencing EU policies*
Territorial level of participation	*National*	Traditional route	National route
	EU	European route down	European route up

A traditional route implies that CSOs participate in national politics with the ambition to influence national policymaking. A national route means that CSOs participate in national politics with the ambition to influence EU policymaking (similar to the domestication of protest). The European route up denotes that CSOs participate in EU politics with the ambition to influence EU policymaking. Lastly, the European route down emphasises that CSOs participate in EU politics with the ambition to influence national policymaking (a form of externalisation of protest). This framework thus offers us four distinct alternatives for understanding domestic CSOs' political strategies.

Research into why domestic CSOs seek political influence at the national or the EU level has not only understood such activities as responses to changing political opportunity structures or related to institutional arrangements, but also emphasised organisational factors (Arvidson, Johansson and Scaramuzzino 2017; Scaramuzzino and Wennerhag 2015). Four sets of factors dominate the discussions and form the basis for our analytical framework and construction of dependent variables.

First, much research suggests that *organisational type* influences whether an actor is present and active at different levels (Beyers 2004; Beyers and Kerremans 2007). While this observation usually includes distinctions between diffuse and specific interests, lobby groups, advocacy groups, social movement organisations and so on, discussions on organisational types with regard to CSOs become somewhat more complex because such discussions have to include the CSOs' aims, activities and relations with their members and beneficiaries. In fact, it has been argued that if the issue a CSO is involved in is threatened by potentially costly policy changes, the organisation is more likely to engage at supranational level (Beyers and Kerremans 2012).

Second, the degree of *organisational resources* is seen as a key factor and studies tend to conclude that large and powerful domestic organisations, with plenty of resources and capacity to act, are the ones that engage in EU politics (Klüver 2010; Kriesi, Tresch and Jochum 2007). Financial resources (money), administrative resources (personnel) and representativeness (membership) are put forward as central to the analysis of whether domestic CSOs' seek influence at different levels, and above all the EU level (Klüver 2010). This assumes that CSOs which interact with the EU tend to exchange resources for influence in a relationship based on interdependency.

Third, studies also stress *level of organisational activity*. Beyers and Kerremans' (2012) study of interest groups shows that domestic interest groups tend to lobby proximate or nearby venues rather than venues that are located further away. They find a cumulative effect as 'proximate venues tend to be addressed first before organisations start lobbying additional and more distant venues' (Beyers and Kerremans 2012: 283). In the EU, domestic CSOs are furthermore often

members of EU based umbrella networks, and one can anticipate a certain degree of division of labour between national and EU branches (Ruzza 2015).

Fourth, a less discussed factor is whether domestic actors deem different *political levels as relevant* for them and the aims they seek to accomplish. Opportunities are not only structural 'facts' and institutionally embedded, but they are also assessed, framed and understood within a specific cultural and political context and can thus be understood differently by different actors even within the same movement (Gamson and Meyer 1996). Though a domestic CSO might be resource-rich and have the capacity to engage in multilevel politics, the EU might not be perceived as important for the CSO's policy agenda or compatible with the aims it seeks to accomplish. This suggests the importance of studying the perceived relevance of the EU for domestic CSOs' activities.

These four sets of factors combined constitute the analytical framework for this article, used to explain what routes domestic CSOs take to influence policies at national and EU levels.

SWEDEN AND THE ROUTES TO POLITICAL INFLUENCE

The relationship between the EU and its member states follows particular traits, largely defined by countries' social, political and economic institutional setting. Sweden has been a member of the EU since the mid-1990s. However, public debates and national politics have since been coloured by a certain distance towards what takes place in Brussels, and politicians have frequently noted the mismatch between national and EU policies, for instance with regards to welfare, employment policies, gender equality and alcohol and drug policies.

Domestic relations between the Swedish state and civil society are coloured by Sweden's corporatist historical legacy and governments at various levels have invited civil society representatives to join public committees and public boards to discuss and implement policies. Such inclusive and cordial relations have obviously engaged unions, but also senior citizen organisations, women's groups, disability movement organisations and immigrant and ethnic organisations (Feltenius 2008, Scaramuzzino 2012). Despite this general sense of inclusion, the Swedish system for interest representation has given different groups partly different access points, different avenues for political influence, different systems for funding (Danielson, Zetterberg and Amnå 2009) and different incitements to organise around certain particular issues. The women's movement, for instance, especially since the 1980s, has developed around the general need to work against gender-based violence and to organise women's shelters in local municipalities (Hedlund 2009).

Moreover, Swedish civil society is largely marked by a Scandinavian 'popular movement' tradition with large membership-based associations functioning as representatives of certain groups and/or interests vis-à-vis the state in a relationship characterised by a high level of trust (Trägårdh 2007). Unlike their counterparts in many European countries, Swedish CSOs only rarely employ large numbers of staff and the sector constitutes only a small part of the total national workforce because few actors are engaged in providing services based on public contracts, although this is slowly increasing (Johansson, Kassman and Scaramuzzino 2011). This suggests a receptive environment for Swedish CSOs' claims and increases their opportunities to engage and potentially be included in national politics and policymaking. This might in turn reduce their interest in being active at the EU level. Given that Sweden has in general been a reluctant member of the EU and that civil society traditionally has enjoyed relatively close and cordial relations with state authorities, one might anticipate that the interest and incitement to seek political influence in or through Brussels ought to be lower than in many other European countries that do not share these characteristics.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

