

Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology

EU Civil Society

Patterns of Cooperation,
Competition and Conflict



Edited by Håkan Johansson
and Sara Kalm



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EU Civil Society

Patterns of Cooperation, Competition and Conflict

Edited by

Håkan Johansson and Sara Kalm

Lund University, Sweden

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Contributors

Stefan Bernhard works at the Institute for Employment Research, Nuremberg, Germany. His research interests include political sociology, the sociology of European integration, market sociology and qualitative methods. He is co-editor of the two-volume collection *The Research Programme of Field Analysis* [German] (2012) and author of 'Beyond Constructivism – The Political Sociology of an EU Policy Field' (2011), *International Political Sociology* 5: 426–445. He is currently working on the labour market effects of EU non-discrimination policy.

Luis Bouza García holds a PhD from the Robert Gordon University, UK. He coordinates European studies courses at the College of Europe, Belgium, where he had worked as an academic assistant. He has also held research and teaching positions at the University of East Anglia, UK, as well as the Universidad Carlos III in Madrid and Spain's National Institute for Public Administration. His most recent publication (2015) is *Participatory Democracy and Civil Society in the EU Agenda-Setting and Institutionalisation*, in *Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology*.

Pauline Cullen is Lecturer in Sociology and Politics at Maynooth University, National University of Ireland. Her research interests focus on civil society mobilisation on social justice issues and the role of states and international governance in providing opportunities and constraints to civil society actors. Her work has appeared in *Voluntas*, *Journal of Political Ideologies*, *Sociology Compass*, *Social Movement Studies* and *Journal of Civil Society*. Her current work concerns feminist movements at national and international levels, gendered mobilisation outside women's movements and the relevance of EU strategies for civil society organisations.

Denis Frank is Senior Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. His research interests are international migration, political sociology and labour markets. He is currently leading a research project, funded by the Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences, which examines the globalisation of migration to Sweden. His most recent publication is 'Changes in Migration Control During

the Neoliberal Era: Surveillance and Border Control in Swedish Labour Immigration Policy' (2014), *Journal of Political Power* 7(3).

Didier Georgakakis is Full Professor of Political Science at the University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, France, and a visiting professor at the College of Europe, Bruges, Belgium. His current research focuses on history and political sociology of the European civil service and the reconfigurations of the EU's institutional and administrative fields. He has published and edited several books and his research has appeared in numerous leading peer-reviewed journals. He recently co-edited *The Field of Eurocracy. A Political Sociology of EU Staff and Professionals* (2013) and *The Political Uses of Governance: Studying an EU White Paper* (2012).

Justin Greenwood is Professor of European Public Policy at the Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, UK, and a visiting professor at the College of Europe, Belgium. His research specialism on interest representation in the EU is reflected in a title of that name published by Palgrave Macmillan (4th ed., 2016), with recent work focused on the European Citizens' Initiative and (with Christilla Roederer-Rynning, University of Southern Denmark) on the role of organised interests in 'The Parliamentarization of EU Politics' which has extended into analysis of the inter-institutional trilogues through which most EU legislative files are agreed.

Elsa Hedling is a PhD student at the Department of Political Science, Lund University, Sweden. Her current research interests lie in the areas of EU politics, European integration, media and political communication and international relations.

Håkan Johansson is Professor of Social Work, Lund University, Sweden. His research interests include civil society, EU studies, social policy and welfare state change. He is currently working on the projects 'Europeanization of Swedish civil society organisations' and 'Local welfare mixes in Swedish municipalities'. He has published extensively covering issues of social policy, citizenship and civil society, and recent publications include 'Bridging the Gap: How Do EU-Based Civil Society Organisations Acquire Their Internal Representation?' (2014) and 'Welfare Mix as a Contested Terrain: Political Positions on Government–Non-profit Relations at National and Local Levels in a Social Democratic Welfare State' (2015).

Sara Kalm is a senior lecturer at the Department of Political Science, Lund University, Sweden. Her research concerns different aspects of migration policy, as well as civil society organising. She is the author (with Anders Uhlin) of *Civil Society and the Governance of Development: Opposing Global Institutions*, which has recently been published by Palgrave Macmillan.

Jayeon Lee is a PhD candidate at the School of Social Work, Lund University, Sweden. Her research interests include EU's social policy, civil society studies and social risks and social protection provision. While working as a research assistant, she has written on representation strategies employed by the civil society organisations working for marginalised groups at the EU level. In her doctoral thesis, she studies the consequences of the changing unemployment insurance provision for retail workers in Sweden.

