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**“Polish business interest associations as a lobbying force
at the national and the EU level”**

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Comparative interest group research in the EU – theory and methodology

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Abstract

This paper examines the changing role of Polish business interest associations (BIAs) at the national and EU level of policy making since Poland's accession to the EU. The study provides the first extensive insight into the development, the extent, the strategy, tactics and their influence as a lobbying force. I started by characterizing Polish BIAs and domestic political context within which they operate. We can assume that Polish BIAs differ from business organizations in old member states regarding the political conditions they operate within, their recourses, relations with institutions and other stakeholders, political behavior, etc. They have been determined by weak traditions of associability and civil society, lack of political culture traditions, different values and communist heritage. The process of European integration affects the overall environment in which these interest groups operate. They must undergo learning processes to understand European policymaking and how to represent of their interests at the EU level. The crucial questions in this context are whether Polish BIAs have adapted to the European challenge, how they are represented at the European level, what problems they face, what successes they have scored?

Introduction

The main objective of research Project "EUROLOB II" is to perform an in-depth analysis of the system of interest intermediation in several European countries and the process of adaptation of interest groups to changes resulting from the extending competences of EU. It is also planned to perform a comparative analysis of functioning of BIAs (business interest associations) and other interest groups in individual countries (Kohler-Koch, Quittkat, 2009). It may be expected that there are clear differences in functioning and representation of BIAs between the old and the new Member States of the EU, which arise from differing traditions of political, social and economic conditions. The heritage of the communist system in the new Member States, including Poland, has a fundamental influence in this case. The weakness of civil society, insufficient social mobilisation, centralisation of power, presence of informal rules in the politics, domination of privileged interest groups, personalisation of relations with state authorities, low political culture, limited financial resources of associations, public

opinion unfavourable towards the interests of business environments, etc. are conditions in which the Polish business organisations are established and operate.

In Poland there is a lack of broader quantitative and qualitative research on the activity of BIAs, which is why the thesis and questions in this work are based on the analysis of business profile of individual organisations and only a few case studies. They might show and outline the specificity of conditions in which the Polish BIAs are operating and some of their characteristic properties. The primary research questions concern the specificity of BIAs operation in Poland, as well as the process of their transformation and adaptation to the changes related to Poland's membership in EU, since we may assume that Polish BIAs are undergoing an accelerated process of adjustment to fast changing conditions. Particularly clearly apparent is the quick Europeanization of associations manifested in change of aims, methods and strategies of interest representation. Nearly all the largest BIAs in Poland are the members of European federations, monitor EU policies, adjust their aims, objectives, and functions to challenges related to European integration, and sometimes they individually represent interests on the European level.

1. Conditions for establishing and operation of BIAs in Poland

It may be assumed, that BIAs in Poland do not constitute a force comparable with their counterparts in the countries of Western Europe. This is determined by the conditions in which the BIAs were established and functioned.

In the 90's the transformation process of political, economic and social system in Poland entered the stage of acceleration. Some researchers stress, that it was then that the networks of connections between various interest groups and centres of power, which decided on the shape of the emerging political and economic system. However non-formal interest groups transformed the procedural model of democracy in Poland into a facade covering the domination of backstage politics actors, e.g. non-formal interest groups, secret services or "oligarchs" of large business (Zybertowicz 2006). The process described by the World Bank as "state captures" was progressing. These are the actions of individuals, groups or companies, which influence legislation processes for their own benefit. Such actions are regarded as high level corruption, resulting from the lack of clarity in transfers of private benefits to public officials (World Bank 2000: XV-XVI)

On the basis of experiences of Poland and other post-communist countries a concept was formulated of “structural power located outside the constitutional state authorities”, in financial and economic institutions, particularly those which are a part of international networks of large corporate business (Staniszki 2003). Such type of politics is characterised by a lack of clarity of system game rules.