The survey from which the empirical data for this paper derives was one of the largest civil society surveys ever conducted in Sweden. In total 2,791 Swedish CSOs answered the survey in 2012-2013. Although the survey was conducted five years ago, radical changes in Swedish CSOs advocacy behaviour are unlikely. Hence it is reasonable to regard the data presented as still actual. The sample for the survey is constructed on the categories used by Statistics Sweden (SCB) in their register of Swedish organisations (*Företagsregistret*) that was used to get information about Swedish CSOs. The aim with the sample was to include the Swedish CSOs one could expect to be engaged in mostly social welfare issues and interest representation. In line with this aim, we included two types of organisations: associations (*ideella föreningar*) and religious congregations (*registrerade trossamfund*). The sample included only the CSOs categorised by Statistics Sweden as associations involved in 'social service and care', associations involved in 'interest representation' and religious congregations. Through these choices, our total population of CSOs was 80,015 associations, which represent approximately 40 per cent of formally organised Swedish civil society. According to Statistics Sweden's calculations, Swedish civil society includes about 217,000 formal organisations (SCB 2010).

The survey questionnaire was sent by mail to a stratified sample of 6,180 randomly chosen Swedish CSOs. 2,791 questionnaires were returned. Because of faulty postal addresses and because some organisations had ceased to exist or changed their associational form, these CSOs were excluded from the sample because they no longer belonged to our population. The final response rate was therefore 51.3 per cent. The data analyses presented in this paper include only cases from the associations/congregations that answered positively to a question about whether the organisation had had any activities at all during the year of the survey in 2012 (this meant that we excluded 40 cases from the analysis).

EXPLORING DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Based on the review of current research, the following discussion presents the dependent and independent variables for the article. The dependent variables originate from the four routes for political influence (see Table 1) and have been operationalised through a series of questions in our survey. The **targeted level** was explored through two main questions:

- National level targeted: 'How often does your organisation use the following means to influence **Swedish** policies?'

- European level targeted: 'How often does your organisation use the following means to influence **EU** policies?'

These two questions were followed by a series of sub-questions presenting different strategies for influencing policies. These sub-questions addressed the **level of participation** as presented in Table 2. To be able to explore the importance of street protest for influencing both national and EU policymaking, we introduced two additional routes as shown in the following table (Table 2) under the label 'Protest'. Since we are foremost interested in CSOs' overall use of specific strategies and not how frequently they use such strategies, we will be using dichotomised variables that show whether the CSOs have at all used certain strategies. The alternatives "often", "sometimes" and "rarely" have thus been merged into a single value, to be contrasted to "never". In one of the tables, however, we also show the figures for those that "often" use these strategies.

Table 2: Dependent variables

		Territorial level targeted	
		Influencing Swedish policies	Influencing EU policies
Territorial level of participation	National	*'Contacted politicians at the national level'*	*'Contacted Swedish authorities or Swedish political parties'*
	EU	*'Contacted EU institutions'*	*'Contacted MEPs or groups within the European Parliament'*
Protest		*'Staged demonstrations'*	*'Staged demonstrations'*

The strategies considered under territorial level of participation are all related to so-called 'inside lobbying', while protest participation falls under the category of 'outside lobbying' (Dür and Mateo 2012). Many of the organisations that were included in this study are social movement organisations, such as trade unions, which besides inside lobbying strategies also tend to use more contentious forms of political participation such as street protests and demonstrations (Beyers, Eising and Maloney 2008; Snow, Soule and Kriesi 2004). Compared to inside lobbying and making direct contact with politicians, street protests are often less geographically bound to the site of the political-administrative level that is targeted during the protest. This difference should, however, not be exaggerated. When the CSOs have contacted politicians, both national parliamentarians and MEPs, such contact could just as well have been made outside of the parliaments and in the parliamentarians' local constituencies. Even though protests are sometimes staged outside of such sites (in Sweden, outside the national parliament; in the EU, outside the buildings of the EU institutions, or in Brussels in general), it is – particularly in Sweden – more common that street protests are quite geographically dispersed over the country (Wennerhag 2012).

In the first part of the analysis, we will explore Swedish domestic CSOs' use of different routes based on survey data from 1,704 CSOs. The cases on which the analysis is based are presented in Table 3 grouped in 10 organisational types representing different issue specific contexts (Vogel, Amnå, Munck and Häll 2003).

Table 3: Organisational types considered, and the number of CSOs for each type

Category	N.
Disability and patients' organisations	167
Temperance and anti-drug organisations	72
Trade unions	110
Women's organisations	90
Victim-support organisations	56
Other interest organisations	148
Humanitarian organisations	450
Social service organisations	78
Religious associations and congregations	533

The first six types of CSOs work for and represent the specific interests of particular social groups in the population. These are disability organisations, temperance and anti-drug organisations, trade unions, victim support organisations, women's organisations and other interest organisations (such

as pensioners', immigrants' and LGBT organisations). We also include three other types of CSOs representing more diffuse interests: humanitarian organisations, social service organisations and religious associations and congregations. Compared to organisations representing specific interests, humanitarian organisations do not seek to primarily represent a specific group and are often providing aid and help for vulnerable groups both in Sweden and abroad. Social service organisations instead have the primary aim of providing specific social welfare services (such as elderly and child care) on the basis of a non-profit organisational logic, often on behalf of and funded by the public sector. Many of these organisations define themselves as cooperatives. Religious associations and congregations are usually engaged in social welfare issues regardless of their denomination. Organisations connected to the Church of Sweden are also, since the separation of church and state in 2000, voluntary organisations.

