



Lobbying Coalitions

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Plan of session (14:00-17:00)

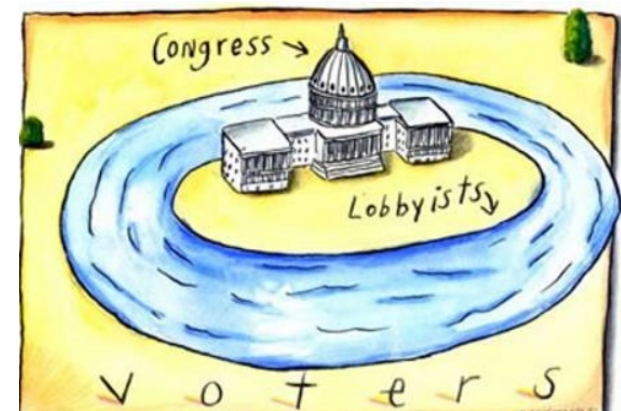
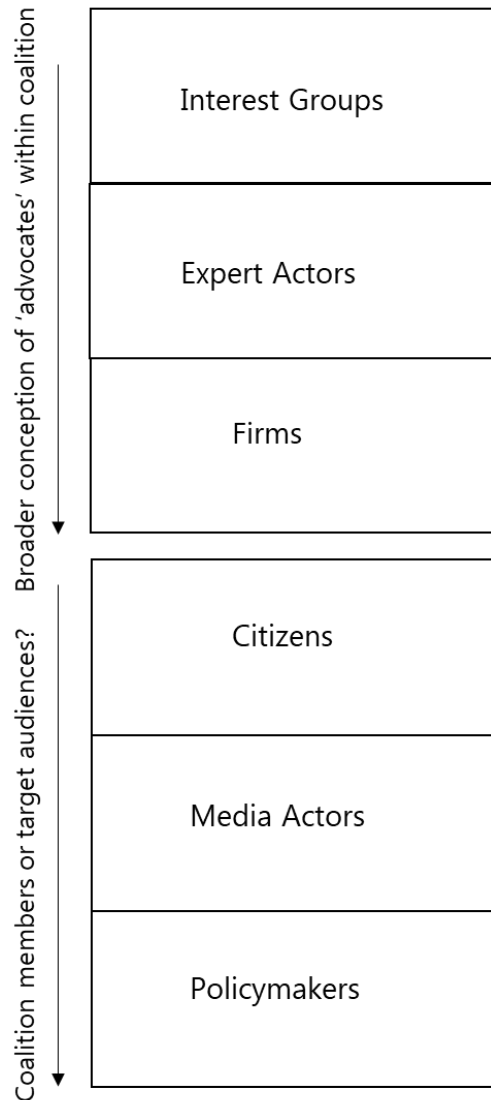
- 1) Definitions of and Approaches to 'coalitions': Types of actors included & Conditions for identifying a coalition (*Wiebke*)
- 2) Scholarly Motivation: Why should we care? (*Michael*)
- 3) Motivation from a Lobbying Perspective: Why do active coalitions form? Cost-Benefit Analysis and Beyond (*Wiebke*)
- 4) Other Theoretical Frameworks: Transaction Cost Analysis & Network Analysis (*Michael*)
- 5) Research Approaches: How can we study the effects of lobbying coalitions empirically? (*Discussion with Michael and Wiebke based on your input*)
- 6) Does cooperation increase lobbying success? Selected Findings (*Michael & Wiebke*)
- 7) Conclusions & Directions for Future Research (*Michael & Wiebke*)



Lobbying coalitions – a contested concept

1) Types of actors included & Conditions for identifying a coalition (*Wiebke*)

Approaches to lobbying coalitions: What actors are included?



