

Civil Society Organisations in the UK: Scope and Scale of Europeanisation

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Abstract

The question “how and what impact does the EU have on domestic political actors?” is one of the puzzles being investigated by students of Europeanisation. In this thesis the question has been reformulated with a view to analyse the impact of the EU on civil society organisations. It consisted in analysing the effects of the EU discursive appeals and institutional civil society initiatives on operation and performance of social and environmental voluntary organisations in the UK and tried to answer the question whether and why they resulted in reorientation of civil society agendas and activities to the EU as well as what routes of Europeanisation and motivations behind it are present in case of the UK organisations.

It draws on the concept of Europeanisation as adaptation to challenges and pressures arising from the EU as a “rules setter” and further develops it with regards to civil society organisations by tracing Europeanisation as responses to the civil society initiatives emanating from the EU. To explain the motivations behind Europeanisation two main approaches used by scholars of Europeanisation have been applied: rational choice approach and constructivist one.

The key findings suggest that the EU turned out to be the venue of a limited use for civil society organisations due to underdeveloped opportunities allowing involvement into the EU policy making process, narrow EU discourse on civil society focusing on EU-wide umbrella associations only and simultaneous changes in the UK government civil society policy at the national level. Differences between social and environmental organisations in use of emerging EU opportunities have also been discovered. They can be explained by misfits between the UK and EU social and environmental policies. Moreover, the thesis that the EU becomes a meaningful object for identification for interest groups, which Europeanise their activities, has not been fully corroborated: UK civil society organisations, though “going to Europe”, express little support of the ideas of “European civil society” and do not adhere to the idea of civil society contributing to reduction of the democratic deficit in the EU, discourses actively promoted by the EU.

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Introduction

Throughout this paper patterns and practices of civil society Europeanisation are going to be analyzed. The research agenda of the present thesis is informed by the concept of Europeanisation which has become a fashionable theoretical framework to investigate the alterations in domestic political structures, processes and behaviours of actors. More specifically, the bottom-up approach to Europeanisation, regarding it as changes in behaviours, ideas and identities of domestic political actors, is applied to analysis of how of civil society organisations Europeanise their activities and what factors impact this process.

Studies of EU effects on domestic actors are not rare. Scholars successfully applied conceptual baggage of the concept of Europeanisation to analyze changes that political parties, bureaucracies and public administrations in EU member states go through. Civil society or voluntary associations have, however, unjustly been missing from this wide research agenda. They have principally been paid attention either as just a type of interest groups and, thus, included in analysis of Europeanisation from this perspective only, or have been analyzed in their supranational form – as EU-wide organisations (Mahoney 2004, 2007; Coen 2007). Scholars, however, failed to analyse Europeanisation of civil societies as such. Students of EU/interest groups cooperation and Europeanisation of the latter thoroughly analysed the process of “reaching the EU” by interest groups. The EU has been depicted as a highly attractive venue or arena for interest groups who exploit the new opportunities structure to maximize their capacities and push forward their agendas and goals (Mazey and Richardson 1993; Kitschelt 1986). The attractiveness of the EU results in the weakening of state/interest groups relations at the national level as the latter can successfully bypass national authorities in pursuit of their goals, and, as a result, national bureaucracies lose their status as “points of entry” for interest groups. Institutionalisation of cooperation practices at

the supranational level and increasing permeability of the EU bodies, thus, leads to intensification of interest groups Europeanisation.

However, the conclusions about interest groups Europeanisation cannot be fully applied for analysis of influence of the EU on civil societies. Conventional groups (business interests etc.) have for a long time enjoyed well-developed infrastructure of cooperation with the EU and have been operating within more or less clear institutional space composed of, for example, EU regulations on lobbying. Civil society organisations have occupied EU agenda about a decade ago before that being only marginally involved in cooperation with the EU. Needless to say, the institutional space of EU/civil society cooperation is only at the stage of its development. In this respect, the thesis about profound civil society Europeanisation can be questioned if not debunked. Thus, Europeanisation of civil society can take different forms due to distinct position of organisations' in terms of internal opportunities and external resources (institutional opportunities) available to them. Moreover, interest groups Europeanisation, as research literature suggests, leads to growing perception of the structures of cooperation as "meaningful objects of identification" (Mazey and Richardson 2001). However, the applicability of this thesis to civil society organisations should also be carefully considered as students of civil societies insist that they are much more "nationally-harboured" than one can expect. The EU may be ideationally more important for conventional business interests due to extreme permeability of economic policies of member states to EU regulations; this may not hold true for civil society organisations whose activities are normally located in areas not so much affected by the EU. Therefore, they may perceive Europe differently which may, in turn, differently shape their routes of Europeanisation.

Research question and major goal

The present thesis attempts to contribute to further investigation of the issue of civil society Europeanisation. Based on the arguments above, the major question is, thus, what is the impact of the EU and European integration on operation and performance of civil society organisations, in general, and does it lead to deliberate reorientation of organisations' activities and agendas to the EU which is seen as constituting the substance of civil society Europeanisation. I then focus on two aspects of such a reorientation: an interactive one or intentional involvement into policy making process at the European level through various channels (both domestic and supranational ones) and communicative one or changes in organisations' ideas and beliefs with regards to the EU and their role in it.

The peculiarities and distinctive features of civil society Europeanisation are going to be analysed through careful consideration of UK organisations operation. The choice of the case is determined by several reasons. Research literature on Europeanisation explicitly refers to the case of the UK as an example of intensive and accurate “downloading” of the EU norms and regulations, or intensive Europeanisation of its policies, as well as quite successful “uploading” of its own ideas and practices to the EU level. (Bache and Jordan 2006; Bache 2008). This inevitably raises the question about whether Europeanisation penetrates and expands over the activities of civil society organisations and if it does, then what are the manifestations and peculiarities of this process.

It is also interesting to test this since the UK government drastically changed its policy towards civil society recently and invested in empowerment and professionalisation of civil society organisations. In this light, it is essential to look whether these developments turned out to be alternatives to EU institutional and resource “offers” or, to the contrary, supplemented them. At the same time, it is difficult to deny the fact that the UK has always enjoyed the reputation of one of the most “skeptical” and distant members of the EU.

Attitudes towards the EU and Europe, in general, as opposed to national sentiments have always exemplified an extreme “anti-EUism”. Thus, the UK never fitted into pictures and success stories of Europeanisation at all. In this sense, it would be especially valuable to see whether this pattern breaks for UK civil society organisations and whether they turn out to be the most “pro-EU” domestic actors.

The major goal of the present project is, thus, to look at whether and how the EU (its recent discursive and institutional civil society appeals and initiatives) has influenced the operation of the UK civil society organisations and whether it pushed them to reorient their activities and agendas.

Theoretical approach

The theoretical agenda of the thesis is informed by the bottom-up conceptualization of Europeanisation as the process of changes of domestic actors’ behaviours, agendas, ideas and identities triggered by expanding multifaceted influence of the EU on domestic political process. When explaining alterations in actors’ behaviour, students of Europeanisation employ two theoretical perspectives to account for occurring changes: the rationalist perspective and the constructivist one. The major focus of the former is on fixed interests and preferences of actors whose logic of action is shaped by existing institutional contexts and resource configurations. EU appears as a new structure of opportunities which impacts behaviour of actors as it provides new resources for some actors whilst constraining others thereby transforming existing institutional settings and equilibriums. Actors stick to the logic of consequentialism and reconsider their behaviour recalculating losses and benefits brought by a new structure of opportunities. The constructivist perspective suggests that the EU pressures redefine the ideas and discourses used by actors to justify their choices and actions, change actors’ identities and beliefs through which they make choices. The logic of appropriateness, as opposed to the logic of consequentialism, suggests that they are not driven

by fixed preferences and interests but rather by considerations of “doing the right thing”. EU pressures trigger alterations of actors’ beliefs and ideas, reshapes their perceptions and visions. Europeanisation is thus explained as, on the one hand, as changes in behaviour of actors based on rational recalculations of payoffs and losses in an altered institutional context and, on the other hand, as redefinitions and transformations of actors ideas and identities.

These two perspectives are going to be utilized as explanatory frameworks to account for Europeanisation of UK organisations. First of all, an analysis and assessment of the EU civil society rhetorical appeals and institutional initiatives are going to be investigated. The principal question is how the EU perceives the role of civil society organisations and what roles it assigns to them. Investigation of discursive meanings, ideas and frames with regards to civil society (re)produced and spread by the EU is important as this would draw an overall picture of the operational space offered to civil society organisations. This will be complemented by detailed analysis of existing institutional arrangements available for organisations. Both discourses and institutional opportunities determine the routes and patterns of Europeanisation for civil society organisations, create incentives for them or, on the contrary, prevent from Europeanising.

Secondly, an analysis of how these discursive and institutional pressures collide with existing opportunities and discourses and ideas shared by organisations themselves is needed. A special accent will be placed on domestic opportunities to assess determinants of civil society reorientation to the EU, if there is any. This, in turn, is going to be complemented by a closer look at organisations’ perceptions of the EU and their role in it which would reveal whether EU discursive pressures hit the target and incentivized them to Europeanise.

Methods

Interviews with representatives of the UK organisations and experts (government officials and think tank researchers) and analysis of organisations' and EU documents will be used as major methods for empirical data collection. This was complemented by sending an email questionnaire to organisations, whose representatives could not find time for an interview or were unavailable during the field research, and in-depth analysis of the sections of organisations' web-sites containing the information on their cooperation with the EU and activity at the EU level.

Altogether there were conducted 17 semi-structured interviews¹: 13 with representatives of civil society organisations (chief executives, EU advisors, project managers etc.) and 4 with experts: 2 from NGOs networks and national umbrella associations, 1 researcher and 1 consultant on the EU funding. The small number of interviews can be explained by a "hot season" when the interviews were planned. In April-May 6th the general elections were held which seems to have been the major reason why some of the planned interviews did not take place.

The questions posed to respondents from organisations were grouped around several main clusters. The first one dealt with the overall state and history of the relationship between an organisation and the EU. A special accent was made on the time of establishing relations and reasons behind that. The second group of questions was about components of collaboration with the EU and examples of organisations' success and failures. Questions from the third group were specifically targeted at getting information on organisations' perceptions and visions of the EU, their mission and role with regards to the EU as well as attitudes of respondents towards the EU.

¹ See Appendix B

Organisations from two particular spheres have been chosen for an analysis of patterns and practices of Europeanisation: social and environmental ones. The choice of social organisations was determined by the fact that the competence of the EU in social sphere is expanding whereas the UK remains the country jealously keeping this realm untouched by the EU influence. With this in mind I have assumed that this might interestingly shape the logic of Europeanisation for civil society organisations. The UK environmental policy is, on the contrary, the most Europeanised which might also have its imprint on Europeanisation of organisations working in this sphere. Moreover, selection of organisations from these spheres leaves much room for comparison of patterns and practices of Europeanisation.

The first chapter will provide a short review of the state of research on Europeanisation of civil society organisations to expose existing gaps in the research literature on this problem. It shall also focus on a more extensive review of the theoretical assumptions of the Europeanisation studies which are going to serve as a theoretical background for the present research. The second chapter shall be devoted to description and analysis of the recent EU initiatives with regards to civil society. Finally, the third chapter shall provide an analysis of patterns and practices of Europeanisation of the UK civil society organisations based on the collected empirical data.

1. Europeanisation and civil society: state of the field and theoretical framework

1.1 State of the research

The question how domestic structures become “Europeanised” or, in other words, how the EU activities impact national policy-making has widely been addressed within literature (Borzel and Risse 2003; Olsen 2002). Research attention focused on the EU impact on different domestic political institutions and scholars tried to shed light on how and under what conditions EU and Brussels activities shape domestic structures.

Issues of civil society’s Europeanisation, however, have appeared on the research agenda only recently. Originally, civil society organisations occupied the attention of scholars studying the challenges and opportunities emerging for domestic interest groups in a situation of expanding presence of the EU (Beyers 2004; Beyers, Eising, and Maloney 2008; Eising 2008; Kohler-Koch and Eising 1999). Scholars addressed a number of different problems. First of all, they were busy with finding answers to how the process of cooperation and interaction of domestic political institutions with interest groups has been shaped by the presence of the EU. The starting assumption was that the Euro-polity affects domestic politics in a way that interest groups can easily integrate into policy making at the European level. Presence of the EU, as was assumed, will inevitably cause shifts in activity of interest groups who will start searching for opportunities to reach the EU level in pursuit of their goals. In this respect, problems of the routes towards the EU and their impact on domestic state/interest groups collaboration were of particular interest as a topic for further research. Within this field scholars soon intensively debated how domestic state/interest groups relations alter if interest groups choose to reach the EU directly or through EU-level associations (Beyers and Kerremans 2007). Employing such theoretical frameworks as multi-level governance

approach scholars proved that an opportunity to build and enter policy networks outside domestic political space (through joining EU-level associations and exploiting their resources) can account for intensification of Europeanisation of interest groups understood as “going to Europe” (Beyers 2002). This, in its turn, may change state/interest groups relations and can lead to “attenuation” and fading of their collaboration as interest groups can bypass the national level. In this light it is very interesting to look at whether this can be relevant for civil society organisations.