Our typology is based on organisational aims and the issues with which CSOs are involved, which we interpret as being broader than the policy fields in which they might be active. As will be shown in the analysis, however, CSOs involved in different issues tend to have different characteristics because different policy fields tend to structure CSOs according to certain institutional logics.

In our final analysis, we explore what independent variables explain the use of different routes. Following our analytical framework discussed above, the following independent variables are analysed.

1. **Organisational type** was assessed manually through answers in the survey about the aim of the organisation and from the CSOs' own webpages.

2. **Organisational resources**, including *membership base* (representativeness) and *employed staff* (personnel) were stated by the CSOs themselves in the questionnaire in response to the following questions: 'How many members does your organisation have? [Individuals; Organisations]' and 'How many full-time employed staff does your organisation have?' The variables have been dichotomised around the values 1,000 individual members and more than 0 employees, and a separate variable was created for CSOs with only organisations as members (i.e. meta-organisations).[2]

3. **Organisational level of activity** was assessed manually through answers in the survey about the main territorial level of activity and from the CSOs' own webpages.

4. **Perceived importance of political level** was measured by the question 'How important are the following levels of political decision making for solving the problems or issues that your organisation works with? [National level; European level].'

ANALYSIS

In this section, we will first discuss our results regarding different routes that CSOs take when trying to influence policies at the national and/or EU levels. In the second part, we will scrutinise the correlation between the use of one route and the use of other routes. The final part examines whether our four sets of factors affect the CSOs' choices of different routes to influence policies. We

used binary logistic regression models to determine the different factors' relative impact on the CSOs' likelihood to take different routes for attempting to influence EU and national policies.

COMPARING ROUTES FOR POLITICAL INFLUENCE

A common feature for Swedish CSOs' engagement in a multilevel political opportunity structure is their main orientation towards the national political-territorial level, rather than the EU level. We find that CSOs more often try to influence national policies (varying between 12 per cent and 39 per cent, depending on route) than EU policies (varying between 13 per cent and 32 per cent, depending on route) (see Table 4 below).

Table 4: The CSOs' use of various forms of advocacy to influence national policies (national level targeted) and EU policies (EU level targeted). Percent

		Level targeted	
		Influencing Swedish policies	Influencing EU policies
Level of participation	National	*'Contacted politicians at the national level'* **39%** *(6 %)* Total N = 1,531	*'Contacted Swedish authorities or Swedish political parties'* **32%** *(3%)* Total N = 1,457
	EU	*'Contacted EU institutions'* **12%** *(0.5%)* Total N = 1,489	*'Contacted MEPs or groups within the European Parliament'* **13%** *(0.5%)* Total N = 1,441
Protest		*'Staged demonstrations'* **32%** *(3%)* Total N = 1,554	*'Staged demonstrations'* **17%** *(1%)* Total N = 1,465

The bold figures show the percentage of CSOs that have *at all* (often, sometimes, or rarely) used the mentioned strategies to influence national and EU policies. The italicised figures within brackets show the percentage of CSOs that have *often* used these strategies.

It is most common for Swedish CSOs to follow 'a traditional route', implying that they directly contact domestic politicians to influence national policies. With the intention to influence national policies, we also find that approximately one third of the CSOs engage in demonstrations, a proportion only somewhat less than those contacting politicians. The relevance of the 'national route', or what della Porta and Caiani (2009) label 'domestication of protest', is thus striking, as engaging in national politics is the most common strategy among Swedish CSOs. Our analysis shows that the proportion of Swedish CSOs that engage in a 'European route down', by contacting EU institutions to influence national policies, is much lower, as 12 per cent reported they engaged in such advocacy activities. To use the EU as a vehicle for pressuring the Swedish government, which can be seen as the opposite of the 'domestication of protest' discussed above and implies an 'externalisation of protest', is therefore less common.

However, being active at the national level does not prevent ambitions and intentions to influence EU policies, as this appears to be almost as common as seeking to influence Swedish policies. Considering that we analysed a representative sample of domestic CSOs, it is remarkable that as much as 32 per cent report that they have contacted Swedish authorities or political parties to

influence EU policies (a national route). We find that arranging protests is not uncommon in this respect. Although this strategy is less common than contacting Swedish politicians, it is used more frequently to influence EU policies than contacting MEPs or the EU institutions themselves (European route up).

IS THERE A TRADE-OFF BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT ROUTES?

It is important to address whether the EU and the national political levels form two, potentially separate levels of a multilevel opportunity structure and how one can understand the relationship between the different ways of influencing national and/or EU policies. Are CSOs that use one route for addressing the EU level more likely to also use other routes that involve national politics and vice versa? Or, on the contrary, does attention to one level of political opportunities lead to less use of another?