- Interest groups/lobbyists only
 - ❖ Klüver (2013)
 - Broader sets of actors in an '**advocacy coalitions**', incl. political actors (agencies, parliamentary committees...), researchers, companies and media actors
 - ❖ Sabatier (1988) actors a **policy subsystem** that comprise an advocacy coalition share a **particular belief system** and show a non-trivial degree of **coordinated activity** over time.
1. *Why does this difference matter?*
 2. *What other differences are there in the approaches/assumptions of Klüver and Sabatier?*

Approaches to lobbying coalitions: 'Forms'/Definitions of coalitions

1) **Camps/sides** based on shared preferences

- ❖ Klüver (2013)



2) **Active cooperation** on specific issues

- ❖ Hojnacki (1997)
- ❖ Mahoney (2008) formal ad-hoc issue coalitions
- ❖ Sabatier (1988): Degree of non-trivial cooperation
- ❖ Junk (2019): signalling coalitions



3) **General cooperation** or organisational **structures**

- ❖ 'Networking' on continuum from loose and informal to highly coordinated enterprises (Mahoney 2008)
- ❖ 'Ties' between organisations, Braun and Beyers (2014)
- ❖ Umbrella organisations, Bouwen (2004)



Approaches to lobbying coalitions: Relationships of these definitions

Suggestion: Second necessary condition; but which types of (non-trivial) activities?

Suggestion: Necessary but not sufficient condition? (cf. Sabatier)