Analysing the issue of EU/interest groups cooperation scholars inevitably studied in depth practices of lobbying used by interest groups (Coen and Richardson 2009). These studies significantly contributed to understanding of institutional factors determining practices of lobbying. In particular, issues of the role of the EU institutions, especially, the Commission, in directing lobbying activities were a subject of interest (Mazey and Richardson 1993; Richardson and Mazey 1992). Scholars also carefully examined how patterns of lobbying change from a policy domain to domain and found correlations between the activity of lobbying and breadth of the EU competence in particular policy areas (Coen and Richardson 2009). Highlighting what factors determine success and failures in lobbying (size of a groups, budget and nature of policy area), scholars significantly clarified the picture of EU/interest groups cooperation.

However, this perspective did not fully take into account multiple differences between interest groups and civil society organisations. Firstly, seeing the latter as belonging to interest groups raises some theoretical questions as these types of groups are, in my opinion, of different nature, pursue different goals and are driven by different motivations. Looking at the above-mentioned empirical evidence of what drives interest groups to “go to Europe” one can question whether the same factors can account for behaviour of civil society organisations. The primary objection here is that their activity may be rooted in a completely

different ideational field and be justified by different ideas and beliefs. In other words, their “quest to Europe” can have other motivations behind, different from rational calculus of likelihoods of obtaining additional opportunities. In this light, theoretical frameworks, used by scholars of this tradition cannot fully explain the motivations behind civil society’s turn to the EU. Secondly, another objection to merging civil society organisations and interest groups while looking at trajectories of their European routes is that those routes are formed by different infrastructures of cooperation with the EU. Interest groups for a long time enjoy cooperation with the EU through a number of well-developed and long-existing windows of opportunities while windows for civil society organisations began to appear slightly earlier than a decade ago (Armstrong 2002). These arguments convince me to separate civil society organisations from interest groups in studying the issue of Europeanisation.

Scholars attempted to address the issue of civil society Europeanisation by looking at how this process develops specifically for civil society organisations. These studies, however, grouped around different aspects. Initially EU/civil society relations, that intensified after EU civil society initiatives, became the subject of primary interest. A plethora of questions have been raised within this research literature stream: EU perception and understanding of civil society, discourses, different third sector agendas and programmes which emerge within the EU institutions etc. (Trenz, Bernhard, and Jentges 2009; Liebert and Trenz 2009). Scholars presented convincing analysis of origins of the EU interests in cooperation with civil societies across Europe and the way this rhetoric has become a plan for further action. However, these studies only superficially addressed the issue of the influence of the EU rhetoric on the decisions of civil society organisations to Europeanise, let alone in-depth case studies of the links between EU-level discourses and behaviour of civil society organisations. In other words, there were almost no attempts to trace whether and how EU rhetorical impulses and signals reached civil society organisations and, what is of a particular interest for the present

thesis, whether they influenced their motivations to build any relations with the EU and get involved into the EU policy process.

Similarly, scholars analysed windows of political opportunities for civil society organisations created by the EU itself, problems of legitimacy arising from widening EU/civil society interaction and mechanisms of formation of European policy networks and inclusion of civil society organisations into these networks. Scholars embarked on an interesting and rich debate on political consequences of this set of EU actions for policies (social policy, first of all) at the national levels, institutional arrangements and reconfigurations of power relations at the EU level as well as provided with a detailed account of how the EU institutions build their relations with new bodies responsible for channeling the voice of civil society (Kendall 2009). Nevertheless, the attention being paid to civil society within this research literature again, as in the above-mentioned research stream, originates from above and it is the EU which serves as the “reference point”. Organisations themselves and their reactions to these shifts in the EU focus remained largely out of interest. Put it differently, the primary subject for research again became the EU reorientation to civil society, this time institutional one, and its implications for the institutional being of the EU and its political image. Moreover, in analysing EU institutional turn to civil society scholars rarely embarked on analysis of its relatedness to domestic institutional arrangements and consequences for operation of civil society organisations.

To conclude, Europeanisation of civil society became understood as developments taking place at the EU level only while the question how this reorientation impacts decisions of organisations themselves to get closer to the EU again remained unanswered (Kendall 2009).

Very few pieces of research addressed civil society Europeanisation approaching it from the perspective of organisations themselves. There is, for example, some empirical

research on performance of EU-wide NGOs networks and EU/pan-European NGOs cooperation (Warleigh 2000, 2001, 2003; Dur and Bievre 2007; Cullen 1999). Findings of these studies are of a crucial importance as they reveal the logic of EU/civil society relations though at the supranational level. However, Europeanisation of nationally-based organisations has obviously not been approached within this literature. Individual organisations and their motivations behind joining umbrella structures disappear when such corporatist structures as EU-wide NGO networks are examined. Moreover, the domestic level is also missing and, thus, the question how organisations' route to the EU level was shaped and their motivations crystallized remains unanswered.

The UK has often been a subject of analysis of the above-mentioned problems. For example, it was included as one of the cases in a large-scale international research project "Third Sector European Network" which was focusing on research on emerging EU third sector policy. But in research literature on the UK the same aspects of the civil society Europeanisation are known to have been missing. This aspect played a particular role in nurturing the research interest of this thesis.

To sum up, one cannot say that questions why and how civil society get Europeanised are of no interest for scholars. However, several issues remain untouched. Europeanisation of civil society is often examined from the perspective of the EU itself and, thus, is defined as a process of the EU orientation. However, for example, Jeremy Kendall notes that Europeanisation can be seen as deliberately engineered reorientation towards the EU of the civil society itself (Kendall 2009). The question why this reorientation occurs and how it is shaped by the EU impulses and pressures has almost never been addressed. Looking at this problem involves closer investigation of motivations behind this reorientation and what role EU institutional and discursive pressures play in shaping them as well as how these impulses and messages alter as they reach a particular domestic context.

1.2. The concept of Europeanisation

The concept of Europeanisation has recently become highly popular in disciplines of international relations and comparative politics. The interest in EU influence on domestic processes has resulted in elaboration of several explanatory models. They considerably differ in what they see as Europeanisation. Some approaches regard it as the process unfolding at the supranational level and, thus, define it as “emergence and the development at the European level of different structures of governance” which exert adaptational pressures on domestic structures and make them adjust to those pressures (Risse, Cowles Green, and Caporaso 2001). Johan Olsen, for example, presents his own classification of types of Europeanisation and notes that there can be five different faces of this phenomenon: developing institutions at the European level (formal legal structures and normative order), changes in external borders or territorial expansion of the EU, central penetration of national systems of governance, exporting forms of political organisation beyond the European territory and, finally, a political unification project (Olsen 2002). Tanja Borzel offers another approach to Europeanisation and defines it as “a process by which domestic policy areas become increasingly subject to European policy-making” (Borzel 1999) . As a result, the concept employs diverse meanings and various applications.

The multitude of definitions and visions is explained by the fact that scholars see Europeanisation from various angles: as a process, result or effects etc. Similarly, they regard it as not only political changes in the form of institutional adjustments and transformations but also as alterations in political cultures, norms and identities. In the focus of Europeanisation research scholars place not only actors but policies, politics and polity changes which naturally led to emergence of multiple approaches.

My research, in turn, is guided by the definition of Europeanisation as changes in behaviour of domestic actors as a result of pressures/challenges exerted by the EU. Such an understanding of Europeanisation draws upon a broader view developed by Robert Ladrech. In his well-known definition of Europeanisation as a process, it is defined as an “incremental process re-orienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC political and economic dynamics become part of the organisational logic of national politics and policy-making” (Ladrech 1994). The notion of “organisational logic” is central in this definition and implies “adaptive process of organisations to a changed or changing environment” (Ladrech 1994).

Claudio Radaelli further develops Ladrech’s approach and suggests one can speak about Europeanisation as “a process of a) construction, b) diffusion and c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, “ways of doing things” and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU decisions and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourses, identities, political structures and public policies” (Radaelli 2000). In particular, he insists that his definition focuses specifically on importance of change in the logic of political behaviour, underlines the process of institutionalization at the national level of patterns, discourses, practices and cognitive maps coming from the EU level and is broad enough to accommodate various accents of Europeanisation research: political structure, public policy, identities and cognitive dimension of politics (Radaelli 2000). Analysing the problem of the concept stretching in application to Europeanisation, Radaelli tries to answer the question what *is* and *can* be Europeanised and begins his list with domestic structures and institutions: public administrations, the legal structures, structures of representation which include party systems and pressure groups. He also contributes to the debate by adding an “ideational” dimension to a set of changes seen as Europeanisation when he speaks about “shared beliefs and norms”

thereby trying to combine pure external institutional attributes and alterations or behavioural shifts with changes in belief and value structures which accompany this process.

Scholars suggest that to account for domestic changes one shall carefully look at several conditions. Tanja Borzel and Tomas Risse posit that two conditions play the most important role for the domestic changes to occur (Borzel and Risse 2003). The first one is the scale and degree of “misfit” between the EU and national politics, policies and polities. The strength and intensity of adaptational pressures with which domestic political structures and actors meet are contingent on how big this misfit is. By measuring the degree of misfit one can potentially measure the degree of Europeanisation as a process which gradually eradicates this misfit in the direction of the “goodness of fit”, the notion introduced by scholars to depict the inverse situation: when differences between the EU and domestic political structures and policies are not big. The misfit can take two basic forms: it can be political or institutional. Speaking about member states in general, scholars refer to compliance of the domestic policies with the EU regulations and rules as to what depicts the essence of political misfit. Such misfit is eradicated by the EU using hard instruments to secure compliance of the member states with the EU regulations. As for the institutional one, its focus is on “domestic rules and procedures and the collective understanding attached to them” and also includes changes in collective identities.

The second condition deals with a number of factors influencing the speed of domestic adjustment. The focus, thus, is shifted from the EU to domestic level at which these factors are located. Elaborating further, Cowles Green and Maria Caporaso mention that “whether a country adjusts its institutional structure to Europe will depend on the presence or absence of mediating factors ... such as: multiple veto points in the domestic structure, facilitating formal institutions, a country’s organisational and policymaking cultures, the differential empowerment of domestic actors, and learning” (Risse, Cowles Green, and Caporaso 2001).

In other words, scholars particularly stress the importance of various types of internal institutions which can either facilitate or slow down Europeanisation process.

The idea of misfit becomes especially relevant as it provides a conceptual starting point for discussion of the behaviour and reactions of domestic actors to challenges posed by the EU. One can assume that too big or, conversely, too small discrepancies between the EU and national politics, policies and political structures shape various reactions of involved actors.

Developing the concept, scholars added that in order to trace the direction of domestic change caused by the EU one shall look at how the EU alters domestic opportunities structures for actors and their beliefs and expectations (Knill and Lehmkuhl 1999). Christoph Knill and Dirk Lehmkuhl describe three mechanisms of Europeanisation as institutional changes: EU policy-making prescribes concrete institutional requirements or an “institutional model”, the EU alters domestic opportunity structure and thus changes distribution of power and other institutional equilibriums and, finally, the EU alters beliefs and expectations of domestic actors (Knill and Lehmkuhl 1999). These clarifications deprive Europeanisation of its mechanical character as the process of adjustment which goes on automatically where the misfit is found and place a bigger emphasis on domestic actors themselves, their understanding and evaluation of available political opportunities as well as their beliefs and expectations.

1.2.1. Actors’ reactions: rational logic of Europeanisation

How do domestic actors react to pressures exerted by the EU? The answer to this question necessitates an appeal to approaches to actors’ behaviour utilized by scholars of Europeanisation. Students of Europeanisation, trying to explain how domestic actors respond

to the presence of the EU, have extensively resorted to the help of two major theoretical concepts: the rational choice theory and constructivist theory.

The rational choice approach focuses on interests and preferences of actors regarding actors themselves as rational subjects whose behaviour is based on calculation of possible losses and benefits. Interests and preferences are fixed and do not change in the course of interactions. Actors cooperate with each other and seek to maximize their wins by analysing existing contexts that they are embedded in and available resources.

When explaining the behaviour of actors in the context of Europeanisation, one operates with the notion of “logic of consequentialism” as logic describing strategic and rational behaviour of actors who anticipate consequences of their decisions. The process of Europeanisation also sets the logic of consequentialism as the EU produces a new opportunity structure for domestic actors. This structure of opportunities provides some actors with new alternatives and resources to exert their influence and, at the same time, constrains ability of others to pursue their own goals (Tsebelis 1990). The process of European integration creates, following the terminology of the concept of “nested games”, additional arenas on which cooperation among actors unfolds. In addition to domestic institutional arenas the EU creates multiple arenas with diverse opportunities for various actors, including actors from other contexts and levels (transnational, for example). As a result, actors are involved in a network of games being played at different arenas. Their preferences and interests are also shaped by various institutional contexts that actors are embedded in and within which they play to increase their payoffs. The process of Europeanisation or top-down influence of the EU on domestic political contexts creates additional arenas playing on which may either empower or disempower them depending on what Europeanisation offers in terms of resources. In any case, with the expansion of the EU influence and its more prominent presence, actors have to

redefine their interests and strategies taking into account emerging opportunities as the EU challenges existing institutional equilibriums (Knill and Lehmkuhl 1999).