Table 5: Correlations between different forms of advocacy to influence national and EU policies

Correlations			Influencing Swedish policies			Influencing EU policies		
			European route down	Traditional route	Protest	National route	European route up	Protest
Influencing Swedish policies	European route down: *Contacted EU institutions*	Pearson Correlation	1					
		Observations (N)	1,489					
	Traditional route: *Contacted politicians working at the national level*	Pearson Correlation	.436**	1				
		Observations (N)	1,470	1,531				
	Protest: *Staged demonstrations*	Pearson Correlation	.309**	.441**	1			
		Observations (N)	1,473	1,514	1,554			
Influencing EU policies	National route: *Contacted Swedish authorities or Swedish political parties*	Pearson Correlation	.406**	.512**	.391**	1		
		Observations (N)	1,376	1,397	1,406	1,457		
	European route up: *Contacted MEPs or groups within the European Parliament*	Pearson Correlation	.505**	.413**	.366**	.578**	1	
		Observations (N)	1,368	1,382	1,392	1,435	1,441	
	Protest: *Staged demonstrations*	Pearson Correlation	.348**	.372**	.543**	.512**	.530**	1
		Observations (N)	1,383	1,405	1,417	1,443	1,434	1,465

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The relationships between various routes seem to be fairly integrated and with extensive spillover effects, because we can show that there are positive correlations between the use of all routes (Pearson's *r* varies between .309 and .578). This suggests that the use of one route makes it more likely for a CSO also to use other routes. For instance, CSOs trying to influence national policies are also more likely to be trying to influence EU policies and vice versa. The correlations are positive for all routes and there is no direct trade-off between the uses of different forms of advocacy.

We however find the strongest correlation between the 'European route up' and the 'national route'. This suggests that CSOs that target the EU are also highly likely to adopt national strategies for the same purpose. It can also be noted that the correlations are strong between the different forms of advocacy used to influence EU policies. CSOs trying to do this are more likely to simultaneously use different types of strategies, including both 'inside lobbying' (contacts with politicians and institutions) and 'outside lobbying' (protests). Our findings thus suggest that CSOs that seek to influence EU policies are also active at the national level and inclined to use a variety of strategies for their purposes.

EXPLORING ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS

The kinds of organisational factors that provide us with insight into how to explain different routes are presented in separate regression models for CSOs' attempts to influence national policies (Table 6) and EU policies (Table 7). Each of the models test for the factors discussed above (organisational type, organisational resources, organisational level of activity and perceived importance of the policy level in question). Humanitarian organisations were chosen as the reference in all regression models because CSOs within this category use advocacy less than CSOs representing and working for specific interests (Scaramuzzino and Wennerhag forthcoming). The significant differences thereby show whether other types of CSOs are using the different ways of influencing policies more or less than humanitarian organisations.

When it comes to the impact of organisational type, this differs both between the targeted policy level (national or EU) and the type of advocacy used (contacting politicians or protest). Table 6 shows our results for CSOs that aim to influence national policies, but act at different territorial levels. It is apparent that there are no statistically significant differences between the types of CSOs that use a 'European route down', by making contacts with EU institutions in order to influence national policies. Somewhat stronger differences appear with regard to the types of CSOs that use a 'traditional route', with CSOs contacting national politicians in order to influence policy at the national level. Here the trade unions and temperance/anti-drug organisations stand out, but also women's organisations that are more likely to stage demonstrations in this respect.

The connection between organisational type and CSOs' ambitions to use various routes for influencing EU policies (Table 7) follows a similar pattern. Once again, we find that women's organisations are much more likely than the reference category to use all routes for targeting EU policies, including staging demonstrations. Trade unions and disability organisations are also in general more likely to address policies at this level, both when it comes to contacting politicians at the national level (national route) and when staging demonstrations, but not when it comes to contacting politicians at the EU level (European route up). The largest differences between types of CSOs are regarding the use of protest as a way to influence policies, both nationally and at the EU level. In comparison to the reference category (humanitarian organisations), women's organisations, trade unions and temperance/anti-drug organisations are several times more likely to stage demonstrations.

Table 6: The most important factors influencing CSOs' attempts to influence national policies. Binary logistic regression

	Model 1A: European route down			Model 1B: Traditional route			Model 1C: Protest		
	Contacted EU institutions			*Contacted politicians working at the national level*			*Staged demonstrations*		
Variable	B		Exp(B)	B		Exp(B)	B		Exp(B)
CSO type (Humanitarian org. = ref.)									
Disability org.	−0.043		0.958	0.097		1.102	0.462	†	1.587
Temperance and anti-drug org.	0.524		1.689	0.844	*	2.326	0.832	*	2.299
Trade unions	0.494		1.639	0.748	**	2.113	1.850	***	6.362
Victim-support org.	−0.489		0.613	−0.079		0.924	−0.384		0.681
Women's org.	0.351		1.420	0.419		1.521	2.107	***	8.225
Other interest org.	−0.308		0.735	0.866	***	2.378	1.200	***	3.321
Social service org.	0.684	*	1.981	−0.029		0.972	−1.310	*	0.270
Religious associations and congregations	0.406		1.501	−0.258		0.772	0.109		1.115
Organisational level									
Organisational level (local organisation = ref.)									
Regional organisation	1.013	**	2.755	1.078	***	2.938	0.772	**	2.165
National organisation	1.759	***	5.807	1.671	***	5.319	0.064		1.066
Organisational resources									
No. of members (1–999 = ref.)									
≥ 1000 members	0.058		1.060	0.234		1.263	0.417	*	1.517
Meta-organisation	0.656	†	1.928	0.103		1.109	0.091		1.096
Employed staff (0 = ref.)									
Have employed staff	0.478	*	1.613	0.965	***	2.624	0.550	***	1.734
Perceived importance of the national level									
The national level is perceived as important	2.157	***	8.649	1.570	***	4.807	1.406	***	4.080
Constant	−4.544	***	0.011	−2.334	***	0.097	−2.864	***	0.057
Observations	1,283			1,312			1,327		
Nagelkerke's pseudo R^2	0.213			0.284			0.269		