Anna Meeuwisse is Professor of Social Work at Lund University, Sweden. One of her research areas concerns the changing roles and functions of civil society organisations in the welfare state, and she has been engaged in several research projects regarding Swedish user organisations and transnational social movements in the health and welfare area. She currently leads the research project 'Beyond the Welfare State: the Europeanization of Swedish Civil Society Organizations', funded by the Swedish Research Council.

Carlo Ruzza is Professor of Political Sociology at the University of Trento, Italy. He has previously taught at the Universities of Essex, Surrey and Leicester, UK. His research interests focus upon civil society, social movements, right-wing parties and the process of European integration. His most recent publications include 'Civil Society Actors and EU Fundamental Rights Policy: Opportunities and Challenges' (2014), *Human Rights Review* 15(1) and 'Populism and the Fall of the Centre-Right in Italy' (with S. Fella) (2013), *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 21(1). His book publications include volumes on health policy, EU-level civil society associations and the role of the right in Italian politics.

Rosa Sanchez Salgado is Assistant Professor of European Public Policy at the University of Amsterdam (UvA), the Netherlands. Her research focuses on the efforts by EU institutions to shape civil society organisations. She has published a book on this topic: *Europeanizing*

Civil Society: How the EU Shapes Civil Society Organizations (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). More recently, her research interests also include the role of transnational networks in European governance. Recent articles include 'Rebalancing EU interest representation? Associative Democracy and the EU funding of Civil Society Organizations' (*Journal of Common Market Studies*) and 'Fostering Regional Democracy through Civic Organizations' (*Journal of European Integration*).

Gabriella Scaramuzzino is a senior lecturer at the School of Social Work, Lund University, Sweden. She has been involved in several research projects about the Internet and civil society and written about sex workers/sex service providers' and sex clients' mobilisation and organisation at local, national and international levels. Her dissertation *Collective Action by Sex Service Providers and Sex Clients on the Internet* (2014) was based on an ethnographic study of three prostitution forums and shows how the Internet has offered new ways to interact and has enabled individuals to act collectively and pursue common interests outside formal organisations.

Roberto Scaramuzzino is a senior lecturer at the School of Social Work, Lund University, Sweden. His research interests include changes in the welfare and integration systems and the role of civil society organisations in different national contexts. His PhD dissertation (2012) was based on a comparative study of migrant groups' mobilisation and immigrant organisations in Sweden and Italy. He has also studied social mobilisation in the prostitution policy field in Sweden and internationally.

Ylva Stubbergaard is Senior Lecturer in Political Science at Lund University, Sweden. Her research focuses on democracy in theory and practice. Within this field, her interest is in power relations between civil society and public authorities, citizenship and public administration.

Abbreviations

ACF	Advocacy Coalition Framework
AGE	AGE Platform Europe
CA	Cittadinanza Attiva (Active Citizenship)
CARE	Cooperative for American Relief in Europe
CBM	Christian Blind Mission
CCFD	Comité Catholique Contre la Faim et pour le Développement (Catholic Committee against Hunger and for Development)
CEBSD	Combined European Bureau for Social Development
CECODHAS	European Liaison Committee for Social Housing
CECOP	European Confederation of Workers' Cooperatives, Social Cooperatives and Social and Participative Enterprises
CEDAG	European Council of Associations of General Interest
CEEP	Centre européen des entreprises à participation publique et des entreprises d'intérêt général (European Centre of Enterprises with Public Participation and of Enterprises of General Economic Interest)
CEMR	Council of European Municipalities and Regions
CEV	European Volunteer Centre
CLONG-UE	Liaison Committee of Development NGOs to the European Union
COFACE	Confederation of Family Organisations in the EU
CONCORD	European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development
CPMR	Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions of Europe
CSA	Civil Society Actors
CSCG	Civil Society Contact Group
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DG	Directorates-General
EAEA	European Association for the Education of Adults
EAPN	European Anti-Poverty Network
EASPD	European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities

EBU	European Blind Union
EC	European Commission
ECAS	European Citizen's Action Service
ECDN	European Consumer Debt Network
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
ECHP	European Community Household Panel
ECI	European Citizens' Initiative
ECJ	European Court of Justice
ECRE	European Council on Refugees and Exiles
EDF	European Disability Forum
EEB	European Environmental Bureau
EEC	European Economic Community
EESC	European Economic and Social Committee
EFC	European Foundation Centre
EFD	Europe for Freedom and Democracy
EFoMW	European Forum of Muslim Women
EGAM	European Grassroots Antiracist Movement
ELO	European Landowners Organisation
ENAR	European Network against Racism
ENoMW	European Network of Migrant Women
EP	European Parliament
EPHA	European Public Health Alliance
EPR	European Platform for Rehabilitation
EPSCO	Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council
EPSU	European Federation of Public Service Unions
ESAN	European Social Action Network
ETUC	European Trade Union Confederation
EU	European Union
EURAG	European Federation of Older People
EWL	European Women's Lobby
EYCA	European Year of Citizens' Alliance
EYF	European Youth Forum
FAI	International Federation of the Christian Association of Italian Workers
FEANTSA	European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless
FEFAF	European Federation of Unpaid Parents and Carers at Home
FEMM	Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality
FIDH	International Federation for Human Rights

FoE	Friends of the Earth
HI	Handicap International
HRDN	Human Rights and Democracy Network
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICG	Intergovernmental Conference
ICRSE	International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe
ICSW	International Council on Social Welfare
IFSW	International Federation of Social Workers
IGU	Internal Governance Unit
ILGA	European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association
INCLUSION Europe	European Association of Societies of Persons with Intellectual Disability and their Families
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRI EUROPE	Initiative and Referendum Institute Europe
ISCSO	International Solidarity Civil Society Organisation
ISG	Indicator Subgroup of the Social Protection Committee
IUT	International Union of Tenants
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersexual
MDM	Médecins du Monde (Doctors of the World)
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MHE	Mental Health Europe
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OMC	Open Method of Coordination
PFCS	Permanent Forum of Civil Society
PICUM	Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants
SAF	Strategic Action Field
StC	Save the Children
SMO	Social Movement Organisation
SPC	Social Protection Committee

TdH	Terre des Hommes (Land of People)
TEU	Treaty on European Union
TTIP	Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership
UBI	Unconditional Basic Income
UEAPME	European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
UN	United Nations
UNICE	Union of Industrial and Employers Confederations of Europe
VOICE	Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies
WAGGS	World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts
	European Region
WPG	White Paper on European Governance
WVI	World Vision International
YFJ	European Youth Forum

1

Thinking Relationally: Questions, Themes and Perspectives for the Study of EU Civil Society

Håkan Johansson and Sara Kalm

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, the European Union (EU) has developed a variety of means by which to interact with civil society (Armstrong, 2002; Kohler-Koch and Rittberger, 2007b; Ruzza, 2006 and 2007; Smismans, 2003). With the ambition to foster a European civil society, the EU has incentivised the formation of EU-level civil society actors by providing funding as well as opportunities for access and consultation to EU institutions. Most conspicuously, a significant number of civil society organisations (CSOs) have been created by the EU and they now regularly interact with national organisations as well as with EU policy-makers in many different issue areas such as development, social issues, anti-discrimination and human rights.

The ambition to reach out to society was intensified around the turn of the millennium, with the publication of the White Paper on European Governance (European Commission, 2001) as well as the process around the proposed Constitution for Europe. The latter actually proposed participatory democracy as a guiding principle besides representative democracy, but this provision was later removed in the Lisbon Treaty. In recent years, there has been increased emphasis on the merits of active citizenship besides organised civil society. The most important institutional innovation in this vein is the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) (Article 11 [4] of the Treaty on the European Union), which provides a right to initiative for individual citizens, albeit one that is in practice circumscribed by demanding requirements.

One conceivable reason for the EU's involvement in these areas concerns citizens' views and the stated ambition to strengthen democracy. The representation of CSOs and direct citizen engagement have been put forward as important ways to include the voice of the citizens of Europe (Liebert, 2009; Nanz and Steffek, 2005; Persson and Lindgren, 2011; Steffek et al., 2008). Another explanation is that the EU needs the resources that CSOs possess in order to improve policymaking (for instance, knowledge and expertise, personal networks, up-to-date information and credibility with grass-roots) and legitimacy (Klüwer, 2010). Providing access to CSOs and other non-state actors is not unique to the EU, but it is an emerging international governance norm to which most intergovernmental organisations have adapted to some extent (Tallberg et al., 2013). CSOs' involvement is expected to mediate – or even overcome – the distance between the EU and domestic societies by 'bring[ing] Europe much closer to the people' and thereby alleviating the criticism towards the EU for being an elitist project (European Commission, 2000b, p. 4, see also Kohler-Koch and Rittberger, 2007b).