However, as was mentioned earlier, a number of intervening factors shall be taken into account when analysing changes in the logic of behaviour of domestic actors. Different kinds of institutions are regarded by rational choice institutionalism as constituting a strategic operating environment. Scholars explicitly emphasize the role of national opportunity structures as the major intervening factor influencing the interests and preferences of actors and, thus, having a profound impact on Europeanisation as a whole. The pace and quality of adaptation to the EU pressures are, for example, determined by the so-called veto points within the national political institutions (Borzel and Risse 2003). Veto points are a characteristic of political system in which the power is dispersed among numerous actors so that nobody has all of it and actors have to intensively cooperate with each other and can potentially block any decisions based on little consensus. This argument is developed and enriched by a recommendation to take into account another factor when analysing how domestic actors response to the EU pressures – existing mediating institutions (Risse, Cowles Green, and Caporaso 2001). The EU provides domestic actors with additional opportunities they can exploit to pursue their interests. However, their ability to do that is, in turn, constrained by other mediating institutions existing in the national institutional context. These institutions can influence the capacity of domestic actors to use the resources provided by the EU beginning from creating extremely favourable conditions and ending with producing severe limitations. For example, trade unions may be given by the EU a unique opportunity to become members of policy networks emerging around implementation of the EU Structural Funds but, at the same time, they may not use it at full capacity as in this member state traditions of government/trade unions relations are weak or this collaboration, on the contrary,

goes on within other institutions the existence of which either discourage trade unions from participation in Structural Funds implementation or creates additional obstacles.

These factors provide domestic actors with means and resources to achieve their goals and are responsible for redistribution of capacities among actors as key player at the arena of politics.

1.2.2. Actor's responses: constructivism and Europeanisation

Constructivist approach developed within the discipline of international relations and has actively been applied to study of European integration. Its main postulate states that interests and identities of the actors are not fixed, they can change in the course of interaction and are formed within the institutions they are embedded in (Chekel 1999). The major goal for actors, unlike in rational choice logic, is not to maximize their profits and benefits but rather “to do the right thing”. The institutions within which actors act define the standards according to which actors are supposed to behave which makes them follow the “logic of appropriateness” instead of the “logic of consequentialism” and, in doing so, to transform their strategies from pure rational into strategies seeking to pursue goals using the most appropriate methods and instruments. Thus, the issue of identities shared by actors and acquired as a result of belonging to a particular community lies, as Frank Schimmelfenning notes, at the center of the constructivist approach (Schimmelfenning and Sedelmeier 2004). In other words, constructivists take on some of the assumptions of sociological institutionalism and admit that institutions within which actors cooperate become “independent” at one point and begin to shape actors’ interests and identities. This occurs because actors cooperate within institutions and this process of cooperation is “seasoned” with socialization and social learning when actors acquire specific understandings, shared ideas and common visions of issues and problems. Thus, constructivism claims it can explain why and how actors acquire

new interests and preferences and become driven by new ideas and understandings which may not comply with their rational interests. Persuasion and learning can account for modifications in actors' preferences and construction of new understandings and norms (Chekel 1999, 1999).

James March and Johan Olsen further explain that from a constructivist perspective actors' behaviour is not instrumental but rather rule-guided: "human actors are imagined to follow rules that associate particular identities to particular situations, approaching individual opportunities for action by assessing similarities between current identities and choice dilemmas" (March and Olsen 1998). It is these "appropriate" norms and rules which regulate actors' behaviour and contribute to construction of their identities and not their rationally calculated preferences and desires. A calculus of identities and appropriateness is far more important than a calculus of political consequences and benefits. Given that another side of the process of Europeanisation is norm construction and diffusion, this aspect is particularly important to trace the change of behaviours of domestic actors. As Borzel and Risse note, Europeanisation is "the emergence of new rules, norms, practices and structures of meaning" occurs at the EU level and only after moves down to the national level (Borzel and Risse 2003). In other words, domestic actors are exposed to norms created by the EU and influenced by them as in the process of Europeanisation agents at the domestic level are supposed to be incorporating these norms into domestic practices and structures. Jeffrey Chekel, in this light, invites scholars to pay attention to how norms created by the EU interact with agents at the national level (Chekel 2001).

The concept of social learning is particularly important for understanding how domestic actors acquire new ideas, identities and beliefs. Mere incorporation of European norms by domestic agents is not enough to account for changes in behaviour as actors can oppose certain norms and rule them out. Initially, social learning was meant to describe the

situation when actors respond to international arrangements by internalizing the norms and rules to become recognized as part of the community (Borzel and Risse 2003). This model was actively used to explain, for example, domestic changes in future EU member states when domestic governmental agents adopted EU rules having been persuaded of their appropriateness. The adoption of the EU rules and norms directly depends on the compatibility of these norms with identities, values and norms shared at the domestic level. In a nutshell, social learning can be defined as a process in which actors acquire new interests and preferences through interaction with broader institutional context (Chekel 2001). Actors communicating to each other on different platforms, forums and arenas thus go through socialization during which their cognitive structures may converge and specific policy discourses are transmitted. Such communications have an effect on their belief and cognitive structures and lead to redefinition of actors' interests and preferences in new, more appropriate, terms.

The reaction of domestic actors to on-going Europeanisation and the EU pressures can be analysed through investigation of the process of social learning in which actors participate. Deconstruction of how actors acquired new understandings and visions of the EU and its challenges would, thus, uncover the process of interest formation and unveil the roots of actors' behaviour.

The chapter has outlined the state of research on civil society Europeanisation and attempted to describe a theoretical framework which could be used for an analysis of concrete manifestations of this phenomenon.

The next chapters will attempt to employ the present theoretical framework to analyse patterns and practices of Europeanisation taken by the civil society organisations in the UK. Using the definition of Europeanisation of civil society as a reorientation of civil society to the EU and supporting analysis with explanatory tools offered by the rationalist and

constructivist approaches and empirical data, I will try to demonstrate how the process of Europeanisation of civil society organisations unfolded itself in the UK.

2. Civil society organisations in the EU policy-making process: formal recognition, institutional arrangements and “windows of opportunities”.

2.1. (Re)discovery of civil society

Interest groups have historically always been very welcome in the EU policy process. It is widely accepted and has also been paid much attention in the research literature. According to one of the integration theories interest groups contribute to European integration and function as vehicles of this process (Haas 2008). As estimated, nowadays EU institutions cooperate with around 1500 formal interest groups: business and citizens interest groups, trade unions, professional associations etc.²

As for civil society, it has occupied the EU agenda quite recently, in the second half of the 90-s, a breakthrough and a U-turn in EU/civil society unseen before. Several civil society initiatives were already made as far back as in the 70-s but those relationships were in no way systematic or endorsed with compelling arguments compare to the situation in the 90-s. Basically, until recently the EU/civil society relations were a prerogative of the EU development policy. The establishment in 1976 of the Liaison Committee of Development NGOs, designed to coordinate aid provision with the biggest development NGOs and to attract NGOs to implementation of the EU development policy, was the first display institutionalisation of the EU/civil society dialogue³.

From the mid-80s the Commission periodically returns to this issue gradually reviewing its stance on possible benefits and spheres of cooperation with civil society. One of the major landmarks is the Fontaine Report initiated by a group of French intellectuals outside

² For further data see CONECCS, the EU register of special interests.

³ Later on this Committee was replaced by the CONCORD - the Confederation of European Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) for Relief and Development.

the EU institutions and published in 1987. The report was provided an impetus to appear by one of the resolutions of the European Parliament on the role and legal status of associations, although devoid of any specifications. The report attempted to bring the problem of legal status of various associations, operating in between the market and the state, to attention in the EU. Its provisions, in particular, included an appeal to create a European Statue of Associations which could serve as a major document for European associations putting them on an equal legal footing across member states and a proposal on better representation of associations at the Community level (Kendall and Anheier 1999). The destiny of the first proposal was not very successful as it finally was not adopted, although the draft legislation was submitted in 1992, primarily due to conflicting views of member states on the necessity of adoption of such a document (Kendall and Fraisse 2005).

Before 1997, the turning point in EU/civil society relations, very few developments took place. First, the Maastricht Treaty was the first official document to include a provision devoted to voluntary associations. The Declaration 23, only annexed to the Treaty and, thus, not constituting part of the European law “stresses the importance of cooperation between [the European Community] and charitable associations and foundations as institutions responsible for social welfare establishments and services” (The Treaty of Maastricht, 1992). The Declaration was the first expression of political will underlying that civil society organisations belong to a distinct group of social partners and encouraged to deepen a dialogue between them and the Community⁴. It was also the first victory for organisations striving to separate themselves from cooperatives or mutuals and distance themselves from the idea of “social economy”, particularly favoured by the Commission and DG XXIII.

⁴ Some years after these “requests” were taken into account and famous European Social Policy forums were held in 1996 and 1998. Later on they became dialogue platforms with the Community bureaucrats and now can be referred to as examples of gradually emerging relations of dialogue and consultation between the EU and civil society. The first forum was attended by more than 1000 non-governmental organisations.

Another momentous event, of an institutional character, was establishment of the Social Economy Unit at the DG XXIII Enterprise Policy. This Unit was, basically, the first institution responsible for relations with “mutuals, cooperatives, foundations and associations” within the Commission. Despite its small size and location at one of the least influential DG ‘s the Unit was very supportive of the idea of European Statue of Associations. It was also this Unit which in 1997, a year called a “critical juncture” in EU/civil society relations, drafted and later presented the first EU document on civil society – the Communication **“Promoting the role of voluntary associations and foundations in Europe”** (Kendall 2001; Armstrong 2002; Cullen 1999).

The Communication, on the one hand, marked the beginning of a new period in EU/civil society relations and, importantly, was the first source of quite tangled EU civil society discourse. The first sign of confusion was that it underlined economic and social importance of civil society (referred to it as “third sector”) concurrently stressing its role in promotion of European integration to the EU citizens. The document also suggested steps to be taken to secure more prominent and enhanced role of the latter. However, the EU did not commit itself to anything challenging – the lines about the dialogue remained within the “recommendation discourse”, the EU was advised to ensure access to funding for voluntary associations and give them an opportunity to take part in EU-wide training programmes as well as promote all forms of cooperation across borders (European Commission, 1997). Nor were the arguments behind double role, laid on civil society organisations, clarified. To the contrary, by regarding civil society from two perspectives, the EU risked having a clear-cut picture of civil society at all.

Discussion paper **“The Commission and Non-Governmental organisations: building stronger partnership”** prepared in 2000 focuses more on political contribution expected from civil society organisations, namely, distinguishing between “operational

NGOs” organisations that deal with service delivery and advocacy NGOs’ whose primary aim is “to influence the policies of public authorities and public opinion in general” (European Commission 2000: 12). More specifically, authors of the paper introduced the major element of the EU civil society discourse – perception of NGOs as contributing to “participatory democracy” linking it to “interest representation of specific groups and issues” and “policy making”. It set the dominant framework for debates – democracy of the EU through civil society participation and representation. In particular, depicting the rationale behind cooperation between the Commission and non-governmental organisations, the Paper places “fostering participatory democracy” as the first rationale (European Commission, 2000). Stating that the right for self-organisation is the basic prerequisite for democracy the Paper stresses the participatory and representation aspects (as the second rationale). Finally, the Paper presents contribution to policy-making in terms of expertise and counseling, “involvement in policy shaping and policy implementation” as the third rationale behind EU/civil society dialogue. The official discourse began to shape around input legitimacy challenges, instrumental engagement of civil society organisations for the benefit of effective and intelligent policy or output legitimacy challenges and embraced civil society’s role in formation of true European public sphere. Students of European civil society pointed out that such a positioning towards civil society resulted in overall confusion about several things: selection criteria according to which organisations are included into the realm of civil society, the role of EU institutions in organizing civil society and a number of related risks (Schutter 2002; Kohler-Koch 1999).

The EU has not sent any clear message about invented European civil society. Speaking about it, the Paper, however, only refers to “civil dialogue” at the European level, though never clarifying what is meant by this. Not directly rejecting “wideness” of European civil society, the Paper, nevertheless, several times mentions EU-level NGOs, networks and

umbrella associations. So, for example, in the part describing the existing contacts between the Commission and NGOs the Paper explicitly refers to forms of cooperation between EU-level NGOs and the EU and does not mention NGOs working at the national or local levels as if it has never had any contacts with them. Furthermore, this looks confusing in the light of willingness to promote the idea of Europe through civil society which inevitably involves closer cooperation with nationally-harboured organisations (Schutter 2002). The idea of European civil society born and spread at the EU level was dangerously shaping as an idea of a transnational civil society with a slightly corporatist face or a community of NGOs operating across borders of the member states and represented by huge umbrella associations and structures in Brussels.