Binary logistic regression. Standardised beta-coefficients are shown in the columns. †10% significance. *5% significance. **1% significance. ***0.1% significance.

Table 7: The most important factors influencing CSOs' attempts to influence EU policies. Binary logistic regression

| Variable | Model 2A: National route | | | Model 2B: European route up | | | Model 2C: Protest | | |
| | Contacted Swedish authorities or Swedish political parties | | | Contacted MEPs or groups within the European Parliament | | | Staged demonstrations | | |
	B		Exp(B)	B		Exp(B)	B		Exp(B)
CSO type (Humanitarian org. = ref.)									
Disability org.	0.780	**	2.182	0.128		1.137	1.071	**	2.918
Temperance and anti-drug org.	0.751	*	2.119	0.138		1.148	1.208	**	3.348
Trade unions	1.049	***	2.855	0.561		1.752	1.727	***	5.626
Victim-support org.	−0.677		0.508	−19.295		0.000	−18.776		0.000
Women's org.	1.108	***	3.027	1.275	***	3.578	1.665	***	5.284
Other interest org.	0.915	***	2.497	0.533		1.704	1.290	***	3.634
Social service org.	0.447		1.563	−0.131		0.877	−0.441		0.643
Religious associations and congregations	0.039		1.040	−0.158		0.854	0.725	*	2.065
Organisational level									
Organisational level (local organisation = ref.)									
Regional organisation	0.322		1.380	0.375		1.454	0.116		1.123
National organisation	0.823	**	2.278	0.560	*	1.751	−0.223		0.800
Organisational resources									
No. of members (1–999 = ref.)									
≥ 1000 members	0.299		1.348	0.402		1.494	0.289		1.335
Meta-organisation	0.483		1.622	0.444		1.559	−0.407		0.666
Employed staff (0 = ref.)									
Have employed staff	0.516	**	1.675	0.786	***	2.194	0.504	*	1.655
Perceived importance of the European level									
The European level is perceived as important	1.393	***	4.028	1.689	***	5.414	1.378	***	3.966
Constant	−2.185	***	0.112	−3.429	***	0.032	−3.442	***	0.032
Observations	**1,215**			**1,203**			**1,221**		
Nagelkerke's pseudo R^2	0.253			0.266			0.223		

Binary logistic regression. Standardised beta-coefficients are shown in the columns. [†]10% significance. *5% significance. **1% significance. ***0.1% significance.

Factors related to organisational resources also affect CSOs' likelihood to use different routes. In all of the models, the factor that makes it most likely for CSOs to attempt to influence policies is the existence of employed staff. A large number of members does not affect the probability of a CSO trying to influence policies, except for in the case of staging demonstrations to influence national policies. When it comes to the organisational level, in all models it is mostly through 'inside lobbying' that nationally based organisations seek to influence both national and EU policies. This is, however, not the case for staging demonstrations, where the CSOs' organisational level has less impact on their likelihood to engage in such activities. Once again, the staging of political protests seems to be following slightly different patterns than other forms of advocacy.

Finally, the regression models show that the perceived importance of the political level for addressing the issues that the CSOs are working with is a key factor and the fact that a CSO perceives a specific level as important makes them more likely to address that level for all types of advocacy.

To value and rank different sets of factors is a methodologically sensitive issue, yet our analysis suggests that organisational type and perceived relevance of the political level have most explanatory power, while organisational resources and level of activity explains less. However, the pattern differs somewhat depending on whether it concerns domestic CSOs' ambitions to influence national policies or EU policies.

ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS WITHIN NATIONAL CONTEXTS

The development of EU policies, discourses and governance arrangements for participation have offered domestic CSOs new opportunities to mobilise around and a further arena for political influence. Despite the fact that EU and national policymaking processes are increasingly intertwined, most CSOs' political activities continue to take place at the national level. Swedish CSOs are clearly embedded in national political, cultural and social settings and primarily use their access to national channels to obtain political influence. This is hardly surprising and in line with previous research. Yet a key finding from our analysis is that such embeddedness does not contradict ambitions to influence EU policies. On the contrary, influencing EU policies is given almost the same priority as influencing national policies. While the ambitions to influence national *and* EU policies suggest a certain balance between national and EU politics in this respect, the gap is more sizeable regarding where the activities take place. The locus for CSOs' activities tends to be rooted in a national setting even when the ambition is to influence EU policies. Demonstrations, however, seem to follow a partly different logic. The use of demonstrations as a form of outside, and more contentious, strategy is more frequent than contacting EU institutions or MEPs. Demonstrations can thus bridge political and territorial divides as demonstrations are staged with the intention to influence EU policies, but are not necessarily taking place in Brussels.