Our broad ambition is to open up a new research agenda concerned with exploring the consequences of the EU's participatory governance for *relations internal to civil society itself*. That is, instead of studying the EU's 'participatory engineering' (Kohler-Koch and Finke, 2007) as a top-down or bottom-up affair, focusing either on explaining the rationale of governing institutions or the incentives of individual actors, we want to provide a relational or horizontal perspective analysing internal relations between civil society actors – including both CSOs and actors involved in the ECIs. In this introductory chapter, we carve out the object of study for this 'relational approach' and suggest a few different theoretical avenues forward.

A relational approach goes against the grain of the research mainstream, which tends to assume civil society to be homogeneous and predominantly driven by normative concerns (Boli and Thomas, 1997). A relational approach also pays attention to strategic forms of behaviour, as well as to conflicts and competition besides cooperative interactions among actors. While access to EU institutions has expanded overall, it has not benefited everyone equally. While some civil society actors have managed to navigate the new waters successfully, others have seen themselves and their causes marginalised or even excluded. And while novel and sometimes surprising patterns of cooperation have emerged between those that 'normally' pertain to different issue areas or interest-based networks, so have new fissures and conflicts also followed on these new institutional developments.

We argue that in order to provide a more complete picture scholarship on EU civil society at this point requires a more nuanced kind of empirical analysis that a relational approach can bring. Such an approach also forces us to see how these interrelations are at least partially constitutive of civil society actors themselves (Crossley, 2011; Emirbayer, 1997), which allows us to account for how new patterns of interconnectedness, new incentive structures and new requirements for prestige and standing are not just acting on civil society actors from the outside but actively partaking in shaping them and their inter-organisational relations.

In what follows, we first provide a provisional empirical background ('mapping') of EU-level civil society. Next, we discuss previous research and argue for a relational approach. In the subsequent section, we present three different analytical perspectives that provide alternative ways for carrying out a relational approach – network, coalition and field models. The final section of the chapter presents an overview of the contributions that follow.

Mapping civil society actors at the EU level

The complete ecology of civil society actors operating at the EU level is much wider and complex than often assumed. Initially, it was mostly employee groups, trade union organisations and various lobby organisations that were active at the EU level with the intention to influence policies and represent interests in Brussels (Beyer et al., 2008; Mazey and Richardson, 2006). The relocation of competencies within a wide number of policy areas from member states to the EU implied a greater interest by CSOs to seek to represent their members, beneficiaries and issues in relation to the debates and policymaking processes that take place in Brussels (Coen-Richardson, 2009; Greenwood, 2007a; Karr, 2007). They sought access to and were engaged in various civil dialogue models with EU institutions (Kohler-Koch and Finke, 2007). Since then the number of EU-based civil society actors has grown considerably, and today we find a large number of civil society actors operating at and seeking access to the EU arena. A review of the Transparency Register (the EU's official register for actors engaging with various EU institutions) for May 2014 demonstrates a total of 6,590 'societal groups' run activities in relation to EU institutions. The largest category is 'in-house lobbyists and professional associations' (approximately 50 per cent), while the category of 'non-governmental organisations' amounted to approximately 25 per cent. Actors that have funding or

seek to consult EU officials and institutions are expected to be registered in this database.

However, the scope of actors that could be included in the notion of EU civil society is much wider, and mapping the CSOs now operating at the EU level is a challenging task since their patterns resemble what is known in the governance literature as ‘multilevel governance’ (Hooghe and Marks, 2001) or even ‘institutional fragmentation’ (Zelli and van Asselt, 2013) – albeit on the civil society side. In the following, we will first present the pattern of organised civil society associated with what can be generally referred to as the ‘civil dialogue’, that is the organised consultation procedures that exist between EU institutions and a set of fairly institutionalised CSOs, and then turn more briefly to the actors involved in more direct forms of participation that the ECI offers.

The organising of EU civil society tends to follow a ‘Russian Doll’ pattern, with smaller units enclosed in ever-larger ones. This analogy can be taken even further by considering that individual EU-level CSOs can be made of numerous national organisations, many of which are in turn composed of several groups. While the specifics of organisational networking vary with different settings, for analytical purposes we identify three main levels of organising: individual EU-level CSOs, platforms of CSOs and CSO meta-networks.