At the same time, the logic of connections within the structures of power indicates a danger of formation of clientelism system in Poland. It lies in creating formal and non-formal mechanisms of dependence between the decision makers and the pressure groups, which grant the power of political support in return for preferential redistribution of resources. The symptoms of formation of such a system in Poland are, among others, the rules of performing staff changes in enterprises of the public sector, or politicisation of state administration. The institutional weakness of the state is accompanied by the lack of traditions of association in Poland, the weakness of civil society and small social capital, which constitute the basis for establishment and activation of associations.

Contact between business environments and public authorities in Poland are dominated by personal, direct relations with administration and politicians. The representatives of economic environments are treated in these contacts not as representatives of business organisations, but rather as people whose significance is determined by their position and connections in the power systems.

In executive state institutions there had formed a practice of *co-optation of people*, and not associations. The access to the most important state authorities is easier for the chosen entrepreneurs, rather than for the largest BIAs (Kozek 2003). Similar practices in France Michel Crozier (Crozier 1996) has described as “democracy of access” in which “it is important to have access to the decision maker”. In the sphere of political culture, a long lasting lack of institution of revealing conflicts of interests, resulted in distrust to compromise and dialogue. These attitudes are visible today in the activity of business organisations, interest representation and lobbying activity. They are regarded by the public opinion as clearly negative.

The system of interest representation is developing in Poland in specific conditions, moreover, most interest groups are rather amorphous and poorly formed. Imbalance or asymmetry among them is apparent. Lobbies, which were established around interests rooted in the previous government system (some trade unions, former industrial branches, monopolies etc.) do not encounter sufficiently strong counterweight in the form of “new”

pressure groups: business organisations, consumer or ecological movements. Such asymmetry of power and effectiveness of pressure groups recreates some forms of behaviour and articulation of interests shaped under the communist system and in the transformation period. Privileged pressure groups, such as the lobby of hard coal mines among others, achieve measurable benefits, namely they transfer their operational costs to other citizens and receive considerable budget transfers.

We still have to deal with a crisis of social and civil dialogue, and the mode of social partnership in Poland is described as consultation etatism (according to Anke Hassel, 2003) – social partners have access to the process of shaping the social and economic policies, but it is not a real participation. The government side wants to control the situation through consultations, allows the participation of employers' organisations and trade unions, but the final decisions are made by the government. This is accompanied by asymmetry of interest representation, which prefers some branches of economy and large state enterprises or well organised political professional groups.

It is painful to see a deficit of social consultations, meaning that there are no rules facilitating broader inclusion of citizens into works on the drafts of legal acts, while there are such, that limit the participation of the social side. The prevalent in Poland confrontation system of conducting politics further minimises the chances for working out social agreements regarding the priorities of state development and common actions for the long-term building of social capital. Consolidation of such rules results in exclusion of some social environments and organisations, which do not want to fit in with the logic of confrontation between the leading political parties (Jasiecki 2004)

In Poland, due to the political role played by the NSZZ "Solidarity" (Independent and Self-governing Trade Union "Solidarity") in the downfall of the communist system, trade unions constitute an interest group with a considerable power of influence. A large part of Polish political elites derives there from: members of the government, party leaders, members of parliament and state officials. Particularly influential, especially on the macro-political level, are trade unions associated in two strongest centres: NSZZ "Solidarity" and OPZZ.(Jasiecki 1997) An important role is played by some of the branch organisations as well. Since the membership in those organisations is of a mass character and they associate people working for remuneration in the same branch, they are distinguished by considerably large mobility and have strong instruments of political pressure at their disposal (a

considerable representation in the state authorities, ability to mobilise members en masse, strike pressure etc.).

Several stages can be distinguished in the development of interest representation system in Poland, that decide on its specificity:

1/ the period of the communist system in Poland – the relations in this period are characterised as “socialistic corporatism” (Hausner 1995) or as the “monocratic model” (Morawski 1995), they assumed administrative state control and subordination to the rule of the communist party. It was impossible to reveal the real conflicts of interests.