It appears that CSOs do not actively choose between either being active at the EU or the national level. On the contrary, our analysis of potential trade-off between routes shows that those who are active in seeking to influence policies at one political level, are also involved in seeking to influence policies at the other political level. Assumptions that domestic organisations are active at the EU or the national level, or use inside or outside tactics, are thus only partly true. Rather the act of seeking to influence EU policies follows a cumulative logic for domestic CSOs. Those who are engaged in trying to influence EU policies are equally active at national level. Furthermore, they also use both inside and outside strategies to a high degree. CSOs that engage in influencing EU policies can in this respect be seen as the most politically active, using all opportunities (national and EU) and means (insider and outsider) to try to influence policies.

A key objective for this article was to further explain why some CSOs sought to influence EU policies and we find a combination of factors that explain why some go to Brussels. Taking us back to discussions on what organisational factors that have explanatory power, organisational type seems to be a key factor.

Our results however challenge previous research on diffuse and specific interests, since our study indicates a mix of both the usual suspects and odd cases that highlight the relevance of organisational type to explain CSOs' activities. For instance, for many years Swedish trade unions have been engaged and involved in EU level politics and with clear access points at both the national and EU levels. They have been particularly active in recent years in getting businesses from other EU member states to agree to Swedish labour market rules and norms when delivering services in Sweden. This is especially important because EU integration is often perceived as a threat to the Swedish model and social contract (Trägårdh 2007).

We find that women's organisations (national route, European route up and protest) and temperance organisations (national route and protest) also stand out as being likely to engage at both the national and EU levels. This is in line with other studies on Swedish CSOs (Karlberg and Jacobsson 2014; Scaramuzzino and Scaramuzzino 2015) that suggest that Swedish women's organisations have both engaged in and been particularly successful in addressing the EU level for the purpose of 'exporting' Swedish norms concerning gender equality to EU institutions. The EU has also been ambitious when it comes to working for gender equality, for instance when it comes to labour market inclusion and anti-discrimination (Bygnes 2013).

The temperance movement has similar rationales for engaging at the EU level because the temperance movement has been active in defending the Swedish way of treating alcohol and drug dependency. Even if Swedish politics is still characterised by a consensus that alcohol consumption needs to be restricted to improve the health of the citizens, anti-alcohol policies have over time lost their saliency as a central political issue in Sweden. Most public discussions have focused on how Sweden's membership in the EU since 1995 affects the possibility to maintain restrictive alcohol policies, for example to maintain exceptions from the rules of the local market such as the state-managed system of selling alcoholic beverages (Cisneros Örnberg 2009). For the organisations of the temperance movement, this has made EU policies an important target for their lobbying, mainly through the Swedish politicians involved in EU politics, but also through European CSO networks.

This suggests that there is something more in the notion of organisational type, since organisational type links to particular issue specific contexts. This is consistent with Beyers and Kerremans' (2012: 268) argument that the 'issue specific context in which interest groups develop their political strategies […] explains the origins of political strategies including multilevel venue shopping'.

However, there is something more profound in this. Explanations of why domestic CSOs engage in EU politics cannot only be referred to CSO types, issue characteristics, formal access at EU level or to organisational factors. To have organisational *resources* and capacity constitutes, of course, a kind of threshold, but, as we can demonstrate, it is not the strongest factor in explaining domestic CSOs' willingness to seek to influence EU policies (Scaramuzzino and Wennerhag 2015). Of much greater importance is whether the CSOs perceive the EU as *relevant* for solving the problems and claims that they address. Such a 'cognitive threshold' has a higher impact on CSOs' use of all routes considered in this article compared to the other organisational factors analysed (type, resources and level). This shows that while organisations might have the skills or the resources to act at different levels, the perception of relevance for the issues they work with is the strongest enabling (or hampering factor) for CSOs' engagement in multilevel strategies. The large majority of Swedish CSOs seek political influence domestically and continue to be firmly rooted and embedded in national structures. The triggering effect kicks in when national values linked to specific policy issues become threatened. It is then that CSOs first engage and become involved beyond the national sphere.

CONCLUSIONS

This article shows the importance of both adopting the perspectives of 'routes to Europe' and focusing on organisational factors within the particular national context in which CSOs are embedded in order to capture fully the advocacy activities undertaken by domestic CSOs. Our model with different routes that combine the level of participation with inside and outside lobbying strategies and the target level shows that the answer to the question of to what extent Swedish CSOs are Europeanized or not is not unequivocal. Depending on the route chosen, we find not only different extents of advocacy activities but also slightly different organisational types. Combining this route-orientated approach with an analysis of the factors behind different strategies shows that

the patterns are quite similar, at least when it comes to inside lobbying. It is also evident that the new set of opportunities for Swedish CSOs at the EU level are within their grasp through multilevel strategies and that there is no trade-off with traditional nationally bound advocacy activities.