Soon in the **White Paper on European Governance** the Commission tries to, first, move away from existing confusion with regards to civil society's role and to shed some light on its intentions (Armstrong 2002; Greenwood 2007; Dur and Bievre 2007; Geyer 2001). This document particularly underlined the importance of civil society and devoted the whole chapter "Better involvement" to describing what is meant by it and what it is composed of (European Commission, 2001). The Paper sees channels of communication between the EU and citizens as instruments of strengthening democracy and adding more legitimacy from a transnational perspective and does not forget about the ideal of true European public sphere. Access to agenda-setting, discussions and debates around policy proposals was granted to those organisations that "exist permanently at the Community level..., have authority to represent and act at European level..., have member organisations in most of the EU Member States..." (ECOSOS, 2001: 117). It clearly indicated: it is relations with Community level NGOs that the Commission would like to improve and better structure rather than relations with a more diverse and multidimensional civil society (Armstrong 2002). Surprisingly weak mechanisms were indicated as tools for implementation of the above-mentioned ideas: an on-

line database for civil society organisations, non-legally binding Code of Conduct setting out standards for a consultation process and “partnership agreements” between institutions and civil society organisations to be made if necessary and if there is a mutual willingness.

Vague provisions of the Paper provoked many criticisms of the EU vision of civil society and its approach to engaging with it. Fritz Scharpf, for example, notes that the seriousness of the invitation for the civil society to take part in governance is questionable as the Paper lacks any specifications and any concretizations with regards to mechanisms this partaking is supposed to be implemented and maintained with (Scharpf 2001). Moreover, the Paper was blamed for “manipulatory undertones” since it was eager to use civil society to sell the idea of Europe (Ruzza 2008).

Nevertheless the EU clearly emphasized its interest in closer collaboration with civil society and supplied this thesis with arguments stressing a threefold role (participatory, functional and integrational) attributed to civil society. In further development of collaborative practices the EU finally adhered to the participatory one linking civil society, first of all, to combating democracy problems. In practice, however, the situation developed differently when the Commission, being supportive of the participatory discourse, nevertheless, began to allocate substantial amount of funding to support youth and educational organisations as they contribute to promotion of the integration. Christine Mahoney supports this argument with figures on overall amount of funding given by the Commission to civil society organisations in 2003-2008 (Mahoney and Beckstrand 2009). Figures indicate that youth and educational organisations turned out to be the biggest recipients of the EU money which is most likely to be related to their main focus of work – projects aimed at popularization of the idea of Europe.

Civil society has gained a prominent place in the EU narrative on the state of its democracy and governance but concurrently was portrayed as transnational civil society

materializing in the form of pan-European organisations. It is pan-European NGOs who were finally granted an unequally better access to policy process. However, the EU narrative on civil society remains quite ambiguous and consists of several major messages attributing different roles to civil society. As Beate Kohler-Koch posits, civil society is seen by the EU as a contributor to reduction of democratic deficit, as one of stakeholders affected by the EU policies and as “stand-by citizens” whose activities form so desirable European public sphere (Kohler-Koch 1999). Together with impulses originating from EU official documents these messages appear as a set of images of civil society and its role, produced by the EU and offered by it to civil societies in member states thereby opening a diverse ideational field within which civil society organisations can identify themselves. Europeanisation of civil society organisation can unfold, be accompanied or even led by and within any of discourses diffused by the EU.

2.2. Structure of political opportunities for civil society organisations at the EU level

Along with the above-described rhetorical re(discoveries) of civil society the EU began to construct an institutional framework to support its slogans and ideas. Producing new institutional arrangements for civil society which would enable it to become part of the governance process, the EU was rebuilding the whole political structure of opportunities for civil society. Speaking about structure of opportunities in a broader sense, formal institutional structure is just one of its components, though a crucial one (Hooghe 2008; Nentwich 1996). Norms regulating civil society participation in policy making that are enshrined in the EU normative acts as well as other formal participatory mechanisms of civil society involvement are primary instruments at the disposal of civil society in its relations with the EU.

It should first be mentioned that no legally binding norms in the EU legislation and founding treaties, which would regulate civil society's involvement in the process of policy making and implementation, have ever appeared. The **Treaty of Amsterdam**, for example, in its Article 138, prescribing the Commission to conduct pre-legislative consultations with "social partner organisations", provided some legal space for civil society. However, this was quite a narrow appeal as it deployed the notion of "social dialogue" with a particular focus on issues of employment and social affairs consultations on which are compulsory for corresponding institutions (DG's) (The Treaty of Amsterdam, 1997). Scholars rightfully note that social dialogue should not be mistaken for civic dialogue, although this norm opened up some space for civil society involvement in policy making and was actively positioned by the EU as such a channel⁵. In practice, a number of civil society organisations regularly take part in meetings and events of the Dialogue. Nevertheless, this group of participating organisations remains too narrow and, undoubtedly, is not representative of civil society.

Similarly, the Lisbon Treaty refers to civil society in very ample terms and casts in very general terms that "the institutions shall maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with representative associations and civil society" (Article 8B) or repeats that the Economic and Social Committee shall consist of representatives of civil society (Article 256A) (The Treaty of Lisbon, 2007). The chapter clarifying the decision-making process states that "the Commission may obtain the opinion of European bodies which are representative of various economic and social sectors and of civil society to which the Union's activities are of concern" (The Treaty of Lisbon, 2007). These are the only references

⁵ K. Armstrong, for example, convincingly demonstrates that for at least three reasons such a mistake should not be made. First of all, social dialogue is clearly enshrined in the Treaty with a specification of what matters are included into the dialogue. Secondly, the interests of partners of a social dialogue are normally far from those one of civil society due to the essence of matters discussed. Finally, functions performed by social partners to which social dialogue is oriented (dialogue between, first of all, labour and management) may not be performed and most often beyond the scope of interest of civil society actors (Armstrong 2002).

to civil society made in the same manner focusing on advisory role of civil society in the EU governance.

Interestingly enough, the EU has made an attempt to “proceduralise” authorities/civil society relations at the sub-national and national levels rather than at the Union’s level by incorporating the provisions of the **Arhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters** in the EU legislation thereby creating a hard pressure on domestic actors. Covering quite a narrow area of environmental policy, the Convention, signed in 1998, was fully incorporated into the EU law in 2006 thereby becoming legally-binding. The Convention’s major focus is on guarantees of access to information and decision-making for the public as well as public participation in policy making. It invokes the governments (and after its incorporation, the EU institutions) to facilitate public participation at various stages of policy making process and support societal groups and associations working in the domain of environmental protection. It also established codes of good practice of provision of information to the public. Just like in the case of social dialogue the norms which emanate from the Convention can, in practice, be utilized by civil society organisations seeking to influence the policy making process at the EU level.

It is not surprising the EU left little legal room for civil society. It would be difficult to imagine the EU infringing on member states freedom in developing relations with an entity conceptualized and understood differently in every case. For this highly normative reason, though just one of many, organisations are not mentioned in any of the EU normative acts which delineate the decision-making procedures. Even new formulas of co-decision mode of decision-making, presented in the Lisbon Treaty, do not directly mention civil society as a potential participant of this cumbersome procedure. Nevertheless, numerous opportunities for

organisations were created by the EU institutions themselves and can be regarded as channels of influence.

The principal point of entry for civil society organisations has always been the European Commission. It is the most important interlocutor for civil society due to its central position in the EU political system, the right to initiate legislation, resources and power to spread them. As a result, its officials are the most “coveted” people to talk to for civil society organisations and its Directorates are the most attractive destinations for most of them (both umbrella and “individual” ones). The Commission is an object of loyalty and gravity for civil society as it controls several stages of the policy cycle simultaneously and, additionally, has always sought to consult external experts to safeguard the support of its legislative proposals and initiatives.

The Commission enjoys its relations with civil society through a complex and multifaceted consultation regime which consists of such instruments as multi-stakeholder forum politics, structured relations with civil society organisations and on-line consultations. Recently the Commission put a lot of effort into multiplication of consultative arrangements to open up more channels. Traditionally, the so-called forum politics and structured relations, opened to transnational incarnations of civil society, have been the first consultation mechanism introduced by the Commission. Later, driven by the idea to open up the governance process and the consultation regime to the public, the Commission set up a regime of on-line consultations for all interested stakeholders.

The birth of “forum politics” dates back to provision of the Single European Act which established the Social Dialogue, officially introduced in the Maastricht Treaty, to promote deliberation on the most controversial issues of the emerging domain of European social policy. Along with that the Commission took some steps to open up the consultation space for interest groups on a number of other issues not covered in concept of Social

Dialogue. Troubled with the state of democracy, the Commission became preoccupied with expansion of its consultation regime over other actors, civil society organisations in the first place.

This shift is marked by the introduction of the concept of “Civil Dialogue” in 1996, concept specifically designed for civil society with a focus on issues of employment and social affairs. Multi-stakeholder policy forums (like European Social Forum, first held in 1996 and regularly organised every 2 years ever since) became the first forms of institutionalization of this idea. The overall purpose of such forums, which began to emerge in other spheres and on other issues, is discussion with multiple interested stakeholders (among which civil society organisations are not the only ones) broad policy strategy and provide an arena for a dialogue on aspects of elaborated policy. Forums are understood in a different way in the EU: apart from the so-called *strategy forums* that aim at exchange of practices and knowledge and are a part of Open Method of Coordination in which Commission acts as a mediator, there are *policy forums* established by structural units of the Commission (like Pension forum, the European Health Forum or European Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Corporate Social Responsibility) (Quitkat and Finke 2008). Despite the fact that these forums are narrowed down to specific issues and are forums with limited attendance (contrary to open strategy forums) they act as huge platforms for discussion and interests’ advocacy for NGOs. However, the Commission perceived forums from a particular transnational angle, and soon failure of representation became the major criticism of this initiative. Forums recognize just European umbrella organisations, which was in perfect tune with the overall civil society discourse, as those ones that nominate participants of Forums. This undoubtedly leaves the questions of transparency of selection as well as true representation open. Such policy induces organisations to become members of umbrella associations and, in this light, can be seen as a pressure they have to cope with if reaching the EU is their goal.

The forums' role in involvement of civil society in policy making must be thoroughly investigated. So far, it is acknowledged that civil society organisations enjoy, though with limitations emanating from corporatist practices of forums' attendance and membership, an opportunity to impact the policy design on a matter of issues through deliberation and discussion. However, this mechanism remains largely informal as neither the Commission nor other EU bodies are formally constrained by the decisions, resolutions or proposals produced at forums although the common points of view found by participants are supposed to be laid as the basis of the EU policies.

The situation becomes a bit more advantageous for civil society when forum politics move down from the macro-level to the meso-level consultations of particular Commission Directorates. Commission's civil society rhetorical messages were apprehended by the Directorates and caused the trend of "penetration" when subdivisions established numerous consultative committees and experts groups with interested stakeholders. Three types of committees are wide-spread: advisory committees, expert groups and scientific committees. The first ones are those in which civil society organisations are the most present due to both their permanent interest and expertise. However, the size and composition of such committees varies considerably and so does the number of seats reserved for civil society organisations. These committees were planned as serviced and chaired by the Commission which automatically put organisations in a position of "invited guests"⁶. Moreover, in most of such groups where, as a rule, decisions are taken by the consensus and civil society organisations have no voting right, which significantly restrains their opportunities to influence the outcomes. Basically, their role consists in expressing their position on debated issues. In this light, despite these committees' being extremely important institutions within which EU

⁶ Environmental organisations are reputed as the most "invited" and involved participants in operation of such committees. This, however, is achieved as, for example, the DG Environment in 2006 had relations 116 regular committees and expert groups organised around policy proposals being elaborated in the DG compare to, for instance, the DG Employment and Social Affairs, the one of a primary interest for the majority of civil society organisations. In 2006 the DG was working with 55 groups (Fazi and Smith 2006).

policies are designed, their potential for enhancement of democracy in the EU remains questionable due to low degree of openness. It is also hard to measure the effective role of civil society organisations in policy design within these committees.

Beginning from the 1994, when the first pan-European transnational NGO, the Platform of Social NGOs (the Social Platform), was launched the Commission began to voluntarily build special structured relationships with EU-wide civil society organisations. These platforms usually act as EU-wide hierarchically organised umbrella associations which are composed of myriads of national umbrella and smaller organisations, up to individual ones, across EU member states. In reality, they appear to be “networks of networks”. Pan-European NGOs emerged as structures to converse a dialogue with the Commission and other EU institutions on EU policies in particular spheres. There are different opinions in the research literature regarding their nature and contribution to the EU governance. Some scholars insist that they represent empirical reality of emerging European public sphere whereas the others regard them as rather elitist and exclusive arrangements (Cullen 1999; Beyers 2004; Geyer 2001). The latter partly holds true as these organisations enjoy the privilege to have special relations with the Commission which, first of all, manifest themselves in financial support provided by the Commission to them from the Union’s budget. Moreover, the process of co-optation of these associations into the structure of the EU governance, regarded by some scholars as a direct evidence of emerging “EU corporatism”, was *ab origin* directed by the Commission itself which institutionalized its relations with pan-European organisations by setting the rules of collaboration.