2/ period of political system transformation – market reforms and transition to democratic government system in Poland are connected, among others, with deep transformations of the entire system of interest representation, which forms the general framework for the operation of business organisations and other stakeholders.

3/ period of the evolution of Polish interests representation on the EU level – two stages:

- the early stage of learning – weak cooperation with European associations – concentration on gathering and transmitting information, monitoring EU affairs, promotion of regions, sector interests etc. (2000-2006) – the role of service provider than interest groups
- second stage (since 2006) – attempt of interest representation (lobbying) on the EU level through: still monitoring and dissemination of information, closer cooperation with (and within) European associations, cooperation with Polish political institutions (government), some cases of advocacy and lobby towards the UE institutions (the European Parliament, the European Commission etc.)

2. Business interest associations in Poland

Business organisations are the primary and the most popular form of economic interest representation, and they serve to primary functions: they mediate between the entrepreneurs and state authorities (lobbying) and trade unions as well as provide services to their members (informational, educational etc.). Depending on their function, character and origin three groups of business associations can be distinguished: employers’ organisations, industrial associations (usually branch associations) and commercial-industrial chambers.

Deserving special attention is distinction between employers' organisations and entrepreneurs' associations (manufacturers), since as stressed by Franz Traxler the problems related to manufacture of goods and provision of services are more complex than problems of employers (Traxler 2008), because manufacturing is related to purchasing resources and selling ready goods, which is dependent on conditions of those transactions. It is one of the important reasons for creating separate manufacturers' associations in individual sectors, often narrowly defined. The employers face considerably smaller problems, since their interests are most often defined broadly, and the only conflict arises from the contradiction of their interests with those of trade unions.

All BIAs as other associations play different functions and are driven by two usually contradictory logics labelled by Schmitter and Streeck the "logic of membership" and the "logic of influence" which denote the exchange relations with members and interlocutors (Schmitter and Streeck, 1999). The logic of membership causes pressure for representational functions. Members must be able to recognize their own particular interests in association policy otherwise they may stop supporting the association with their membership, loyalty or contributions in terms of finance, manpower and information. They must have the feeling that they can influence association policy, or, at the least, that they are represented by the association. The logic of influence is to join the association's collective representation on behalf of its affiliated sector, to government and other bodies as well. The logic of influence demands that associations be control organizations. Associations should be able to distantiate themselves somewhat from the many different particularistic individual member interests and to shape and define these in aggregating them, also taking into account the power and interests of interlocutors.

Generally the logic of membership requires small and homogeneous organizations, when larger in size, to be internally differentiated, decentralized, needing only limited resources so that costs to members will be low, and a concentration on the production of selective goods. While the logic of influence is favoured by larger associations, with centralized decision-making structures, well resourced and acquiring their resources from a variety of sources, providing a diversity of output in which binding regulations are important, and disposing over effective sanctions to discipline members. Being able not only to aggregate but also to influence interest input from members, such associations can develop stable long-term policies and enter into more permanent alliances with other business associations and interlocutors (Waarden 1999).

Within the tension between the two logics of exchange, associations have to develop their organizational structure. They usually start off as pure representative organizations. In time, as they try to realize goals such as self-regulation and as they engage more and more in negotiation and concertation with interlocutors, they have to develop characteristics of control organizations (Waarden 1999).

2.1. Horizontal employers' organisations

Horizontal (umbrella) associations are organisations established above the sectoral divisions, without specialisation, "not seeking profit". Due to their broad competences and involvement in the "high politics" they have the potential to become important players not in everyday management, but in creating domestic public policies. Polish employers' organisations are primarily confederations, which next to various kinds of branch associations include individual members, large and small enterprises and their representatives. Some members may receive a special privileged status.