Individual EU-level CSOs usually represent a particular group or issue and concentrate their lobbying activities on Brussels and sometimes also on the member states. They have different objectives, resources and conditions. Some are well established with offices and employed staff members in central locations in Brussels, and they often receive funding from the EU. They run professional campaigns, write position papers, arrange conferences, deliver press releases and run projects. Others are less established and might lack the type of conventional resources mentioned above. They might also be less formalised and operate more in terms of a loosely knitted network of actors and nevertheless might engage in deliberation and debates at the EU level, seeking to make their point heard in relation to both EU institutions and other CSOs. They tend to prefer ‘inside’ lobbying activities to ‘outside’ protest, which is also the action repertoire favoured by the EU (Greenwood, 2007a, 2007b). Some of these CSOs have national member organisations from a significant number of EU member and candidate countries – organisations that are themselves often umbrella organisations within their respective national context. Among other tasks and functions, these EU-level CSOs provide national members with

information about EU policy developments and transmit information on national conditions upwards.

One example is *Fédération Européenne d'Associations Nationales Travaillant avec les Sans-Abri* (FEANTSA, the European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless), which has more than 130 member organisations in 25 member states (FEANTSA, 2015). Many of their national member organisations are service providers working with the homeless. Another example is the European Women's Lobby (EWL) that represents 2,500 national organisations that are grouped into 30 national coordinations (EWL, 2015). We also count Brussels' representation of international NGOs in this level of organising (for instance, Save the Children, Amnesty International and Greenpeace). These organisations differ from the others as they are international rather than European in aim, mission and founding. They are also comparatively broad in their scope. They sometimes pursue different strategies in Brussels than elsewhere. An example is Amnesty, which is otherwise based on grass-roots activity but here concentrates only on lobbying.

A second level of organising is inhabited by *platforms of CSOs*. Such platforms organise individual EU-level CSOs in large networks on the basis of issue area. In cases where this cooperation is formalised, it is often funded by the EU, which wants to create broad CSO partners with whom it can consult on different issues. One example is the Social Platform, which gathers organisations in the fields of social policy and anti-discrimination (see Chapter 4 by Johansson and Lee and Chapter 5 by Cullen in this volume). EU institutions promoted its establishment in the mid-1990s and it today defines itself as 'the alliance of representative European federations and networks of non-governmental organisations active in the social sector' (Social Platform, 2014). It has 47 individual CSO members, among them FEANTSA and EWL mentioned above. Other members work in many different though somehow related areas such as poverty, autism, gender issues and transgender persons, youth and old age and consumer debt (Armstrong, 2002; Cullen, 2010; Geyer, 2001; Kendall, 2009). Another example is Concord (European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development), which represents 1,800 CSOs across Europe. Concord was founded in 2003, but its predecessor CLONG-EU had already been created in 1976 as one of the first CSO platforms supported by the EU (see Chapter 6 by Sanchez Salgado in this volume).

A third level of organising is *CSO meta-networks*. These are mechanisms of various kinds that draw together CSO platforms (mostly) in

even wider forms of cooperation and dialogue. Cooperation is as a rule less structured here than in CSO platforms. One such mechanism is the Civil Society Contact Group, which aims ‘to represent the views and interests of rights and value-based civil society organisations across the European Union on major issues, which affect us across our sectors of activity’ (Civil Society Contact Group, 2014). It was formed by four CSO platforms in 2002 with the objective of promoting debate on the Convention. It now has eight members from the ‘value-based’ fields and has a broader agenda on enhancing CSO and citizen participation and promoting a vision of Europe centred on solidarity. Another example is the Liaison Group, which gathers representatives from 22 civil society platforms interacting with the Economic and Social Committee. The role of the Liaison Group is to structure dialogue and cooperation with the Committee. The most recent example of a CSO meta-network is the European Year of Citizens Alliance (EYCA). The EYCA was initiated by the Liaison Group and other civil society actors in preparation for the Year of Citizens 2013. It describes itself as ‘an open network of European and national civil society organisations willing to promote active citizenship as a core element of the European democracy’ (European Year of Citizens Alliance, 2014). While it was meant to limit its activities to 2013, it has created linkages among CSOs, which appear to linger beyond that year. It is probably the widest CSO coordination so far: among its members are 62 European CSO platforms (including all the above-mentioned ones) that together represent more than 4,000 CSOs in 50 European countries (*ibid.*).