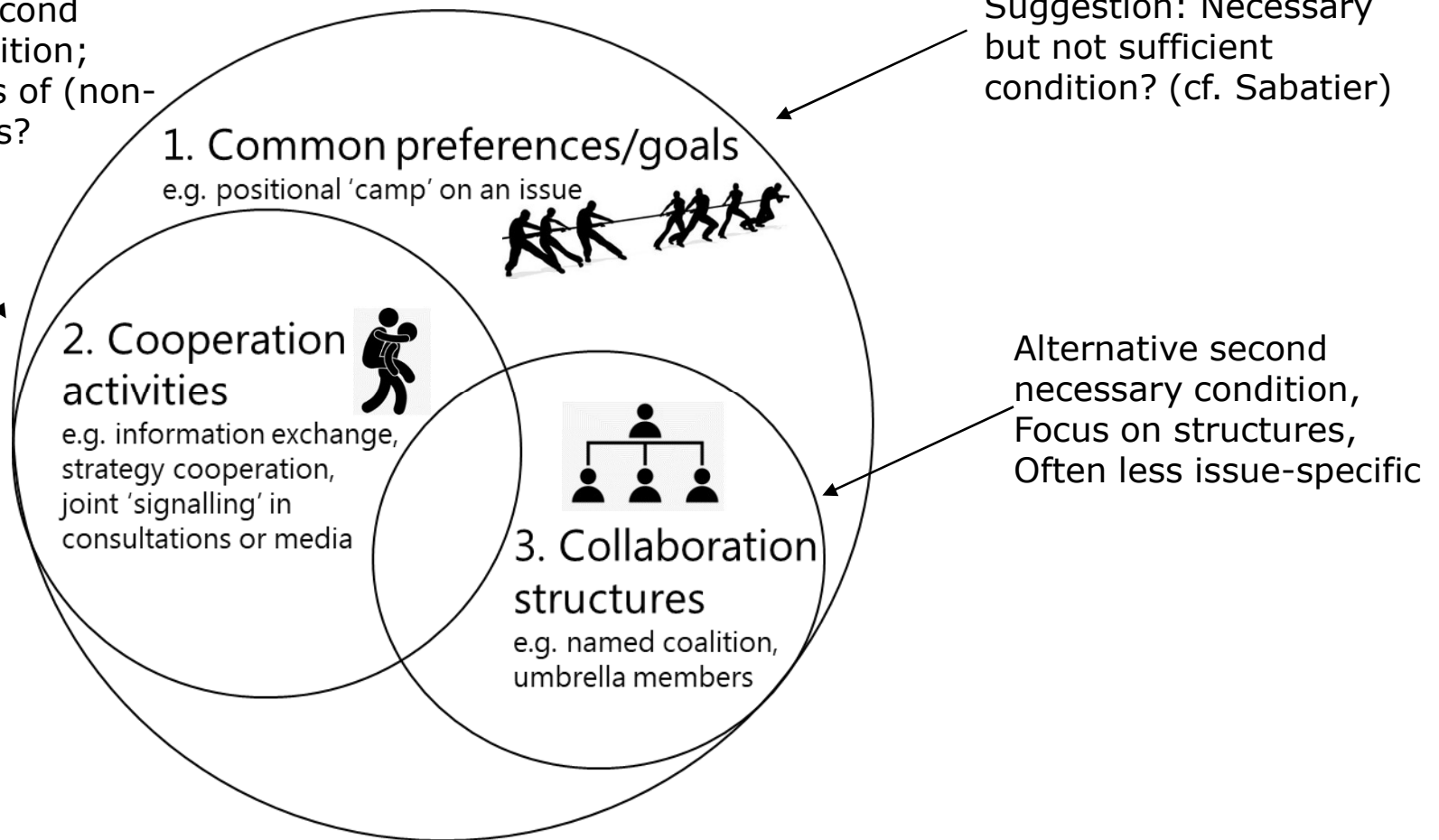
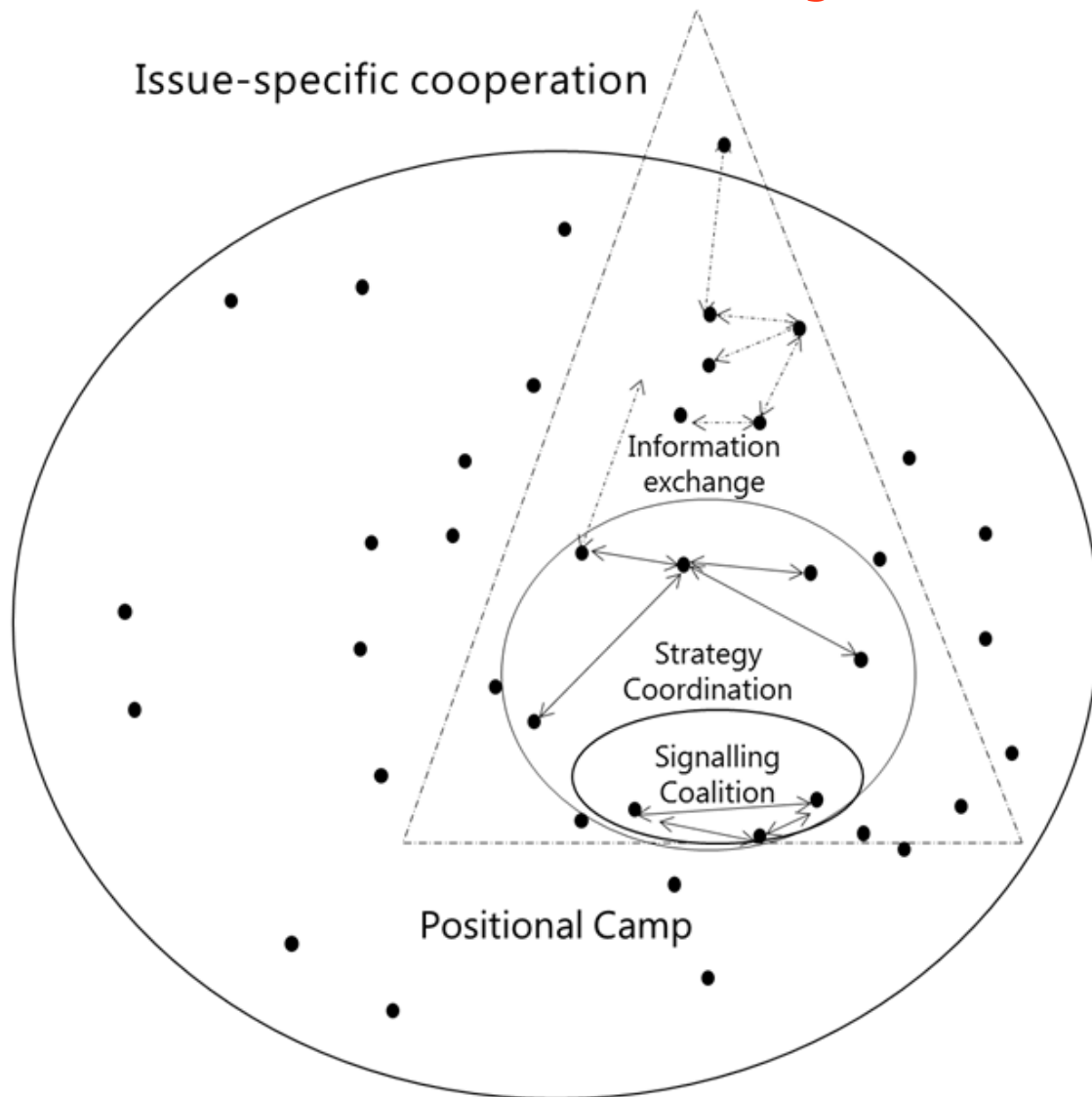


Figure 1: Defining Features of Lobbying Coalitions

Addition to aspect 2: What kind of Cooperation Activities can we distinguish within a camp?