The most important horizontal employer's organisations in Poland are: PKPP Lewiatan (Polish Confederation of Private Employers "Lewiatan"), Business Centre Club, Pracodawcy RP (Employers of the Republic of Poland), Krajowa Izba Gospodarcza (National Chamber of Commerce) and Polska Rada Biznesu (Polish Business Council). They represent horizontal interests of employers. They participate in the legislation process, monitor and give opinions on legal acts, constitute social partners in the social dialogue. They played a much greater role than branch organisations in institutionalisation and professionalization of economic interest representation.

PKPP Lewiatan (Polish Confederation of Private Employers "Lewiatan") is the youngest employers' organisation, established in 1999 it represents primarily the interests of private entities, including 58 regional associations and branch employers organisations as well as 23 direct members (primarily international concerns). It acts on behalf of 3500 companies employing over 600 thousand employees. It operates on both, domestic and EU levels: it is a member of BusinessEurope, it has its own representation in Brussels as well as a representative in the Economic and Social Committee. At PKPP Lewiatan the domination of "logic of influence" (Schmitter 1999) is apparent. It is an organisation very active in the sphere of high politics, and is a prestigious and social partner enjoying a high social status, broad expert infrastructure, offering valuable resources: expert knowledge and legitimization.

PKPP Lewiatan was established on the initiative of the Polish Business Council and from the very beginning it was to be a confederation of employers of highly expert character, acting on behalf of private enterprises, a member of Tripartite Commission. PKPP Lewiatan was to fill the gap in the developing social dialogue, in which hitherto there was no private business representation. At that time BCC was an opinion-making organisation, however it was not involved in the works of dialogue, whereas Pracodawcy RP represented primarily the interests of state sector. Polish Business Council, however, had never been and never intended to become a participant in the social dialogue. Moreover, some of the members of Pracodawcy RP and BCC were disappointed with the activity of those organisations and were looking for alternate possibilities for interest advocacy, which is why they quickly joined the newly establishing PKPP Lewiatan. PKPP focused on organising a group of professional experts and on creating lobbying corresponding to western models. PKPP very quickly developed international activity, primarily on the EU level. It was the only Polish business association to establish a branch office in Brussels.

Business Centre Club exists since 1991. BCC was designed according to models of American and British clubs and Rotary type organisations. In line with that convention the association was to not only represent the interests of its members, but also to create models of cooperation and communication between businessmen, support the development of the middle class in Poland. It may be believed that the founders of BCC strived at building the identity of the club's members around the style offered by the BCC, which was to permanently bind the members with the organisation. It was to be an "elite club" of Polish business, but presently it gathers primarily small and medium enterprises (over 2 thousand of them). Personal membership is dominant, next to regional enterprises and organisations, the members are individual entrepreneurs. It offers primarily lobbying services to its members and external partners and represents general interests of Polish business. For a long time the club did not participate in social dialogue. It is perceived as a prestigious club of entrepreneurs and as the largest in Poland organisation of individual employers. Presently it enjoys a status of a social partner and is active in the Tripartite Commission, but also in the sphere of "high politics". To a small extent it is involved in international activity.

Pracodawcy Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (Employers of the Republic of Poland) is one of the oldest of business associations in Poland. It was established in 1989. It associates over 7 thousand enterprises, employing over 3 million people. Initially, this organisation represented primarily state enterprises, which is why in many cases is supported the

government side. Its present members include both private and public companies as well as regional and branch employers' associations. After the crisis in leadership in the 90's and organisational changes, the association reoriented its activity to sectoral policies and provision of services to its members. Presently its activity revolves around the provision of services to its members and around the focus on domestic sectoral policies, with little involvement on the international level. It enjoys the status of a social partner. In its activity the domination of "membership logic" is apparent.

The National Chamber of Commerce was established in 1990. It represents the interests of over 150 regional and branch business organisations. It is a member of Eurochambres and International Chamber of Commerce in Paris. The National Chamber of Commerce has signed agreements on cooperation with most of the national chambers of commerce around the world.