This three-level logic gives us an analytical road map for discussing EU-based CSOs. As argued and elaborated in this volume, this must not overshadow the fact that the wide number of civil society actors now operating at the EU level take many different guises. Although many EU-based civil society actors are formal organisations and – at least to some extent – linked with wider networks of cooperation often engaging with EU institutions, several are not so easily sorted into such seemingly hierarchical structures. Analyses of EU civil society must also include actors that have a social movement basis, activist or grass-root orientation or just have a much less formalised structure (Imig and Tarrow, 2001; Ruzza, 2011).

Another cluster of actors are those that mobilise and organise in relation to the ECI. The ECI invites a more direct form of participation in comparison to the more elite-driven civil dialogue CSOs. It was initiated to increase the element of direct democracy in the EU, and it puts the people on a par with the European Parliament and the Council as

far as legislative initiative goes. Article 11(4) of the TEU maintains that initiatives that collect one million validated signatures from at least a quarter of the member states during a one-year period can request the Commission to make proposals on any issue that falls within EU competencies. This does not mean that it necessarily will have its will implemented; it merely guarantees a meeting with the Commission and a hearing in the Parliament. Each ECI needs a citizen committee of at least seven persons living in seven different member states. The ECI is explicitly meant to engage other actors than the professional and institutionalised set of CSOs, namely 'all citizens' (EurActiv, 2011). However, some established CSOs take the opportunity that the ECI provides to promote a particular cause and draw attention to its favoured issue (see Chapter 10 by Bouza García, Chapter 11 By Greenwood and 12 by Hedling and Meeuwisse in this volume). The ECIs that have been successful so far are backed by established movements, for instance, trade unions and animal rights movements.

This 'mapping' exercise shows that the system of EU civil society actors is complex in its organisation and demonstrates signs of both fragmentation and concerted actions. It includes a very large number of civil society actors that vary in size, aims and forms of organisation. The types of relations that exist between them may include competition over resources and positions, political, ideological or other kinds of conflicts, as well as efforts at cooperation and alliance building (Cullen, 2005, 2010).

Exploring new research questions

The emergence of the EU's participatory regime, combined with the growth of civil society actors operating at the EU level, has created an upsurge in academic research on these and related areas, and much current research can be sorted into three major strands.

One group of scholars has adopted a top-down perspective, analysing the discourses, policies and governance methods deployed by different EU institutions (mainly the Commission) *vis-à-vis* EU-level CSOs (Greenwood, 2007a, 2007b; Kohler-Koch, 2009; Smismans, 2003, 2008; Trenz, 2009). The White Paper on European Governance is the hallmark of these debates, illustrating the EU's aspirations and desire to experiment with new types of governance mechanisms and involve CSOs in deliberation, debates and policymaking processes at the EU level (European Commission, 2001). This research has revealed the Commission's entrepreneurial role and shown that over the years it has

indirectly as well as directly mobilised and/or set up platforms of CSOs in policy fields it deemed relevant. The EU's forms of financial, technical and ideational support have marked this remarkable bureaucratic activism (Bowen, 2009; Coen-Richardson, 2009; Kohler-Koch and Finke, 2007; Sanchez-Salgado, 2007).

Another strand of research employs a bottom-up perspective as it puts civil society actors' tactics and strategies at the centre of attention. Scholars have demonstrated that EU-based CSOs oriented towards Brussels tend to employ 'insider' strategies and deploy activities such as lobbying, legal action, expert opinions, position papers, conferences and participation in various advisory or consultative committees, rather than more confrontational activities such as demonstrations and protests (Balme and Chabanet, 2008; Cullen, 2003, 2010; Kriesi et al., 2007; Sanchez Salgado, 2007; Saurugger, 2006). A related but separate field of study instead concerns the Europeanisation of protest and asks whether social movement claims and targets have a European dimension (Della Porta and Caiani, 2007 and 2009; Imig and Tarrow, 2001; Ruzza and Bozzini, 2008; Teune, 2010). Findings suggest, among other things, homogenising effects on social movement groups/organisations as they enter into an EU sphere, as they adopt similar organisational structures, high levels of professionalism, similar types of resources and a politically neutral discourse (Ruzza, 2011).