How do we trace/study this?

- Interviews/Surveys
- Visible cooperation: concerted press releases, events, consultations

Existing research:

- Studies including camps
- Studies on formation of active (signalling) coalitions
- Studies of effects/success of coalitions (few, some null or negative findings)

Figure 1: Variation in coalition activities (issue-specific)

Source: Junk (2018)

Why care?

2) Scholarly Motivation (Michael)

Potential Informational Benefits of Coalitions

- Coalitions may distribute the lobbying apparatus more widely, placing eyes and ears around the policy domain.
- May provide the coalition access to policymakers with different loyalties, depending on the alignment of coalition members.
- May provide policymakers access with to information from different groups.
- These benefits are likely to be greater the more there is diversity of coalition membership.
- Possible dimensions of diversity: Party; Ethnic group; Region; Industry; Profession.

Potential Signaling Benefits of Coalitions

- Coalitions may signal to policymakers that outside interests have resolved their internal differences.
- Coalitions may signal the potential for compromise on an issue.
- Coalitions may signal the potential threat to policymakers from unified opponents outside of government.
- Coalitions may signal that an individual organization is an important player in a field.
- These potential benefits may depend on the degree to which the coalition achieves internal unity and is able to communicate that.

Potential Power Benefits of Coalitions

- Coalitions may allow weaker interests to pool their resources to combat stronger interests.
- It may be harder for policymakers to ignore organized coalitions than individual groups.
- Media may pay more attention to coalitions than to individual groups; they are more newsworthy.
- Coalitions may allow powerful actors to mask their role in an issue and create the appearance of greater support than actually exists.

Potential Information Costs of Coalitions

- The larger a coalition is, the harder it is to keep information confidential or proprietary.
- The coalition may help to expose weaknesses about a side of a policy issue that might not have been easily detected without the coalition.

Potential Signaling Costs of Coalitions

- Coalitions may blur the identities of individual groups.
- Coalitions may signal that groups think that they are weak.

Potential Power Costs of Coalitions

- Coalitions may provide an new arena for powerful interests to dominate weaker interests.
- Coalitions may make organized interests more inflexible and slower to act, depending on the rules and management of the coalition.