These findings are of key importance considering that this article draws on a representative sample of domestic Swedish CSOs where a large majority of them (83 per cent) are locally based associations, 9 per cent are active at regional level and 8 per cent at national level. Because the sample of organisations studied here are not the most likely to engage in politics or to be active at the supranational level (as is often the case in previous research), it is not surprising that the majority of them do not engage with either national or EU politics. Elsewhere (Scaramuzzino and Wennerhag forthcoming), we have shown that Swedish CSOs primarily make contacts with politicians and officials at the local level. Taking this into account, it is remarkable that as many as one in three of the organisations target EU policies, although this is done through their national channels. This suggests that while the EU is present as a political opportunity structure for Swedish CSOs, Brussels is still distant and the bubble difficult to burst.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS

Roberto Scaramuzzino, School of Social Work, Lund University, Box 23, 22100 Lund, Sweden [roberto.scaramuzzino@soch.lu.se].

ENDNOTES

[1] Although the terms 'domestic' and 'national' are often used as synonymous, in this article we make an important distinction between national and domestic levels both concerning levels of government and organisational levels. By domestic levels we mean all levels within the Swedish context including local, regional and national levels. By national level we mean the central or state level.
[2] Regarding members, 82 per cent of the CSOs had 1–999 individual members, 15 per cent had 1,000 members or more, and 4 per cent of the CSOs were meta-organisations. Regarding employed staff, 69 per cent of the CSOs had no employed staff, while 31 per cent had staff employed.

REFERENCES

Arvidson, M., H. Johansson and R. Scaramuzzino (2017). 'Advocacy Compromised: How Financial, Organizational and Institutional Factors Shape Advocacy Strategies of Civil Society Organizations'. *Voluntas.* Online first: 1-22.

Beyers, J. (2004). 'Voice and Access: Political Practices of European Interest Associations'. *European Union Politics*, 5(2): 211–240.

Beyers, J. and B. Kerremans (2012). 'Domestic Embeddedness and the Dynamics of Multilevel Venue Shopping in Four EU Member States'. *Governance*, 25(2): 263–290.

Beyers, J., and B. Kerremans (2007). 'Critical resource dependencies and the Europeanization of domestic interest groups'. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 14(3): 460–481.

Beyers, J., R. Eising and W. Maloney (2008). 'Researching Interest Group Politics in Europe and Elsewhere: Much We Study, Little We Know?'. *West European Politics*, 31(6): 1103–1128.

Binderkrantz, A. S. and A. Rasmussen (2015). 'Comparing the domestic and the EU lobbying context: perceived agenda-setting influence in the multi-level system of the European Union'. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 22(4): 552–569.

Bygnes, S. S. (2013). 'We are in Complete Agreement": The Diversity Issue, Disagreement and Change in the European Women's Lobby'. *Social Movement Studies*, 12(2): 199–213.

Cisneros Örnberg, J. (2009). *The Europeanization of Swedish alcohol policy*. Stockholm: Stockholm University.

Danielson, A., P. Zetterberg and E. Amnå (2009). *Bidrag till vad? – En kunskapsöversikt över effekter och metoder rörande statliga bidrag till ideella organisationer* [Grants for what? – A research overview on methods and effects of state grants to voluntary organisations]. Stockholm: Ungdomsstyrelsen.

Della Porta, D. and M. Caiani (2009). *Social Movements and Europeanization.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Della Porta, D. and M. Caian (2007). 'Europeanization from below? Social movements and Europe'. *Mobilization*, 12(1): 1–20.

Dür, A. and G. Mateo (2012). 'Who lobbies the European Union? National interest groups in a multilevel polity'. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 19(7): 969–987.

European Commission (2000). *The Commission and NGOs: Building a stronger partnership*, COM (2000) 11, Online: https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/commission-discussion-paper-commission-and-non-governmental-organisations-building-stronger_en [accessed 23 January 2018].

Feltenius, D. (2008). 'From Outsiders to Influential Insiders: Pensioners' Organizations in the Policy Process in Sweden'. *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice,* 10(1): 29–46.

Gamson, W. A., and D. S. Meyer (1996). 'Framing Political Opportunity'. In D. McAdam, J. D. McCarthy and M. N. Zald (eds), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Cultural Framing.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 275-290.

Hedlund, G. (2009). 'Att samverka i ideologiskt laddade frågor – exemplet kvinnofrid'. In G. Hedlund and S. Montin (eds), *Governance på svenska*. Stockholm: Santerus.

Imig, D. and S. Tarrow (2001). *Contentious Europeans: Protest and Politics in an Emerging Polity.* New York: Rowman and Littlefield.

Johansson, H. and S. Kalm (eds) (2015). *EU Civil Society. Patterns of cooperation, competition and conflict*. Basingstoke, Hants.: Palgrave Macmillan.

Johansson, H., A. Kassman and R. Scaramuzzino (2011). *Staten och det civila samhällets organisationer i ett föränderligt välfärdssamhälle* [The state and the civil society organizations in a changing welfare society]. Stockholm: Överenskommelsen.

Johansson, H. and J. Lee (2014). 'Bridging the Gap: How do EU-Based Civil Society Organisations Acquire Their Internal Representation?'. *Voluntas*, 25, 405–424.

Karlberg, E. and K. Jacobsson (2014). 'A Meta-organizational Perspective on the Europeanization of Civil Society: The Case of the Swedish Women's Lobby'. *Voluntas*, 26(4): 1438–1459.

Keck, M. E. and K. Sikkink (1998). *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Klüver, H. (2010). 'Europeanization of Lobbying Activities: When National Interest Groups Spill Over to the European Level'. *Journal of European Integration*, 32(2): 175–191.