A third category of research seeks to evaluate the democratic quality of EU–civil society relations (Kröger and Friedrich, 2012; Trenz, 2009). Some scholars argue that the participation of CSOs follows a transmission belt model, meaning that EU-level organisations could be transmitters of EU information to domestic members/actors while acting as collectors of knowledge and information from the domestic level and bringing it into the EU debate (Kohler-Koch, 2010; Kröger, 2013; Rodekamp, 2014; Steffek and Hahn, 2010; Steffek et al., 2008; Tomšič and Reik, 2008). The transmission belt model has, however, been questioned in recent empirical research (Johansson and Lee, 2014; Johansson and Schütze, 2014), demonstrating that the expected transmission between EU and domestic CSOs is less obvious than the theoretical models envisage. Researchers have also assessed the implications of the Commission's explicit preference for some selected 'representative' organisations at the EU level (Greenwood, 2007b; Greenwood and Halpin, 2007; Johansson and Lee, 2012a; Kohler-Koch, 2008; Kohler-Koch and Quittkat, 2009; Obradovic, 2009). Although the Commission never supported a formal accreditation system and expressed its intention to have its windows open for various CSOs (Obradovic, 2009, p. 303), many commentators have pointed out that it has had preference

for larger peak organisations hampering other expression of interests and forms of organising (Armstrong, 2002; Greenwood, 2007b; Greenwood and Halpin, 2007).

What is overlooked in these strands of research is how civil society and its actors themselves engage in collaboration and partnerships as well as in competitions for power, status and resources. We do not dispute the relevance of existing debates, yet the research bias towards the EU's relations and interactions with a set of overwhelmingly fairly institutionalised actors masks internal civil society dynamics where ideals of democracy, solidarity and inclusiveness are at times traded for competition and rivalry, leading to relationships structured by hierarchy and exclusion. Considering the extensive number of actors operating at the EU level and their complex internal coordination into larger platforms and meta-networks, a neglected area of research is hence the forms of cooperation and competition that exist *among* and *between* civil society actors regarding, for instance, who should set the rules of the game, whose issues and interest should be privileged and who shall be the legitimate representative of civil society in the EU.

The contributions of this volume seek to fill this gap by analysing the relationships and interactions that take place between civil society actors, elements of conflict and collaboration in these relationships and how civil society actors structure the room for manoeuvre for others as they seek to gain better positions, more resources and a higher standing. The main aim of the book is to explore a relational approach to EU civil society and to analyse dimensions of coalition, cooperation and alliance building towards common ends as well as dimensions of competition, conflict and power games over positions and resources. We argue that such a relational approach can open up an analytical space where we can theorise the dynamic relationships of organisational life of EU-based civil society, for example, to discern patterns of conflict and cooperation, uncover the dynamics between emerging actors and incumbents, and grasp the resources that give standing and prestige among various actors (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Crossley, 2011).

Throughout the volume we will explore the following set of research questions: How is EU civil society constituted? What does it take for civil society actors to enter and what factors facilitate and/or hamper participation? Which actors tend to dominate certain sectors of the organisational life of EU civil society and what types of resources and capital give actors prestige, status and standing over others? What explains the level of conflict or cooperation in particular parts of EU civil society? What is the nature of the relationship between EU civil

society and its surroundings, including domestic civil society actors and the general EU institutional context?

Our overarching aim and research questions are inspired by the 'relational' approach within general sociological theorising. This tends to assert that entities and actors (e.g., civil society and civil society actors) 'derive their meaning, significance, and identity from the... functional roles they display within that transaction' (Emirbayer, 1997, p. 287). We see relationships between civil society actors as dynamic in nature, that is, no actor can hold a relationship and enter into an interaction with another actor and remain unaffected. This implies that notions such as resources, power and status cannot be analysed as an attribute of actors but need to be analysed against the backdrop of the complex web of relationships in which the actors operate.

Theoretical perspectives

Now that we have sketched the main arguments for a relational approach to EU-level civil society, it is time to discuss possible theoretical avenues for this purpose. Without any claim to exhaustiveness, this section presents three models through which we can understand and analyse relationships between civil society actors in this context, namely *network*, *coalition* and *field* models. The contributions to this volume all work with one or more of these models. A question that arises is whether these models are competing or complementary. It is not the purpose of this introductory chapter to take a firm position on this issue, but the different contributions tackle it differently – some contrasting and evaluating the models, others combining them. While the models seem to perceive many things differently – for instance, the prospects that cooperative relationships will emerge – they also appear to treat their subject matter at different levels of abstraction. This is partly due to different meta-theoretical assumptions.