Therefore, this consultative arrangement provided additional opportunities for thousands of organisations to take part in the policy making process at the EU level. One of the necessary conditions is, however, to be a member of a pan-European umbrella organisation to have an access to the EU policy making. Membership, in its turn, implies

sharing the same set of ideas and willingness to work on elaboration of policies across national borders. It also can guarantee that local problems will be heard at the EU level which, in its turn, can potentially bring the EU closer to citizens. Several limitations, however, shall be taken into consideration. The system of consultations with certain organisations, built and maintained by the Commission, first of all reflects “corporatist” and “elitist” vision of civil society promoted by the Commission itself which, in doing so, exercised control over the process of civil society participation in policy making through selection, co-optation and support of certain organisations. The democratic potential of such a system leaves much to be desired, as some scholars repeatedly points to (Salamon and Anheier 1997). Additionally, the fact that financial support of these organisations’ activities flows from the Commission raises the problem of their independence and ability to serve the watchdog function and not being a lapdog instead. Furthermore, this opportunity to take part in policy making directly depends on a plethora of side factors mediating relations between organisations and Brussels-based umbrella structures like the size or an organisation willing to join the pan-European structure, available resources, proximity of positions on policies and issues, personal contacts etc. These factors form into myriads of configurations unique for each organisation.

To smooth over these criticism another consultative mechanism, public consultations carried out by the Directorates, was introduced. This has recently become one of the key consultation mechanisms as it provides more access to a bigger number of organisations since it is often organised on-line⁷ and does not have any harsh requirements with regards to participants. Such consultations are held on the majority of policy initiatives at the stage of policy formulation. The scope of use of this mechanism as well as the scale of participation of civil society organisations in it varies from Directorate to Directorate. In some case, like in DG Employment and Social Affaires, the on-line consultations are widely used and are

⁷ For the example, one of the web resources being used for public consultations is the web-site “You voice in Europe”.

prioritized to other ways of consulting the public, for some DG's this practice is unknown (Quittkat and Finke 2008). Additionally, this interactive mechanism gives an opportunity to report on the process of policy implementation.

Hence this mechanism's contribution for empowerment of civil society is hard to estimate. Public on-line consultations are opened to anybody who would like to speak on subjects of the EU policies and this is widely used by companies, business interests and ordinary citizens. In this light, it is really hard to assess the contribution of civil society organisations. Similarly, it is difficult to trace the destiny of contributions and whether they are assumed as the basis of elaborated policies in their final form.

These structured interactions of the Commission with civil society are complemented by a number of other instruments among which are informal meetings with Commission officials or numerous conferences at which EU bureaucrats exchange their opinions with different stakeholders. Windows of opportunities have also been created for civil society by other EU institutions copying the forms developed by the Commission. The European Parliament, competing with the Commission for recognition and influence, developed the most advanced and characterised by a high degree of openness system of relations with civil society. This is especially relevant for the co-decision procedure, the mode of decision-making in which the Parliament enjoys greater power according to the Lisbon Treaty. The major channel of impact for civil society was opened at the stage of formulation, through parliamentary standing committees with which organisations can establish direct regular relations and employ the procedure of hearings. However, the Parliament followed the Commission in granting only EU-wide organisations the privilege to take part in Parliament's work. But the Parliament turned out to be an attractive venue for civil society organisations its members (MEPs) whom organisations can contact with their proposals, amendments and

suggestions concerning policies and legislation acts and one can expect that in an “after Lisbon” era the use of this channel will increase manifold.

The EU has also challenged another aspect of civil society functioning, besides their eagerness to influence the decision-making process. The stage of policy implementation of one of common EU policies, cohesion (regional) has also experienced sort of a “civil society interference” planned and implemented by the EU. The core idea of executed reform was expansion of a partnership principle for implementation of Structural Funds onto economic and social partners. Since then this innovation has triggered much research interest and resulted in emergence of an influential concept of multi-level governance in European studies (Hooghe 1996; Kohler-Koch and Eising 1999).

With regards to civil society organisations the major policy innovation was inclusion in General Provisions on implementation of Structural Funds paragraphs containing direct references to civil society organisations as full partners in allocation of the Funds. Comparing General Provisions and especially European Social Fund (ESF) Regulations for the periods of 1999-2006 and 2006-2013 one can easily notice that the EU significantly changed its approach to civil society. General Provisions for 2006-2013 directly commit member states to consult civil society organisations (Article 11) whereas this provision was absent in 1999-2006 regulations. Moreover, Article 42 states that member states’ authorities may go for delegation of authority at the stage of implementation and management of the Funds and entrust civil society organisations with responsibilities at this phase of Funds allocation. ESF Regulations for the indicated period also designate possible ways of engaging with civil society organisations in implementation of the Funds (Chapman 2004).

Thus, not only did the EU open up for civil society opportunities to take part in policy design but also in policy implementation. Furthermore, this can be considered as a type of hard pressure as it obliges national authorities to work in partnership with civil society

organisations. This can serve as a good illustration how the EU can potentially shake the structure of political opportunities available for civil society organisations. Further analysis can demonstrate the reaction and response of civil society organisations to such a pressure.

2.3 Conclusions

Opinions about whether the EU managed to put its rhetorical promises to make civil society a full-fledged governance partner into practice differ. Some scholars agree that the structure of political opportunity for them is quite well-elaborated, advanced and inclusive. The others, to the contrary, insist that the created access venues available for civil society are scarce, of limited use and reflect the discursive confusion concerning the role of civil society. Firstly, there is no proper legal basis for systematic consultations with civil society. Consultative arrangements are “rather politically driven and rank between semi-formal and informal” (Kroger 2008). Such a poor regulation of access does not contribute to deeper involvement of civil society into political process at the EU level. Secondly, existing mechanisms lack specific criteria according to which civil society organisations are chosen as participants of policy making process. EU institutions and bodies develop their own visions and understandings of civil society which may vary from broad pictures encompassing almost all types of organisations to very restrictive ones. At the same time, unofficially the EU favours big EU-wide organisations. For instance, more effective participation of civil society in policy design and elaboration was severely limited by making civil society to adapt to numerous EU rules and regulations and such requirements as, for instance, accounting and financing which automatically cut off smaller organisations or those ones who do not belong to any umbrella structures.

Nonetheless, as in case of rhetorical pressures and different narratives of civil society, variations of institutional opportunities open up a wide space for variations in patterns of

Europeanisation for civil society organisations. The next chapter attempts to analyse how these developments affected Europeanisation of organisations in the UK.

3. Europeanisation of the UK civil society organisations: explaining the responses, reactions and motivations

3.1. Introduction

The discussion about the extent of Europeanisation of the UK organisations can be commenced with a brief look at how prominent their position in Brussels is. Due to scarcity of data it is not possible to hypothesize how successful UK organisations in dealing with EU institutions and bureaucrats but some very superficial conclusions can, nevertheless, be made. UK organisations are undoubtedly the most active when it comes to membership in umbrella associations. Figures on the number of member states' organisations in European social and environmental umbrella associations convincingly confirm the overall thesis of high degree of Europeanisation: UK organisations leave behind their counterparts from other member states in terms of activism (Table 1)⁸. These figures slightly change when it comes to the official EU register CONECCS which contains information on all the national organised interests having offices in Brussels. UK organisations occupy the third position lagging behind France and Germany (Table 2). Furthermore, the data on EU funding given to civil society reveals that the UK organisations occupy the bottom of the list among the biggest member states being funded the least (Table 3).

How can these discrepancies between explicit activism in EU-wide civil society structures and enjoyment of EU money be explained? What does the EU mean for them if the most desirable resource – funding – is not fully used? These small questions become clearer if one has an overall picture of the EU impact on operation and performance of organisations.

⁸ See the Appendix A

3.2. Europeanisation and new opportunities: what does the EU have to offer?

To explain the rationales behind the deliberate attempts of civil society organisations to Europeanise one shall closer examine the effect of the EU civil society initiatives on already existing political opportunities available to civil society.

In the UK civil society Europeanisation was hugely dependent on drastic alterations in domestic structure of opportunities, namely, the U-turn in government civil society policy from almost a total neglect to celebration of civil society's role (Fyfe 2005; Kelly 2007). This shift had a series of important consequences like growth in the numbers of organisations (or charities, the term most preferred by the UK scholars and practitioners), remarkable diversification (flourishing of social enterprises, for example) and professionalisation. The latter led to use of more sources of funding, development of techniques of working with target groups and use of new innovative methods of problem-solving. All of this was accompanied by a substantial increase of government funding of charities' activities. According to the last data, annual government funding of civil society organisations doubled and reached 12 mln. GBP in 2008.⁹ Growing professionalism also led to the situation when one third of charities' income comes from government contracts thanks to rapidly developing practices of outsourcing. This remarkably favourable situation with increase of state funding had direct implications for the development of European dimension in UK civil society organisations' work as will be shown later.

All these changes, as was mentioned above, have to a greater extent been brought about by the government policy. The term "rediscovery", surprisingly coinciding with "rediscovery" of civil society by the EU, is often used when describing particularities of civil society policy of the

⁹ According to the recent assessments one third of voluntary organisations' total income (12,8 bil. GBP out of 35,5) comes from statutory sources: government contracts and fees and grants which makes British civil society one of the most heavily state funded sectors in Europe (Kane 2009).

British government. As Kendall notes the statement about civil society's increasing multifarious contributions to UK society has become a mantra catchphrase for politicians and bureaucrats (Kendall 2009). Indeed, in the late 90-s the civil society moved from the periphery of politics into the front line and occupied the central position in politician's minds and platforms. The Labour government denoted in 1997 that it was going to change the approach to third sector.¹⁰ In fact, the approach of the Conservative predecessors can also be characterised as "third sector-centered" when, in accordance with ideological positions of the party, charities were drawn into a more central role in service provision. However, the policy of the Conservative government was characterised as inconsistent, sporadic and unsystematic. Kendall, analysing how voluntary sector mainstreamed into the public policy rhetoric and action in the UK, posits that the Conservative government viewed the world exclusively through "two sectors" lenses as it was too preoccupied with the overall rhetoric and debate, the Conservative party has traditionally been involved, about the boundaries between the market and the state left too little room for regarding voluntary organisations as potential contributors to economic development and tackling social problems (Kendall 2000).

In general words, the true exceptionality of the situation in the UK was that the major agenda-setter was the political party for whom the rhetoric about civil society was a circumspect way of political positioning and ideological distancing from the rivals before the elections. "Rebranding" itself, the Labour placed its stakes on welcoming civil society into the realm of public policy as a feature of its "newness". Such a purposive stance was thoroughly prepared and even more thoroughly put into life after the New Labour had come to power in 1997¹¹. Right after

¹⁰ Prior to the elections the Labour party published "**Building the future together**" in which the Compact between the party and the third sector was proposed. This was one of the first Labour's declarations of support for third sector (the term used in the memorandum) (Haugh and Kitson 2007). More specifically, the position of the New Labour on voluntary associations was that working with voluntary organisations, trade unions and other incarnations of citizen's self-organisation was one way to achieve democratization understood as distribution of power, wealth and opportunity among the many and not the few" (Riddell 1997)

¹¹ It was given a prominent place in Party's pre-electoral policy documents like, for example, Blair's Fabian Society pamphlet "The third way: new politics for the new century" as well as endorsed by policy papers and reports prepared by Labour affiliated think tanks and Labour sympathetic academics (Blair 1998). The most

the successful general elections in 1997 the New Labour began to implement the provisions of their electoral manifesto regarding voluntary sector. The result of the implementation phase was a number of developments which significantly restructured domestic opportunities for the UK civil society.

First of all, the government introduced a number of new financial regulations which unprecedentedly altered the whole financial situation for civil society organisations. These innovations included numerous tax reliefs for organisations working on service production and delivery as well as a target to increase the annual allocation of state funds for voluntary organisations up to 100 million pounds, the threshold which has finally been reached (Kendall 2000). Such an unprecedented financial commitment triggered vibrant civil society activity in the following years. Basically, it later led to civil society's turn away from the European funding. As figures show, in the period from 2002 to 2006, for example, the reliance on the EU finding diminished while the averaged amount of statutory funding increased (Tables 4, 5; (Green 2009)¹². This observation, however, is not relevant for all types of organisations but for social ones.