In spite of conversional processes there is a specific difference between the employers' organisations. Pracodawcy RP is strongly rooted in the segment of the largest industrial enterprises, owned by the state or privatized. On the other hand PKPP Lewiatan represents primarily large domestic and international enterprises, but also small and medium enterprises. While BCC associates primarily individual entrepreneurs and small companies.

Due to the strongly rooted traditions of privileged role of trade unions in industrial relations and in the public sphere, the influence of employers' organisations on shaping the domestic policies was limited. However in the recent years their role has considerably increased, particularly within the scope of macroeconomic policies and strategic decisions. It may be expected, that in the post-Ford times, with the weakening and marginalisation of trade unions and the necessity to implement neoliberal economic mechanisms, also in Poland the significance of employers' organisations shall be ever greater (Gardawski 2010).

2.2.Polish branch associations

Sectoral associations are the most numerous groups among all the stakeholders representing interests in Poland. There is no data on the precise number of those organisations, but close estimates suggest, that there are approximately 200 of them. They usually have a structure of federation or confederation, i.e. an association gathering domestic organisations and large enterprises. The primary task of a sectoral association is to represent the interests of a particular branch in front of state authorities and to provide services to its members. In traditional industrial branches sectoral associations are powerful, firm and they strongly

integrate branch environment, whereas in the fields where the possibilities of state's intervention are limited, the groups are usually scattered, less mobile and weak. A question arises, do sectoral organisations in their activity follow to a larger extent the "membership logic" or the "influence logic"? We may assume that in many cases the "membership logic" is dominant due to a fairly strong competition between the associations and their members, large number of organisations representing the same sector, fairly large dependence of associations on the resources of their members, fairly large fluctuation of members, etc.

3. Specific features of Polish BIAs

Closer analysis of operation of horizontal and sectoral organisations reveals some specific features, which determine their character:

1/ Leadership in organisations – Polish employer's organisations are democratic, however they have a hierarchical character, with a huge role of the leaders. The title of president is a symbol of special distinction of the role of the chairperson. In spite of the presence of procedures of democratic vote, the key decisions are usually made by the presidents (chairpersons) following consultations with the leading members of the association (Gardawski 2009). The presidents enjoy a large margin of procedural freedom. Organisations have worked out mechanisms of conciliating contrary interests of their members and reaching compromises. In cases when the conciliation of interests and reaching a compromise is impossible, the organisation takes no position.

2/In some sectors there is apparent dispersion and fragmentation – many new associations are established within the framework of a single sector, which often compete with each other. It concerns primarily the sectors with dominating participation of private property (e.g. construction, media). In sectors where state enterprises are dominant the interest representation is monopolised by large, long-time privileged associations (e.g. in mining and energy sectors). However such associations are usually dominated by the largest enterprises, which enjoy a special membership status and nearly deciding vote.

3/Platforms and alliances – new forms of business interest representation – next to formal sectoral organisations ever more often appear less formal structures of cooperation between various entities (usually companies) in the form of platforms, coalitions, "round tables" and other types of alliances. Usually this kind of forums deal with the cases of a single sector (e.g. foreign trade, sector of energy manufacturing) or a single case affecting several branches (the

so called thematic alliances). Examples of coalitions include: Climate Coalition, Green Effort Group, Coalition for LPG, Coalition S-7.

4/Organisations most often compete against each other, and cooperate only when they are endangered. In general, the operation of business organisations is reactive, only some of them rarely undertake new initiatives.