Overall Scholarly Motivation

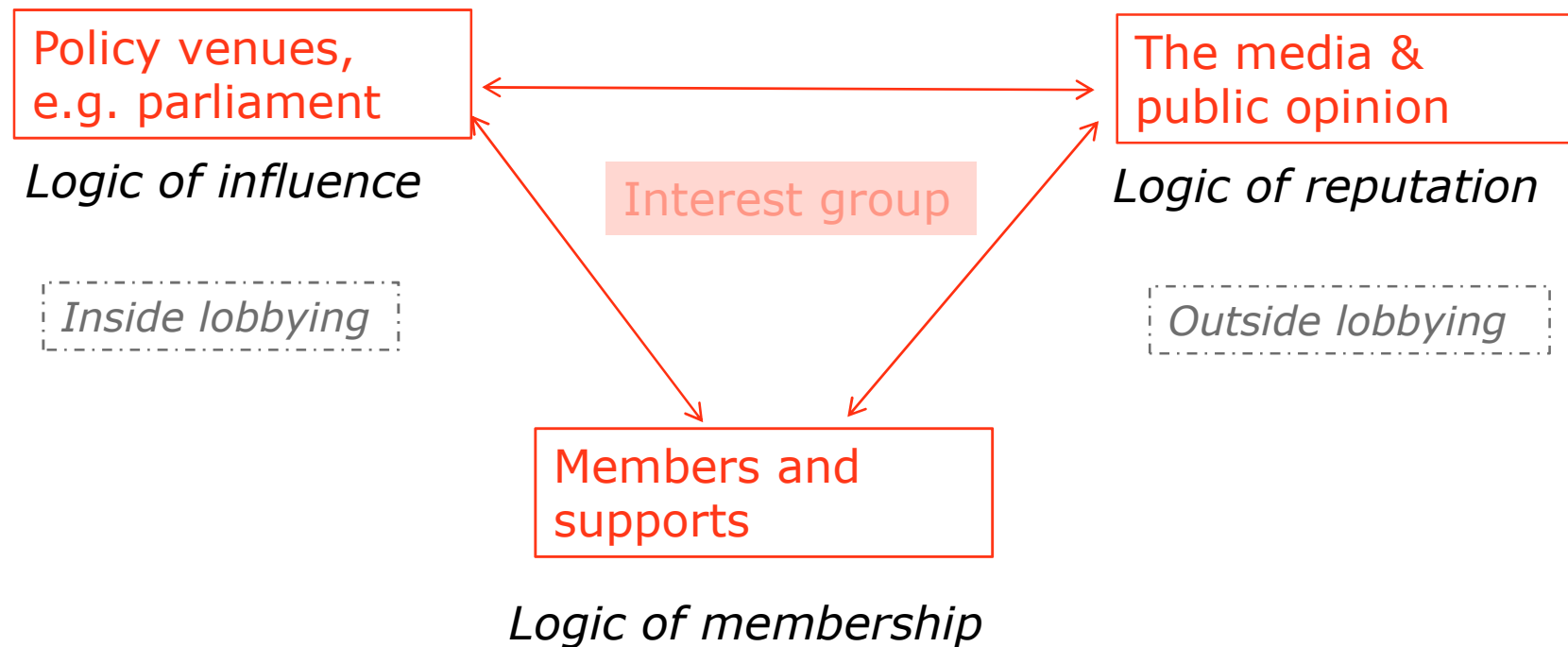
Coalitions may reveal important aspects of interest group politics.

- Flow of information and blockages of information
- Status signaling
- Power dynamics

Why care?

3) Motivation from a Lobbying Perspective: Why do active coalitions form?
Cost-Benefit Analysis and Beyond (Wiebke)

Theory: Exchange Approaches to Lobbying



Cf: Berkhout (2013: 233)

Group perspective and strategic choice: Why (not) form active coalitions?

Different 'logics' (compare Berkhout 2010):

Logic of **Influence** on the specific policy → benefits, especially when unlikely to win alone

Logics of **Survival** (competition with those in the same niche?),
Reputation, Membership → costs?

Group perspective and strategic choice:
Why (not) form active coalitions?

Benefits of active cooperation:

Costs of active cooperation:

*Note down at least two aspects ...
Prepare for a round in the plenary*

Group perspective and strategic choice: Why (not) form active coalitions?

Hojnacki (1997): choice to join coalition as **cost benefit calculation**

Factors: context, knowledge about allies, need for autonomy, type of organisation

Benefits of active cooperation:

Pool resources (money, information, contacts), efficiency

Signal support to policymakers

Crowded advocacy space makes it hard to receive access and excerpt influence, coalitions help?

Hope: Counter strong opposition, join forces with pivotal actor

Costs of active cooperation:

Money, time to form and manage coalition

Autonomy and Survival:
Maintaining a distinct identity;
Competition for membership

Need to moderate position?

Related to: How and when would active cooperation increase lobbying success?

Other Theoretical Frameworks

4) Transaction Cost Analysis & Network Analysis (Michael)

Transaction Cost Analysis

Transaction cost theory – as explained by economist Oliver Williamson – focuses on determining which institutions are best suited to carry out a transaction. The key decision is whether to undertake transactions in house or to contract out.

In house: The institution's own lobbyists do the lobbying.

Contracting out: Use a lobbying firm or use a coalition.

Key considerations:

- **Asset specificity** – How close is the issue to the organization's key issues / concerns?
 - **Recurrence** – How often does the issue arise?
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Network Analysis

Focuses on how the structural patterns of relationships among groups affects the lobbying dynamics.