A huge institutional endorsement of civil society was another direction of the new government policy preoccupied with creating new windows for civil society. Institutional expansion began with the elaboration and launch of the Compact, legally non-binding agreement/memorandum between the English government and voluntary sector outlining the principles of collaboration and delineating the major government commitments towards civil society. The first and the most important commitment was to secure "sector's involvement in policy development from the earliest stages of policy development ... from informal engagement to full-scale public consultation" (Great Britain. Home Office and Community 1998). The Compact explicitly stated that "the sector has the right to campaign, to comment on

famous example of such an involvement is "Deakin Commission Report" prepared by a well-known center left academic Nicholas Deakin. This document emphasized the role that voluntary sector plays in country's development, presented a well-elaborated argumentation on necessity to cooperate with the sector and advocated for introduction of a Compact between government and civil society which, finally, was done.

¹² See Appendix A

Government policy and to challenge that policy, irrespective of any funding relationship that might exist” (Great Britain. Home Office and Community 1998). The major implication of emergence of the Compact was that it stimulated the sector itself for more active positioning as political actor. Later the potential of the “Compact” spilled over local government arrangements when the Government announced that participation of third sector in service provision was to be expanded and local authorities were advised to work more closely with voluntary sector (Kelly 2007). As a result of these policies the sector became actively involved in policy formulation, voluntary organisations found themselves invited to different government commissions, panels, working groups etc. Establishment of the Office of the Third Sector, a special governmental body, was the top institutional development. Moreover, the figure of Minister for Third Sector, member of the Cabinet, is considered as a strong institutional advantage for the UK civil society sector. Soon the trend often called “penetration” became apparent when almost all governmental bodies established partnership relations with third sector by setting up joint committees, commissions and expert groups.

These developments contributed to significant empowerment of civil society organisations as political actors. However, almost at the same time the EU contributed to widening of windows of opportunities for participation in policy design and implementation both at the domestic and EU levels. UK civil society organisations, thus, encountered a double pressure which directly streamed their Europeanisation.

However, EU civil society initiatives proved to be efficacious incentives to Europeanise for only some organisations. Here, first of all, some references should be made to a number of features which characterise individual organisations as relevant intervening factors. One of them is the size of an organisation which can holistically be seen as not merely the number of personal it employs but also the scope of its activities, the level at which it operates and other resources it possesses. The patterns of Europeanisation are, undoubtedly,

very different for big and small organisations as impulses sent by the EU did not affect all of them evenly. Basic distinction between “big” organisations and “small” ones can be made with the former seeing their relations with the EU in a positive light and being very inclined to Europeanise and the latter ones being quite skeptical about the necessity of establishing relations. This piece of interview clearly demonstrates that being a big organisation brings additional benefits:

Of course, big associations perform better when it comes to attempts to reach the EU. To be absolutely honest with you, we have got resources beginning with almost permanent networking with governmental officials and ending with bigger budgets. I assume we do the things better, no offence intended, and even though sometimes we can not boast we know the specific better but we are more likely to be given support both from the government and the EU (if we are seeking it). (Interview N1)

Funding, as confirmed by both this piece of interview and previously shown figures, does not play a decisive role for neither types of organisations: neither small nor big ones regarded it as linked to their “European work” due to pouring of money into the sector by the government. It is, nevertheless, tempting to conclude that bigger charities can “afford” to Europeanise due to their heavier position as actors who possess sufficient resources to get involved. This, undoubtedly, holds true for almost all the “big” organisations whose members have been interviewed. Moreover, one could hypothesize that recent government measures which purported to stimulate civil society activity were of a special benefit for small organisations and, after all, succeeded in turning their face towards domestic opportunities. However, this picture is a bit refracted when one moves down one level in an attempt to trace the practices of Europeanisation. It is equally impossible to say that small organisations have not been affected by the EU at all, especially locally. First of all, the presence of the EU in their lives seems to be even more prominent, and they are fully aware of that. Commissioning and public procurement are the spheres where voluntary organisations have been directly and

deeply affected by the EU pressures. These domains are heavily regulated by numerous Brussels rules to make sure the process is transparent, open and competitive. The situation is quite dual for organisations. On the one hand, knowing that it is the EU that made the process of participation in contracting and outsourcing more difficult and bureaucratic contributes to appearance and spread of quite anti-EU attitudes.

You know, the rules of commissioning favor particular organisations, exclude small ones, give more room for maneuver and, after all, secure success for big organisations. And I can tell this leads to emergence of kind of monopolies in our sector. I suppose these things very well explain why small organisations are quite skeptical about the EU. (Interview N3).

This may serve as an additional confirmation of the thesis that the “size” of an organisation significantly correlates with the scope of Europeanisation as it is naturally linked to its capacity and resource endowment. On the other hand, one still cannot negate that Europeanisation of local and smaller organisations is sometimes far greater than that of big and London-centered ones. This, however, is true for a certain type of organisations, namely, those ones working in a social sphere as the EU offered serious opportunities which enhanced their participation in the process of policy implementation. Modified regulations of the Structural Funds allocation enabled civil society to become members of partnerships, together with local authorities, and work on combating social problems using the Structural Funds endorsement (Bache 2008; Bache and Jordan 2006). Unfortunately, none of representatives of local organisations was an informant on this issue but some insights into how the EU influenced local organisations were provided by experts working on EU funds consulting.

The experts claim there were several phases of responses of small local associations to opportunities provided by the EU. Local civil society Europeanisation, in this light, perfectly fits into the rationalist logic when actors’ decisions were conditioned by external institutional context. The first phase began around 1994 when the UK government made an explicit accent

on the necessity to benefit more from existing EU funding instruments¹³. The situation further developed quite favorably for small organisations as the national umbrella association – National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) – stepped in as an intermediary between the EU and the UK voluntary sector and provided its organisational, political and reputation resources to help local organisations to make use of vast financial reserves available in the Structural Funds.

*The beauty of that system was that NCVO took the responsibility to carry out the final audit of how the money has been spent; and this was the major factor why locals (**associations** – A.D.) were very eager to get involved. The audit rules of the EU are hideously strict, incomprehensible and sometimes merely impenetrable and you see that smaller organisations cannot afford hire personnel or experts to make sure they follow them (Interview N6)*

However, later on the structure of opportunities for organisations dramatically changed. The first driver of change was the UK government actions with regards to how Structural Funds are managed in the country. The Government was guided by its own considerations of strengthening its own financial instruments available for civil society, which it backed with increase of domestic funding, and, concurrently, was inclined to make Structural Funds management as inexpensive for the country's budget as possible. Soon the management costs were cut down by reducing the number of civil servants administering Structural Funds in the country. Thus, without openly discouraging civil society organisations from exploring the opportunities provided by the EU, the government made the process of using the Funds' reserves more difficult. This change in the UK government's stance coincided with transformations which took place at the EU level. The Commission decided to toughen the rules of money management having complexly analysed how the Funds were managed domestically and found numerous examples of mismanagement and fraud occurring

¹³ In addition, the Structural Funds at that time included several components/schemes, like "Local social capital" programme within the European Social Fund, introduced in 1998, whose primary goal was to reach as large number of civil society organisations as possible (Kendall 2009).

due to inappropriate domestic regulations. The regulations being in force in the UK was also an example of such inappropriateness.

The Government, by the way, was reluctant to get engaged with Structural Funds as European funding was completely outside the mechanisms used by the Treasury and this produced an additional organisational burden which no one wanted to bear. Additionally, the EU introduced the requirement of co-financing and sometimes the Government merely refused to take that money because of that (Interview N6).

As a result, local organisations encountered sort of a double pressure arising both from the domestic level and the EU level and, quite logically, their response to the window that was gradually narrowing and becoming smaller (to an extent as, for example, the window of “national opportunities” was, on the contrary, expanding) was to refrain from active use of the European offers. Additionally, the situation worsened since NCVO decided to dispense with its policy of managing and choosing the UK projects run by civil society organisations and thereby bearing all the risks related to projects’ maladministration¹⁴. Due to their organisational weakness and lack of professionalism not so many organisations could singly manage the European projects without being supported by either government or national “umbrellas” resources.

The situation slightly changed when the right and authority to manage Structural Funds was delegated to regional actors and the partnership principle was extended so that organisations could rely on their partners in projects implementation. The Government has, consequently, lost its unlimited control over the formulation and implementation of the Funds

¹⁴ Kendall notes that this verdict was the result of a strict position of the organisation’s new leadership who viewed EU programmes as a burden rather than as asset and complained about its excessive complexity. Furthermore, the new leadership announced it was going to concentrate on the subnational dimension as an organisation’s mission (Kendall 2009)

It should also be mentioned that the rhetoric about complexity of the EU rules is a natural companion of overall EU rhetoric of small organisations. To trace the roots of this discourse would be an enthralling but demanding research task itself. In the present we may conjecture, and this needs to be empirically proven, that this discourse might have grown from toughening of the EU rules with regards to funding and policy entrepreneurship of experts and other stakeholders, including government ones.

which could have contributed to further empowerment of civil society. This conclusion, however, needs some additional empirical verification. One may infer that Europeanisation of local organisations was bluntly developing along the lines of clash between domestic and European opportunities which directly determined the course of action taken by civil society organisations.

It goes without saying that EU opportunities for bigger and London-based actors implied different things and triggered different responses. By “big” organisations national umbrella associations are normally meant. Here the distinction between the spheres where organisations locate their actions turned out to be of a crucial importance. Environmental and social organisations demonstrate examples of different strategies with regards to the EU pressures and, what is more interesting, the patterns of their Europeanisation are determined by different sets of factors and driving forces.

Variations in Europeanisations of these types of organisations are, first of all, conditioned by the fact that EU turned out to be “useful” and offered different things to environmental and social NGOs and, as a result, organisations deployed different strategies towards the EU. Social NGOs more actively use EU consultative arrangements and other numerous channels elaborated, promoted and maintained by the EU for lobbying and campaigning whilst environmental organisations are more focused on exploitation implementation and monitoring opportunities. In other words, EU institutional pressures turned out to be of a different stimulating effect. Furthermore, the concept of misfit appears to have a certain explanatory power for the existing situation.

Social NGOs have directly oriented towards active involvement into the decision-making process at the EU level and they explain this interest by referring to the process of 1) widening of the EU competence in the sphere of their interest accompanied, at the same time, by 2) an insufficient quality of the EU policy on social issues. One respondent, who works as

the “EU person” in the Royal National Institute of Blind People, clearly described the situation relevant for many national umbrella associations dealing with social issues:

Why the EU? The EU policy is essentially important as nowadays more and more decisions originate in Brussels, if I may say so. 8 out of 10 legislative acts come from Brussels; and it is impossible not to pay any attention to what Brussels is doing as in most cases their policy lacks any expert input. I am not trying to say that the UK policy is far better – there are just sort of grey areas where neither the EU, nor the UK policy takes problems of our constituents into consideration. Since the EU legislation is incorporated into the national one, it is logical if we influenced it already at the stage of emergence (Interview N8).

This state of affairs largely determines the Europeanisation of social NGOs as involvement in continuous lobbying and campaigning at all levels with the purpose to influence the final version of the EU legislation. In this light, the EU window of opportunities composed of various channels which provides access to the decision-making agenda is being actively used by social NGOs. Furthermore, social NGOs seem to be active in utilizing as many channels as possible. Besides becoming members of the pan-European umbrellas and thereby getting an access to specialized forums and stakeholders meetings, they intensively explore the opportunities of lobbying through national MEP's in the European Parliament, participation in numerous expert committees and groups working with DG's and in other forms of consultations as well as direct campaigning. The choice between the mechanisms depends on which EU decision-making procedure or regime/mode is into play with regards to a particular piece of legislation. The co-decision procedure, for example, sends organisations to the European Parliament as the most easily reachable of the EU institutions whereas other modes can make them seek other points of entry¹⁵. This, basically, implies that organisations

¹⁵ The EU activity of the Royal National Institute of Blind People can serve as a good case. They are members of the European Blind Union, European Disability Forum and regularly cooperate with the Disability Intergroup in the European Parliament through UK MEP's (the UK Office in the European Parliament). The RNIB took an active part in drafting and commenting on the EU directives on food labeling, equal treatment and access to goods and services to make sure this legislation was responsive to needs of the blind people.

possess wide knowledge of how the EU functions and the respondents usually demonstrated that when they were elaborating on details of their EU actions.

However, respondents particularly emphasized that the most preferable way for them to reach the EU level is through domestic institutions and channels. The first reason lies in their overall skepticism towards EU-wide umbrella associations which arises from alienation from day-to-day work of umbrella associations.

I can say that sometimes NGOs express quite skeptical views about their counterparts at the EU level. I think this is connected to the fact that European umbrellas are funded by the Commission and people cannot be sure they are totally independent from the course of action liked by the Commission (Interview N8).