5/The structure of motivation for Polish BIAs to join European federations – we may assume, that decision whether to join a European organisation is based not on the calculation of costs and benefits of membership, but rather on estimation of costs of “non-membership”. It is apparent in an analysis of expectations of Polish organisations towards European groups. According to many statements of their leaders, membership in European federations is considered in the categories of prestige and legitimization. Interest representation or provision of typical services is expected only to a small degree. Non-membership in European associations, on the other hand, is perceived as a sign of low status, or even social degradation. Such statement confirms the radical conclusion of Justin Greenwood, that the decision to join EU associations is not based on an explicit and detailed cost-benefit calculation, but is motivated by a more general consideration, “collective association is seen as a must” (Greenwood 2002a). Collective interest representation by EU associations is a part of the European political reality and indispensable in the dialogue with the EU institutions (Eising 2009).

6/The lack of active policy of Polish government and parliament regarding the interest groups, including business organisations.

4. Interest representation of Polish BIAs at the EU level

Many Polish business associations try to represent interests and play an active role in the European lobbying arena, even if they lack recourses and experience of the lobbying game in international relations. The most popular form is cooperation and membership in European federations and confederations. It is the most attractive, common and the easiest way of interest representation but sometimes ineffective. Polish business associations are members of horizontal and sector European organisations. All the biggest Polish peak associations of economic interests cooperate with European confederations e.g.: PKPP Lewiatan is a very active member of BusinessEurope, Polish Chamber of Commerce (KIG) is a member of Eurochambres; Employers of the Republic of Poland (Pracodawcy RP) cooperates with

European Centre of Enterprises with Public Participation and Enterprises of General Economic Interest (CEEP), etc.

Polish sectoral organizations also closely cooperate with European associations. The examples include the following: Polish Council of Chemical Industry is an active member of a very influential lobbying organization in the EU – European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC), Polish Committee of Electric Energy cooperates with partners within EURELECTRIC, Polish Bank Association is an active member of the European Banking Federation, Polish Organization of Trade and Distribution cooperates with Eurocommerce, National Confederation of Employers in Construction Industry belongs to European Construction Industry Federation (FIEC), Polish Assurance Committee is a member of European Assurance Committee (CEA), etc. Some Polish associations are very active and fast learning members. Many of them started this cooperation and have become members of European organizations before Poland's accession to the EU.

But generally the activity and involvement of Polish associations on the EU level are less prominent, and less spectacular. It is true that many organisations are members of European federations and participate in many campaigns and programmes, but usually their role is limited to that of a contributing partner in projects prepared and coordinated by associations from other countries. It is rare for Polish interest groups to act as organizations initiating or coordinating European projects. In many cases when an issue relates interests of Polish associations, they could not enlist other members to cooperation or initiate coalition insight European federation. The examples are the campaign in the Spirit Drinks Regulation (2008) and the campaign in the new Cosmetics Regulation (2009) (Kurczewska 2009). While in situations when a campaign was initiated by other members, Polish organizations and firms were very active partners e.g. in the campaigns in the REACH package, the liberalisation of the EU energy markets, postal services liberalisation in the EU, liberalization the EU defence market (Directive 2009/43/EC and Directive 2009/81/EC), etc.

Many case studies confirm that Polish associations are focused on gathering material about specific legislation on the domestic level by default rather than making a deliberate attempt to shape legislation by accessing EU institutions and networks. For them the exchange of information is more important than the actual impact on the EU policy-making. This is a probably the reason why many Polish associations are rather passive members of European federations (Kurczewska 2009). It seems that in Poland the necessity of intensifying lobbying and advocacy activities in the EU in favour of Polish subjects is either unnoticed or

there are barriers that are very hard to overcome. Possibly one of them, apart from the costs, is the lack of common interest awareness among the national organizations and the dislike for close cooperation and entering the associations as well as not noticing the ‘European correlation’, that is the dependence of the national situation on the situation in the EU (Kurczewska 2009).