- Brokerage
 - * Strength of weak ties
 - * Structural holes
 - * Boundary crossing
 - * Hubs
- Multiplexity
 - * Complexity of informal organization
 - * Different types of relationships are relevant
- Dynamics
 - * Preferential attachment
 - * Reciprocity, triadic closure

Research Approaches

5) How can we study the effects of lobbying coalitions empirically
(Discussion based on your input)

Discussion in Breakout rooms – 30 minutes

Group 1) Case studies

Group 2) Surveys / interviews with individual interest groups and/or interviews with coalition representatives

Group 3) Documentary sources, such as amicus curiae briefs and regulatory comments

Group 4) Text analysis of media and other text sources

In your group:

- i) Outline a Research question (and possibly: dependent variable, independent variable and/or theory) where the method could fruitfully be employed
 - ii) Sketch a hypothetical research design to study this (what are the choices involved, how do you select material etc.)
 - iii) Discuss strengths and limitations of this data collection method
- Prepare to present you main insights in a 3-4 minutes' pitch
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Does cooperation increase lobbying success?

6) Selected Findings (Michael & Wiebke)

How and when would coalitions increase lobbying success?

Findings from four research articles

How? Cooperation as a means to:

Manage interdependence between actors (Junk and Rasmussen 2019: incentives to coordinate framing)

Redistribute resources among partners (Junk 2019a: actors with lower resources benefit more)

Signal diverse support on important issues (Junk 2019b: diversity works on salient issues)

Secure access to policymakers (Junk 2019c: access of umbrella organisations to the legislature)

When? Effects as conditional

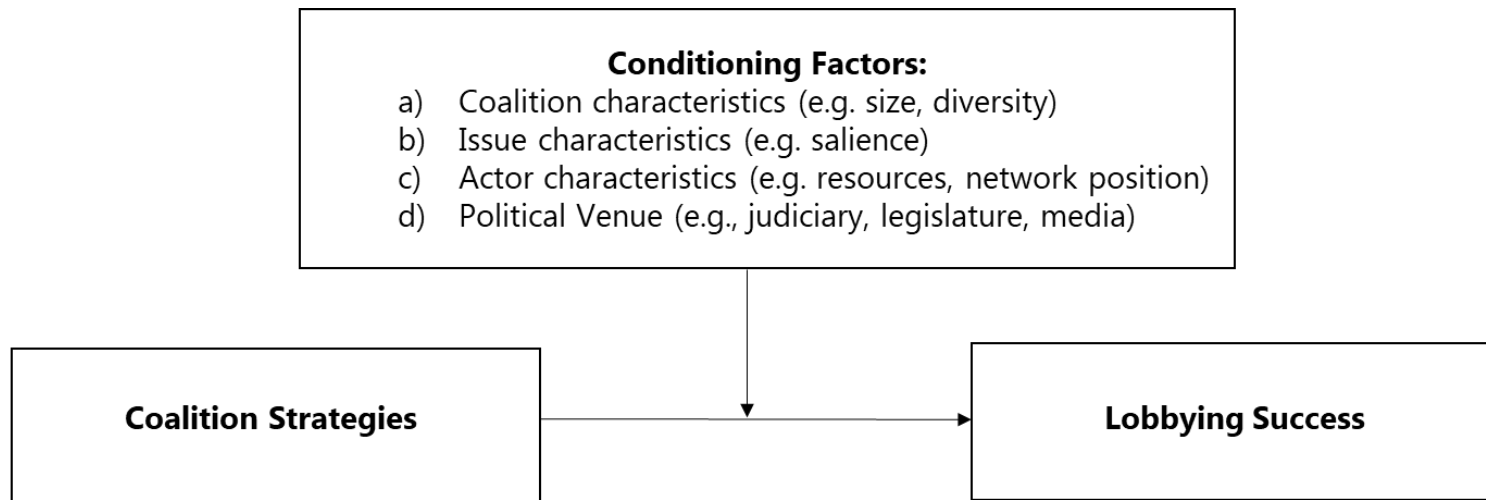
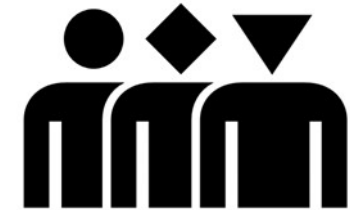


Figure 3: Moderators of the Effects of Coalition Strategies

Junk (2020): When Diversity Works

Focus on coalition composition

How and when do characteristics of active coalitions increase their lobbying success? Advantage of 'Strange Bedfellows' (diversity)?