We are members of the EUROchild network and this is an additional asset of ours. But what they do is not a matter of our everyday concern as technically it would be absolutely impossible to keep an eye on their everyday developments. They inform us and then we react but it all feels a bit far away (Interview N4)

The second explanation is the simple cost-effectiveness of reaching national MEP's and participating in consultations arranged by the UK government on the EU legislation as this provides an opportunity to change planned directives and regulations without spending much resources. Moreover, respondents often referred to well-developed lobbying culture in the UK comparing their lobbying experience with the one of their counterparts from other member states. In this respect, acting through domestic channels is quite a rational strategy as it does not involve any collision of methodologies of policy making when differences in styles of policy elaboration process can hamper the process.

You need to know people in the Commission and you need to know how they will react to your proposals and to your sudden coming in general. In some countries our "European job" is not seen as satisfying the criteria of democratic governance at all even if you claim you are going to protect the interests of civil society, the signal which, as you assume, everybody takes only positively. The Commission sometimes is a hard case since there is no common attitude to lobbying and campaigning in general (Interview N10).

To conclude, Europeanisation of social NGOs unfolds predominantly as recognition of the expansion of the EU, its relevance for problems which organisations are working on and inevitability to work with it. Emerging opportunities to partake in the EU policy process are regarded as necessary instruments to avoid incorporation of inefficient or ineffective policies into the national law, of which organisations are trying to make the most. Such a pattern of Europeanisation, however, is more relevant for big national umbrellas which possess enough resources and internal will to engage with the EU. Hence, even “big national associations” do not appear as an internally coherent group. For some of them the coming of the EU civil society innovations was nothing but a continuation of ongoing work. For some, Europeanisation was seen as a new direction that organisations should develop to improve their performance and overall effectiveness. Big associations gradually ended up introducing positions of “EU persons” in their internal organisational structures and allocation of more funds to endorse their EU action. Nevertheless, almost all the respondents notice that involvement into the EU policy making process was essential from the perspective of their political influence since it provided them with additional lobbying opportunities. Such a resource as EU funding, availability of which was of crucial importance for local civil society organisations, did not play much role for big associations as they traditionally derive their income from membership, service fees or donations, not even relying on statutory funding. To the contrary, the knowledge of the EU financial opportunities was surprisingly scarce and did not even reflect organisations’ experience.

The situation for environmental organisations is somewhat the opposite. On the basis of the information collected during the interviews, we can distinguish between three major factors which caused different path of Europeanisation for environmental organisations. First of all, the U-turn in government civil society policy did not exert such a big influence on

environmental organisations. The majority of measures taken by the government were purposefully designed for organisations dealing with social issues: social exclusion, social capital, employment, equality, volunteers etc. The discourse of civil society spread by the government was focusing on its social contribution (Kendall 2000, 2009). The “green dimension” in all its linkages to civil society role has come to the front of the government’s attention and agenda later and its coming is more likely to be related to peculiarities of the UK environmental policy evolution, in general, and its gradual Europeanisation, in particular (Bache and Jordan 2006). Therefore, the mainstreaming of civil society into the UK public policy did not directly affect environmental organisations in terms of creation of additional opportunities. To the contrary, by the end of 90-s they had already been enjoying sort of privileged relations with the government in terms of lobbying and policy design. The EU civil society signals, however, became extremely important for them from another perspective.

The second reason of incredibly profound Europeanisation of environmental organisations can be found in striking misfit between the UK and EU environmental policies, its low integrity and poor uploading of the EU policy models (Jordan 2003). The EU environmental policy is perceived by default as more progressive and better elaborated compare to the national one.

We must admit that we are sort of lagging behind the 80 thousand pages of the EU legislation on environmental protection. The UK has so much to learn from the standards elaborated by the EU and we see our mission to import as much of advanced EU legislation as possible (Interview N7).

Low process of adaptation as well as insufficient flexibility of the national authorities in adoption the best practices and environmental standards made environmental organisations look at the EU with a hope to improve the domestic situation. The EU and opportunities of participation turned out to be useful from the perspective of putting some pressure on

domestic authorities to keep improving the environmental standards in the country. A vivid example of such Europeanisation is ongoing struggle of the Royal Society for Protection of Birds (RSPB) to make the UK government fully implement the EU Birds Directive which has been in force for 30 years so far but been very poorly implemented in the UK.

We are putting a lot of effort to make the EU press a bit harder on the UK government in addition to our close cooperation with our government. We can be a role model for the rest of Europe. The UK has some of the finest conservation treasures in Europe and we should be setting a lead example in Europe for bird protection (Interview N11).

In this light, reaching the EU level was a convenient strategy of catalyzing changes in national policy in terms of quality of standards. In this light numerous channels of “getting to Europe” were seen by organisations as a good instrument of promoting their own agendas and getting it supported by supranational bodies that possess significant regulatory power. Having already been deeply involved in cooperation with domestic authorities environmental organisations went for Europeanisation in order to strengthen their positions and push forward their agendas.

We need the EU to reinforce our message and the Union proves to be a very effective tool to achieve this goal. Our bureaucrats complain that the EU can come to our back garden and ruin it but they persistently do not want to see any positive effects, and this is more than relevant for the sphere we work in (Interview N12).

They do that by means of active involvement in implementation and monitoring of the EU environmental legislation. Such organisations as Environmental Protection UK¹⁶, UK branch of the WWF, Friends of Earth, Environmental Investigation Agency etc. are actively involved (either members or participants of the projects) of various EU agencies working on

¹⁶ This organisation is famous for its passionate monitoring of the EU Air Quality Directive in the UK

improvement of implementation of the EU environmental legislation as well as EU umbrella associations dealing specifically with monitoring, like, for example, the European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law or European Environmental Bureau¹⁷. Possessing necessary expertise environmental organisations are invited to take part in projects aimed at elaboration of indicators of practicability of the EU legislation or, for example, elaboration of environmental inspection guidelines. Moreover, representatives of organisations themselves practically always indicate that their primary goal is to monitor the implementation process of the EU legislation in the UK and stress the importance of enforcement work. It should be noted that active Europeanisation of social organisations at this stage is practically non-existent.

3.2. Europeanisation behind ideas: is there any?

Logic of behaviour of civil society actors is often associated with motivations regarded as far from being born out of a rational cost-benefit analysis. Europeanisation as a reorientation towards the EU may also be driven by calculus of another nature and content rather than the one evolving around rationalist assumptions. As constructivist perspective suggests in their desire to Europeanise actors may be driven by identities and discourses which determine their vision of Europeanisation as the “right” or “appropriate” thing to be done in contrast to as a way to maximize their wins or payoffs. These ideas and discourses actors acquire through cooperation with each other and, in application to the process of Europeanisation, through active communication with actors representing the EU.

¹⁷ Web-based EU Financial Transparency System allows to trace what organisations have been granted funding by the EU bodies and agencies as well as what their projects were targeting at. The data is available for 2007-2008. An analysis of the contents of projects of the UK environmental organisations supported by the DG Environment were aimed at elaboration of indicators, assessment tools and standards which could be used for evaluation of the efficiency of EU environmental directives and regulations. This also partially supports the argument that environmental organisations are more deeply involved into the EU policymaking at its implementation and monitoring stages (Financial Transparency System).

In present research this perspective was used to explain what stands behind UK civil society organisations's Europeanisation and whether this process is driven by organisations' appeal to ideas and discourses that the EU accompanied its civil society initiatives with: the idea of a special role of civil society in reduction of democratic deficit and the idea of belonging to European civil society. In other words, the primary goal was to trace what role these discourses played in organisations' Europeanisation, how these ideas became a part of organisations' rhetoric and how they are related to other motivations.

The answer to these questions involves a closer look at, first of all, the identity shared by UK organisations as overall perception of their role and mission to what they inevitably link all their actions and decisions and, secondly, their perception of the EU. As for the first one, it has been developing within the dominant discourse around voluntary organisations which never was very much focused on the normative aspects of the concept of civil society. Instead, as a result of historical development and recent purposeful actions of the government the discourse around civil society organisations assumed a very instrumentalist tinge. This probably explains why the term "third sector" can be heard much more often than any other to label citizens's associations. The discourse about citizens' organisations as being components of civil society is almost absent but such frames as "charities" and "voluntary associations" are more willingly used by both representatives of these organisations and government officials, and the relations between the state and civil society are being interpreted through the "sector" framework (Kendall 1996). This inevitably leaves its imprint on self-identification and ideas delivered by organisations.

The second one is connected with the legendary British attitudes towards the European project as a whole as a "disagreeable necessity rather than a positive benefit" (Gowland and Turner 1999). The EU has never been a product which government could easily sell to the public without damaging its reputation or losing much political credibility and popularity.

Paradoxically, but the UK has always belonged to a model of quite a “good governance” in terms of EU policy uploading and coordinating issues with Brussels (Wallace 1997). The problems have always emerged with UK’s political commitment to the EU which resulted in spread of attitudes of detachment and isolationism. In this light it was not a big surprise to register similar rhetoric delivered by civil society organisations regardless of their sphere of action and level of Europeanisation. It seems that not being committed to Europe is perceived as “the right thing to do” when it comes to, for example, relations with the government rather than the opposite. Almost all the respondents practically unanimously confirmed that use of Europe in terms of making it central direction of the organisations’ work or policy would not be very beneficial or would not pay many dividends as “Europe is not a very popular concept”.

This factor is crucial for understanding their susceptibility to the idea of belonging to European civil society. Thus is determined, in turn, on actors’ own identification with Europe as a political and cultural entity. Scholars of Europeanisation especially emphasized actors’ identity as one of decisive factors linking domestic actors to the EU and thereby facilitating Europeanisation if they realise that EU values and mission coincide with their own understandings (Risse, Cowles Green, and Caporaso 2001).. In this respect civil society organisations’ European identity would tell quite much about whether they are driven by logic of appropriateness in their intentions to Europeanise or not (Schimmelfenning and Sedelmeier 2004).

One may easily hypothesize that this scenario is not fully the case for the UK organisations. The self-positioning of the majority of respondents in their answers to a simple question of identification with Europe concurred, as one can assume, with well-known British self-exclusion in terms of identity. The organisations’ missions and role were naturally seen to be closing up on Britain; and respondents almost always stressed their pragmatic attitude to

the existence of the EU thereby reproducing widely spread rhetoric about Britain's being a member for purely pragmatic reasons. This pattern, however, naturally breaks in case of big national associations who are members of the EU-wide umbrellas.

First of all, respondents from these organisations speak more about their turn to the EU as this is what civil society is meant to do; however, they rank it second compare to, for example, dealing with the EU because it “decides a lot”.

Well, the things I previously mentioned, like, working with the Commission because they do a lot on combating social exclusion matter a lot but we shall not forget that we are civil society and as civil society we must use every opportunity to protect the interests of our constituents at whatever level they need our concern. (Interview N7)

Secondly, as expected, they were reproducing the rhetoric of being a part of the European civil society slightly more actively than the smaller organisations. When describing why organisations joined the EU umbrella associations, respondents were most often referring to the idea of working together with partners from different countries to, first of all, “reinforce the message” sent to the EU and, secondly, because this was what they perceived the European civil society is in practice. It is not very difficult to trace back the roots of this discourse as it is being produced and reproduced during numerous events organised for civil society at the EU level.

A lion share of our work in Brussels is networking and communications with the EU officials in the first place. That's how we can get our messages across and make us heard and, basically, Brussels does its best to give us this opportunity. I spent almost half of last month at conferences, round tables and workshops in Brussels and Strasbourg and I can say that European civil society is not an empty phrase (Interview N6).

There are again some differences in “strength” of the feeling of belonging to European civil society between social and environmental organisations. The former ones seem to be less driven by considerations of working together with partners from different countries which can be explained, and is confirmed by the respondents themselves, by existence of striking

differences in social policy models, practices and problems that their colleagues from member states have to cope with. In rhetoric of respondents from environmental organisations one could hear a lot more appeals to “common problems”, “European common agenda” and “solidarity with partners” in the sphere of environmental protection but very few mentionings of belonging to wider communities as, for example, European civil society. One of the informants directly stressed the “commonality aspect” that:

[T]hese problems do not affect member states and peoples selectively. You cannot draw any boundaries or build fences for the polluted air – it will be blown down to your country sooner or later; and this works for the majority of environmental issues. The EU environmental policy is a mechanism which can work on principles of solidarity only and there can be 100% my or 100% your agenda (Interview N11)

Working at the EU level and involvement into implementation and monitoring of the EU environmental policy in the UK is, thus, regarded as more of a contribution to the solution of common problems. Representatives of environmental organisations more often referred to things like “working jointly” and “fighting the problems together” as well as saw their EU activism as a contribution to “common future”. Moreover, the opinions of “environmentalists” clearly demonstrate that they are trying to present old and well-known environmental problems in a European frame through arguments about the necessity of new policy because the previous one failed or was not very successful. Frames, as scholars working in constructivist tradition claim, can justify, symbolize, persuade, influence the patterns of behaviour and determine actions (Schmidt and Radaelli 2004). Thus, one can preliminary conclude that in case of UK environmental organisations active use of a European frame can partly account for Europeanisation of their activities. Such a use of the European frame was not recorded in case of social NGOs as that would have probably be seen in rational terms as preventing organisations from gaining support of constituents or forming allegiances with government.