Dominating strategy of Polish BIAs in representation of their interests at the EU level is close cooperation with national institutions, especially with the government, and treating them as main advocates and interlocutors on the European arena. Many empirical studies (on the role of Polish interest groups in the EU decision-making process in cases: the Energy and Climate Change Package, the Spirit Drinks Regulation, putting tariffs on imports of frozen strawberries from China, etc.) have demonstrated that Polish organizations prefer putting pressure on national-level than directly pressuring EU-level institutions. In many situations Polish organizations seem to be not prepared enough or they simply do not see the necessity or potential of building a coalition inside the European co-operation network. The main partner of the lobbying on the EU level is national institutions, mainly the Polish government and the Polish members of the European Parliament. I suppose that Polish organisations, particularly sectoral associations, whilst being able to negotiate with the Polish administration, are afraid or not capable of proceeding with the techniques at the EU level (Kurczewska 2010).

Another way of representing interests at the EU level is setting up direct representations and bureaus in Brussels. In compare with Polish regions and local authorities that have numerous bureaus and offices in Brussels, Polish business organizations have relatively small representation in the capital of the EU. Only one confederation of employers and few individual Polish enterprises have got their permanent representations. Polish Confederation of Private Employers (PKPP) Lewiatan is the only one Polish entrepreneurs’ organization to have a permanent representation in Brussels. It issues opinions, both on direct basis and through BusinessEurope, on drafts of directives and other acts of the EU law having impact on the European economy, as well as monitor important developments of the European economic policy. Representatives of PKPP Lewiatan in Brussels participate in the works of committees and advisory agencies to European institutions (the EC). PKPP Lewiatan’s positions, developed by experts and the Brussels office are presented both in the framework of official consultations and through direct contacts with the European Commission officials.

Since recently their own direct representations in Brussels have got enterprises such as: Polish Telecom (Telekomunikacja Polska), Polish Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Company (PGNiGE), Polish Post; Polish State Railways (PKP SA); Gas Pipeline Operator (GAZ-SYSTEM S.A.) and other organizations and institutions: Polish Farmers' Organizations and National Council of Legal Advisors of Poland. The main goals of this representations are: promotes their interests vis-a-vis the EU institutions and European associations, provide entrepreneurs with the information and services facilitating their functioning on the Internal European Market, represents them at their pan-European counterparts based in Brussels.

However, in case of some special sectoral interests, particularly those, whose interests are marginalized or even disregarded on the national level, the main frame of reference is comprised of European organizations and institutions. It concerns primarily ecological production e.g. Polish Wind Energy Association. Insufficient aggregation of their interest to national policy and dominance of unfavorable opinions in public debate, forces these associations to seek partners on the EU level. Both, EU institutions and European organizations are perceived here as advocates, spokesmen and defenders of their interests.

5. Lobbying of Polish sectoral organisations regarding the EU's energy-climate package

The propositions of new regulations contained in the energy-climate package were a serious challenge for Poland, particularly the draft of a new directive on the European Union Greenhouse Gas Emission Trading System (EU-ETS). Polish economy, and particularly the energy sector, is nearly entirely dependent on coal, which is why the government had to take its specificity into account. The most controversial were the plans to introduce as of 2013 auction trade of CO² emission permits. The largest energy manufacturers in Poland as well as domestic sectoral organisations undertook intensive actions to oblige the government to consider their interests in the Poland's position in the EU-level negotiations. Several organisations and coalitions gathering economic environments were established in order to advocate their interests. The largest and the most offensive was the Green Effort Group coalition (Group G6) representing the energy and industrial sector. This group closely cooperated with the government administration, members of parliament and senate, Poland's

representatives in the European Parliament and other EU institutions in order to promote their demands.

Group G6 played a key role in determining the position of Poland and during negotiations on the EU level. This organisation was found in July 2008 by the largest Polish energy concerns: PGE Polska Grupa Energetyczna S.A., Tauron Polska Energia S.A., Enea S.A. and Energa S.A., as well as two networks: CO² Forum and Forum Odbiorców Energii Elektrycznej i Gazu (Forum of Receivers of Electric Energy and Gas). Its main aim was to conduct lobbying for modification of provisions suggested by the European Commission within the framework of the review of ETS.