Kohler-Koch, B. (2009). 'The three worlds of European civil society: What role for civil society for what kind of Europe?'. *Policy and Society*, 28(1): 47–57.

Kohler-Koch, B. (1997). 'Organized Interests in the EC and the European Parliament'. *European Integration Online Papers*, 1(9). Online: http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/1997-009a.htm [accessed 23 January 2018].

Kohler-Koch, B. and B. Rittberger (eds) (2007). *Debating the Democratic Legitimacy of the European Union*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.

Kriesi, H., A. Tresch and M. Jochum (2007). 'Going public in the European union: Action repertoires of western European collective political actors'. *Comparative Political Studies*, 40(1): 48–73.

Lundberg, E. and T. Sedelius (2014). 'National Linkages and Ambiguous EU Approaches among European Civil Society Organizations'. *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, 10(3): 322–336.

Marks, G., and D. McAdam (1996). 'Social movements and the changing structure of political opportunity in the European Union'. *Journal of West European Politics*, 19(2): 249–278.

Princen, S. and B. Kerremans (2008). 'Opportunity structures in the EU multi-level system'. *West European Politics*, 31(6): 1129–1146.

Rodekamp, M. (2014). *Their Members' Voice: Civil Society Organisations in the European Union.* Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.

Rucht, D. (2001). 'Lobbying or Protest? Strategies to Influence EU Environmental Policies'. In D. Imig, R. Douglas and S. G. Tarrow (eds), *Contentious Europeans: Protest and Politics in an Emerging Polity*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.

Ruzza, C. (2015). 'Changes in the Field of EU civil society organisations: Institutionalisation, Differentiation and Challengers'. In H. Johansson and S. Kalm (eds). *EU Civil Society. Patterns of cooperation, competition and conflict*. Basingstoke, Hants: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ruzza, C. (2006). 'European institutions and the policy discourse of organised civil society'. In S. Smismans (ed.), *Civil society and legitimate European governance.* Cheltenham: Edward Elgar: 169-195.

Ruzza, C. and Bozzini, E. (2008) 'Organised civil society and European governance: Routes of contestation'. *European Political Science*, 7(3): 296–303.

Sánchez-Salgado, R. (2014). *Europeanizing civil society: How the EU shapes Civil Society Organizations.* Basingstoke, Hants: Palgrave.

Sánchez-Salgado, R. (2007). 'Giving a European Dimension to Civil Society Organizations'. *Journal of Civil Society*, 3(3): 253–269.

Scaramuzzino, R. (2012). *Equal Opportunities? A Cross-national Comparison of Immigrant Organisations in Sweden and Italy*. Ph.D. dissertation. Malmö: Malmö University.

Scaramuzzino, R. and G. Scaramuzzino (2015). 'Sex Workers' Rights Movement and the EU: Challenging the new European Prostitution Policy Model'. In H. Johansson and S. Kalm (eds), *EU Civil Society: Patterns of Cooperation, Competition and Conflict*. Basingstoke, Hants: Palgrave Macmillan: 137-154.

Scaramuzzino, R. and M. Wennerhag (2015). 'Civil Society Organizations Going European?: The Europeanization of Swedish CSOs.' *SAGE Open*, 5(2): 1-14.

Scaramuzzino, R. and M. Wennerhag (forthcoming). 'Europeanization of Swedish civil society: Motives, activities, and perceived consequences.' In A. Meeuwisse, and R. Scaramuzzino (eds), *Europeanization in Sweden - Opportunities and challenges for civil society organizations*. Manuscript accepted for publication by Berghahn Books.

SCB (2010). *Det civila samhället 2010: ett regeringsuppdrag med undersökningar från Statistiska centralbyrån* [Civil society 2010: A government assignment with investigations from Statistics Sweden]. Örebro: Statistics Sweden.

Smismans, S. (2003). 'European civil society: Shaped by Discourses and Institutional Interests'. *European Law Journal*, 9(4): 473–495.

Snow, D. A., S. A. Soule and H. Kriesi (2004). 'Mapping the terrain'. In D. Snow, S. Soule and H. Kriesi (eds) *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing: 3-16

Teune, S. (ed.) (2010) *The transnational condition: Protest dynamics in an entangled Europe*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Trägårdh, L. (2007). 'The "Civil Society" Debate in Sweden: The Welfare State Challenged'. In L. Trägårdh (ed.), *State and Civil Society in Northern Europe – The Swedish Model reconsidered.* New York: Berghahn Books: 9-36.

Vogel, J., E. Amnå, I. Munck and L. Häll (2003). *Föreningslivet i Sverige: välfärd, socialt kapital, demokratiskola* [Associational life in Sweden; welfare, social capital, school in democracy]. Stockholm: Statistics Sweden.

Wennerhag, M. (2012). 'Demonstrerandets normalisering?' [The normalization of protest?]. In L. Weibull, H. Oscarsson and A. Bergström (eds), *I framtidens skugga: 42 kapitel om politik, medier och samhälle*. Gothenburg: SOM-institutet.

Zippel, K. (2004). 'Transnational Advocacy Networks and Policy Cycles in the European Union: The Case of Sexual Harassment'. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society,* 11(1): 57–85.