It goes without saying that during working within pan-European umbrella associations leaders and rank and file of organisations of all types acquire a particular understanding of their mission at the EU. During these frequent and dense interactions they go through socialization and learning, redefine and reconfigure their interests and acquire new ones. Although it seems to be extremely hard to distinguish whether the logic of being active in Brussels as the right thing prevails over the logic of gaining additional political and resource benefits but use of these justifications can easily be recorded.

It is interesting to note but almost nobody identified the problem of democratic deficit as lying behind their motivations “to go to Brussels”. The only exception was the head of the European department of the NCVO who directly mentioned that he saw the mission of activation of the UK civil society organisations “to strengthen the democratic function of the EU and revitalize its democratic fabrique” (Interview N2). This rhetoric arises from the work that NCVO has been doing for a long time. This national umbrella association was for a long time lobbying the idea of the European Compact, analogous to the English one, which would regulate EU/civil society relations, define transparent and clear mechanisms of funding provision and algorithm of civil society involvement into the EU policymaking. The campaign, however, is being conducted among national umbrellas from other member states on behalf of their members which sort of alienates other UK organisations from this. Apart from him doubts about the democratic character of the EU which could partly be shaping the motivation behind Europeanisation have never been expressed by other respondents.

Conclusion

The present thesis sought to sketch out peculiarities and features of Europeanisation of civil society organisations looking at the case of the UK. Having defined civil society Europeanisation as a process of deliberate reorientation of organisations' activities towards the EU as a result of continuous discursive and institutional pressures arising exerted by the EU, I tried to investigate whether this reorientation took place for UK social and environmental organisations, how it was developing and what factors shaped its logic and direction. To answer these questions I have employed the potential of the concept of Europeanisation explaining this phenomenon by exploring alterations in domestic actors' behaviour and agendas through the prism of two logics: "logic of consequentialism" and "logic of appropriateness". Through qualitative analysis of the interviews conducted with representative of the UK organisations and experts and analysis of EU and organisations' documents, I have attempted to unveil some of the characteristics of civil society Europeanisation.

The case of the UK, often portrayed in the literature on Europeanisation as one of the most advanced in terms of EU penetration and, thus, turned out to be more complex. One would expect quite high degree of Europeanisation of civil society organisations too due to long traditions of voluntary sector's development in the country, high professionalism and maturity. That partly holds true as they, for example, demonstrate noticeable activism when it comes to cooperation with the EU through supranational umbrella associations leaving organisations from other member states far behind in terms of numbers. On the other hand, such reorientation cannot be seen simplistically and some deeper insights were needed to characterise the case of the UK organisations.

As expected the EU initiatives concerning civil society did not have the same effect on all the organisations. Social and environmental organisations differently took the

opportunities provided by the EU purporting to involve civil society in policy making. Moreover, differences in Europeanisation of social and environmental organisations are not so much in whether they at all reoriented their activities to the EU, when such a reorientation was supported by impulses of the Union itself, as in what impulses they found rational and appropriate to respond to. An overall observation is that social organisations successfully reoriented their activities to get more involved into lobbying and campaigning at the EU level whereas environmental ones paid more attention to opportunities at the stage of policy implementation and monitoring.

These discrepancies can partly be explained by a number of intervening factors. Europeanisation was determined by clashes between domestic and EU opportunities. The messages and actions undertaken by the EU with regards to civil society coincided with profound changes in structure of opportunities existing at the domestic level. This domestic window was extremely favourable for social organisations operating mainly at the local level. The government after 1997, at the same time with the EU, became busy with creating favourable conditions for local organisations in terms of funding and infrastructure as well as changing its methods of management of the EU financial instruments (Structural Funds). These developments resulted in a loss of interest in the EU and its instruments of civil society support on the part of smaller organisations, and figures on how dependency on funding from various sources was developing in the following years confirm this conclusion. One can say that in case of smaller organisations there was (and maybe still is) “reverse Europeanisation” although the situation might change in the future in the light of reforming of regional policy instruments by the Union (expansion of the “partnership principle” in Structural Funds). The reorientation of smaller organisations towards domestic opportunities can be explained both in terms of rational and constructivist logic. Devoid of vast resources and being literally alienated from the EU and its agenda in their routine daily activities, small organisations

naturally leaned to national government's offers, appeals, pressures and opportunities which were much easier to use.

Big organisations, being more independent of domestic structural shifts and changes, turned out to be more receptive to the EU pressures and responded with an active involvement in the EU policy making, although mainly at the stage of policy design. Such an involvement was partly a reaction to existing misfit between the EU and the UK social policy and political initiatives which made bigger organisations seek to exploit emerging European channels of participation as well as domestic ones to impact the contents of policy. Partly was it a reaction to the Commission's attempts to spread the discourse of European civil society encompassing organisations active at the EU level and discourse of civil society's role in making the Union's policy making process more democratic.

Environmental organisations demonstrate another pattern of Europeanisation connected with their active participation in policy implementation and monitoring. This, in turn, can again be explained by a striking misfit between the EU and UK environmental policies with the latter lagging behind the former. Because of that and since none of the domestic civil society initiatives were in any way focused on them, environmental organisations willingly made the European dimension an integral part of their operation though from a different perspective. They were more eager to choose the path of Europeanisation through involvement in the implementation of the EU policies and Brussels-funded projects. Moreover, Europeanisation turned out to be a way to exert more pressure on domestic authorities to facilitate the process of adoption of the EU rules.

Although one cannot say that discourses shared by the UK organisations are in tune and reflect the EU ones, no matter whether this is social or environmental organisations, there can be registered some articulation of such ideas as "European civil society" and "civil society as a tool for eradication of democratic deficit", the ones particularly actively promoted

by the EU. It goes without saying that organisations-members of European NGOs differ from the rest of the sector in how they rhetorically address “European issues”. This discourse is reproduced within those platforms which work as communicative arenas for exchange of opinions and ideas. Despite deeply-rooted pragmatic and skeptical attitudes towards the EU, respondents quite often referred to their European activity in highly ideational terms. Respondents from environmental organisations, however, expressed more adherence to such discourses as “common European agenda”, “common problems” and, finally, “belonging to European civil society” than their social counterparts.

The above conclusions, however, do not claim to be exhaustive and fully reflecting the process of Europeanisation of civil society. Taking into account the complexity of the object of study, encompassing too many types of different organisations, and the contentious character of the concept of Europeanisation itself, the present study is an attempt to shed just some light on intersections of these two phenomena. It, however, tried to fill the gap in the Europeanisation literature which rarely addresses the problem of how the EU changes the operation of civil society. First, civil society’s responses to the EU pressures are normally analysed through the prism of interest groups analysis but this inevitably leads to losses in understanding of the process of Europeanisation. The present work questions some of the postulates of the research literature on interest group Europeanisation. One of them is, for example, the thesis that the EU becomes a more important venue and an object of meaningful identification. With the help of some empirical data it has been ascertained that UK civil society organisations, in this light, are more nationally linked in terms of identities. One reason lies in the nature of the EU civil society policy which is characterised by blurred civil society discourses and underdevelopment of participatory mechanisms. Another explanation is, perhaps, too strong national component of UK civil society’s identity which is, obviously, reverse for conventional interest groups. Second, there can hardly be found any attempts to

define what the process of Europeanisation is for civil society organisations, how it develops and what can be contingent on. In this study such an attempt has been made although time and space limits did not allow embracing a wide range of factors which can be determinant of Europeanisation for civil society organisations.

This research project also embarked on an in-depth case study of one country. It is clear that conclusions made on this material can hardly be generalised to compare patterns of Europeanisation of the UK organisations with patterns of their counterparts in other member states. However, this case study attempted to provide a thorough and comprehensive interpretation of how the process of Europeanisation can evolve nationally. The conclusion that such domestic factor as government policy had an impact on Europeanisation of civil society, made in the thesis, can, nevertheless, be verified on other cases. This makes the case of the UK a starting point for further studies on Europeanisation of civil society which are not very wide-spread.

Minds of EU officials, researchers and millions of supporters of the idea of united Europe are occupied with thoughts on what can bring Europe closer to people and contribute to emergence of truly common European space. However, not only is Europe being built by political decisions and day-to-day peoples' contacts. Civil society, representing millions of Europeans, can successfully contribute to overcoming of dividing boundaries and formation of European identity, an unresolved problem for present-day pro-EU politicians. Studies on how the EU influences civil society are, thus, useful and needed as they might reveal a lot about the real impact of the EU and even provide with some thoughts on what could be done to keep the best out of such an impact and avoid sticking to the worst.

Appendix A

Table 1. Number of UK civil society organisations in EU-wide social and environmental umbrella associations

Umbrella Association	Number of organisations by Member States				
	UK	France	Spain	Germany	Italy
Social organisations*					
Age Platform	19	20	4	4	19
Autism Europe	9	8	11	1	6
Workability	3	3	0	2	2
Solidar	3	5	3	3	5
Eurochild	14	4	2	4	2
European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities	13	4	1	7	2
European Association of National Organisations Working with the Homeless	25	7	15	2	2
Inclusion Europe	4	3	2	3	1
Environmental organisations**					
European Environmental Bureau	14	12	7	13	3
Climate Action Network	26	14	2	16	0
Health and Environment Alliance	7	3	0	3	1

*All these umbrella associations are members of the Social Platform of NGOs, the biggest pan-European forum/association which unites smaller organisations.

** To illustrate the case of environmental organisations data on three pan-European environmental umbrella associations are presented in the table. Associations are members of the Group Green 10, the analogous of the Social Platform of NGOs in the sphere of environmental protection. The rest of the Group's members are composed of 1 representative organisation from each member state.

Table 2. Number of the UK and four other member state organisations registered in the official EU CONECCS register

Member State	Number of registered organisations*		
	Total number	Environmental NGOs	Social NGOs
UK	43	23	15
France	47	23	28
Germany	67	31	25
Italy	28	16	16
Spain	26	12	16

* Discrepancies in the figures reflecting the total number of registered NGOs and numbers of those working in a particular sphere are explained by the fact that some organisations claim both spheres as their primary field of activity.

Source: Mahoney, Christine, and Michael Beckstrand. 2009. Following the Money: EU funding of Civil Society Organisations. In *11th bi-annual European Union Studies Association conference*. Marina del Rey, USA

Table 3. Number of the UK civil society organisations funded by the EU and percent of groups given funding in 2003-2007.

Member State	Number of groups	Percent of groups
Germany	178	15,57
Belgium	154	13,47
France	139	12,16
Italy	134	11,72
Spain	71	6,21
Netherlands	61	5,34
UK	55	4,81

Source: Mahoney, Christine, and Michael Beckstrand. 2009. Following the Money: EU funding of Civil Society Organisations. In *11th bi-annual European Union Studies Association conference*. Marina del Rey, USA

Table 4. Dependency of the UK civil society organisations on the EU funding in 2002-2006

Source of funding	Percentage of organisations received funds from the source in:			
	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6
Local authority	53	50	49	48
Central Government	41	37	33	28
NHS*	22	21	18	17
European Union	11	10	8	7

*NHS – UK National Health Service

Source: Green, Hazel. 2009. State of the Sector Panel Survey. Report 1: Activities and Funding. London: The Cabinet Office. Office of the Third Sector.

Table 5. Average amount of funding received by the UK civil society organisations from different sources in 2002-2006

Source of funding	Average amount received (mil. £)			
	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6
Local authority	51	65	68	73
Central Government	81	83	92	104
NHS*	34	38	39	41
European Union	56	56	49	51

*NHS – UK National Health Service

Source: Green, Hazel. 2009. State of the Sector Panel Survey. Report 1: Activities and Funding. London: The Cabinet Office. Office of the Third Sector.

Appendix B

The list of respondents interviewed

Experts:

1. Hanneke De Bode, Senior Advisor on European Affairs, Euclid Network
2. Oliver Henmann, European and International Officer, NCVO
3. Karl Wilding, Head of Research, NCVO
4. Peter Alcock, Director of the Third Sector Research Center, University of Birmingham

Organisations:

5. European Network of Third Sector Leaders (EUCLID) (Filippo Addari, Executive Director of Euclid Network)
6. Royal National Institute for Blind People (Carine Marzine, European Campaigns Officer)
7. Third sector European Network (Tamara Flanagan)
8. Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO) (Stephen Bubb, the Chief Executive)
9. National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NCPSS) (Nauren Khan, European Adviser)
10. Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) (Sacha Cleminson, EU advocacy manager)
11. Mencap (David Congdon, Head of Campaigns & Policy)
12. Friends of Earth
13. Environmental Investigation Agency
14. Women's Institute (Marianne Sladowsky, Head of Public Affairs)
15. Carers UK (Tom Hoyle, Third Sector PR manager)
16. Animals Defenders International (Angie Greenaway, Executive Assistant)
17. British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (Anita Prosser, Head of International Development)

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