Network models

Network theories are sometimes accused of being static and formalistic, as they define networks as a *structure* of relationships linking social actors in a particular context. Notions such as *nodes* (actors that tie other actors together), formal and informal *ties* (the relationships that actors have with each other) and *boundaries* (what demarcates the network) are central in these models. While networks between civil society actors have been theorised previously (Diani, 2013a; Diani and Bison, 2004; Diani and McAdam, 2003; Gerlach, 2001; Murdie and Davis, 2011), we

will present a fairly general model here, focusing on networks in social movement research.

Social movement networks have a particular quality that sets them apart from other types of network, namely collective identity. Identity is crucial since 'it connects actors to longer-term collective projects, thus making their relation different from that between actors engaged in purely instrumental coalitions' (Diani, 2013a). These elements of a collective identity and shared commitment to a common and mutual recognition among participants are hence seen as contrasting with instrumental coalition behaviour (Diani and Bison, 2004). While a social movement network may be integrated and strengthened by the presence of collective identity and shared commitment, it may be disintegrated and threatened by factors such as personal power games among leaders, pre-existing cleavages, competition and ideological differences (Gerlach, 2001).

Some movement scholars emphasise the role of networks for facilitating individuals' decisions to become involved in collective action. Others instead explore the logics of partnering within networks, and it is this strand of movement scholarship that is of relevance to this volume (see, for instance, Chapter 5 by Cullen in this volume). Here, networks are conceptualised as the structure 'of the links between the multiplicity of organizations and individual activists, committed to a certain cause' (Diani, 2013a). This perspective urges us to analyse the varying degree of involvement of civil society actors and explore why some are more centrally placed than others in a particular network. What precise factors that might be relevant for explaining involvement and positionings of civil society actors (either as individuals and/or as formal organisations) *vis-à-vis* each other in EU-based networks is a matter for empirical research, as demonstrated by some of the contributions to the volume.

Another goal of social movement network studies is to categorise entire network structures in order to allow for comparisons (Murdie and Davis, 2011). In order to do so, one needs analytical categories that can be used in empirical research. Mario Diani's useful model operates with the dimensions *centralisation* (although a social movement network is often informal, it may still be more or less centralised) and *segmentation* (the degree to which communication is prevented by some barrier, for instance, ideological differences or the differing levels of interest in a particular issue) (Diani, 2003).

Network models encourage us to analyse the complex web of relationships that exist between civil society actors and to pay attention to both formal and informal forms of coordination among them. From

this perspective, the challenge for empirical research is to flesh out the complex relationships between actors that one assumes constitute EU-based civil society and to detect nodes and peripheral actors. It is equally a challenge for scholars to address the collaborative as well as competitive elements in various networks (an issue explored further below).

Coalition models

Another analytical option for exploring a relational approach to EU civil society stems from theories on coalitions (Cropper et al., 2008). Coalitions are studied in a wide variety of social science disciplines and research fields. In inter-organisational studies, a coalition is generally defined as a group of actors that is deliberately constructed, issue-oriented and directed towards a goal that is external to the coalition and therefore requires concerted member action (ibid.). Actors are generally assumed to be fairly calculating in these models, entering and leaving coalitions for a particular purpose. We find related definitions in political science, particularly in theories on advocacy coalitions. Here the notion illustrates coalitions or alliances between governmental (legislators, public administration officials, judges, etc.) *as well as* non-governmental actors (interest groups, intellectuals, etc.) (Sabatier and Weible, 2007, p. 196), who engage in a 'non-trivial degree of coordination', which also involves some 'degree of working to achieve similar policy objectives' (ibid., p. 196). In social movement research, too, coalition models have been used to analyse the forms of collaboration that take place and what factors explain the success or failure of such alliances and coalitions (Beamish and Luebbbers, 2009; Staggenborg, 1986).

Coalition models have been widely used in civil society studies and especially in for those on internationalisation and Europeanisation (Bandy and Smith, 2005; Ruzza, 2004). Keck and Sikkink's (1998) theory on 'transnational advocacy networks' has been enormously influential, since it managed to account for the role of civil society actors within global governance. Although 'network' and not 'coalition' is in its name, it fits here because it describes a politically active collective agent, reminiscent of a coalition rather than a relatively static network. A transnational advocacy network is defined as including 'those relevant actors working internationally on an issue, who are bound together by shared values, a common discourse, and dense exchanges of information and services' (Keck and Sikkink, 1998, p. 2). It may include a broad range of actors, for example, international and domestic CSOs,