Close relations between the Group G6 and the state administration during the resolution of the union energy-climate package indicate the neo-corporate character of climate policy formation in Poland. Despite the lack of formal institutionalisation, Group G6 participated in determining the position of Polish delegation in the EU Council, in forming the opinion of the Polish members of the European Parliament as well as other representatives of Poland in the EU institutions, and it even acted on behalf of the Polish government on the international forum. It was the primary, and as a matter of fact the only consultation partner. Nearly all of its demands, remarks and arguments were included in negotiation strategies of the government and Polish members of the European Parliament. The interests of energy and industrial branch were regarded to constitute strategic interests of Poland. In line with the intentions of Group G6 a perspective was adopted, according to which the EU's energy-climate package constitutes a serious threat to the Polish economy and society, since its implementation will hinder the development of the energy sector and other sectors in Poland, and shall result in rapid increase of energy prices. In consequence it shall contribute to slowing down the economic development and lowering the international competitiveness of Poland. Even the public debate in Poland was dominated by a catastrophic vision of the results of implementation of the package's provisions. Strongly rooted neo-corporate traditions in Poland as well as the unusually privileged position of the energy sector and energy-consuming industry determined the aims and shape of Poland's position concerning the EU climate policy. The campaign was led simultaneously on domestic and European level, with a large involvement of the media, KREAB agency was also hired.

The EU council agreed to a compromise, which took into account the position of the Polish government, including the demands of Group G6. Thus, modifications to the most important for the organisation provisions of the directive's draft were introduced, in particular

to provisions concerning the slowdown of introduction of the obligatory as of 2013 auction system for purchasing CO² emission permits. Both the Polish government and Group G6 perceive the negotiated compromise as a great success. The organisation admits, that its assumptions were convergent with the aims of state administration, however a deeper analysis reveals that the government's position was nearly identical to the programme and demands of the G6. The Polish position does not include any suggestions of ecologic organisations or consumer associations (Kurczewska 2011).

Poland was the main opponent of the introduction of full payment as of 2013 and became the leader of a group of nine less developed EU Member States, which demanded the introduction of transitory periods for their economies. A coalition of countries was established which included, among others, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Slovakia and Romania. The Council took into account the demands of this group not wanting to risk the entire package to be vetoed, and recognising the relevance of the raised arguments. Determination of France, which held the presidency in EU at that time, the support of Germany towards the introduction of derogation and the risk of the regulation being vetoed by Poland and countries of the coalition forced the European Council to take into account some of the coalition's demands. In the end, the provisions of the energy-climate package were made less severe (Kurczewska 2011).

Conclusion

Polish business interest associations differ from national associations in the EU old member states, they are younger and have small experience in professional interest representation, especially at the EU level. They have to operate in the unstable Polish political system and in the face of lack of clarity of system game rules. The heritage of communism, the weakness of civil society, low political culture, limited financial resources of associations, insufficient social mobilisation, centralisation of power and domination of privileged interest groups are the main barriers in more efficient business interest representation and professionalization of lobbying activity in Poland.

In representation of interest at the EU level the dominating strategy of Polish BIAs is the focus on close cooperation with national institutions, especially with the government, and treating them as main advocates and interlocutors. Lack of belief in the possible influence and the efficiency of the national organizations on the European level leads to the abandoning of

interest representation within EU institutions. So far, Polish organizations cooperate with the European associations in carrying out common lobbying campaigns but only as a rather passive partner. The representations of the Polish interest groups in Brussels also are not overwhelmingly interested in professional lobbying on the Union level. If Polish organizations take up lobbying it is most usually through the ‘national channel’ which uses national institutions, mainly government organs. The case study on the lobbying of Polish sectoral organisations regarding the EU’s energy-climate package shows the main mechanism of such cooperation.

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