Benefits of diversity: Signalling Support

Pluralist theory: Policymakers have incentives to favour diverse coalitions uniting different societal interests, especially when fearing subsequent *disturbance*



Costs of diversity: Cooperation Costs

Organisational concerns: different substantive interests impose higher costs of cooperation, especially when lacking incentives to *discipline* members

Expectations

1. Pure **pluralist**: Coalition diversity should generally increase coalition success
 2. Benefits & costs **moderated by advocacy salience**: As advocacy salience increases, there is an increasingly positive effect of coalition diversity on preference attainment.
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Junk (2019): When Diversity Works

Theory: Differential costs of diversity

TABLE 1 Variation in Expected Effects of Diversity inside the Coalition

	Low Salience	High Salience
Costs of Diversity	↑ Cooperation Costs (– contribution incentives)	↓ Cooperation Costs (+ contribution incentives)
Benefits of Diversity	↓ Signaling Benefits	↑ Signaling Benefits

Data from the GovLis project, five country dataset:

- Denmark, Germany, Holland, Sweden, the United Kingdom (corporatist/pluralist)
- Issue-centred sampling: **50 national issues**, stratified quasi-random sample from public opinion polls (2005-2010)
- Active advocates on these issues identified in **media coding, interviews** with policymakers, **desk research**. Sample of 1667 unique actors on an issue
- Information on cooperation gathered in **online survey**

Junk (2020): Variables and Findings

Dependent Variable: Coalition's preference attainment (N=122)

Independent Variables: Alternative measures of Coalition Diversity in terms of actor type & Advocacy Salience as average active actors per year (log)

**FIGURE 1 Marginal Effects of Diversity
95% CIs based on Model 2**

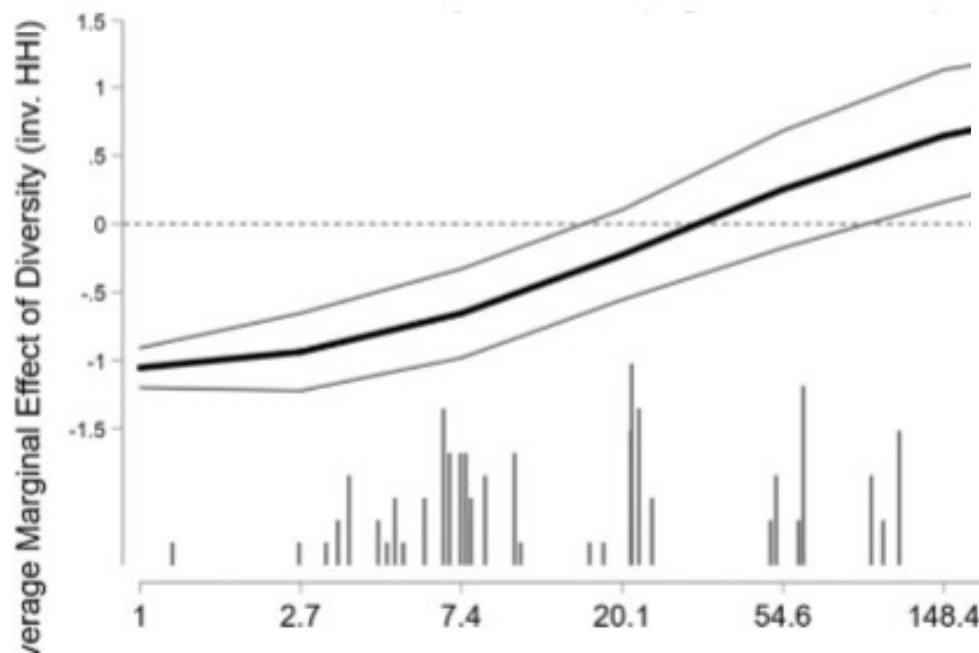


TABLE 3 Predicted Probabilities of Coalition Success in Percent

	Lower Salience (16 Advocates/ Year)	Higher Salience (99 Advocates/ Year)
Min. Diversity (0)	70	5
Mean Diversity (0.29)	61	6

Conclusions:

Being in a diverse coalition pays off on salient issues, no positive average effect

Is this worrying? Policy capture on low salient issues?

Heaney & Leifeld (2018) -- Leadership and Cooperation

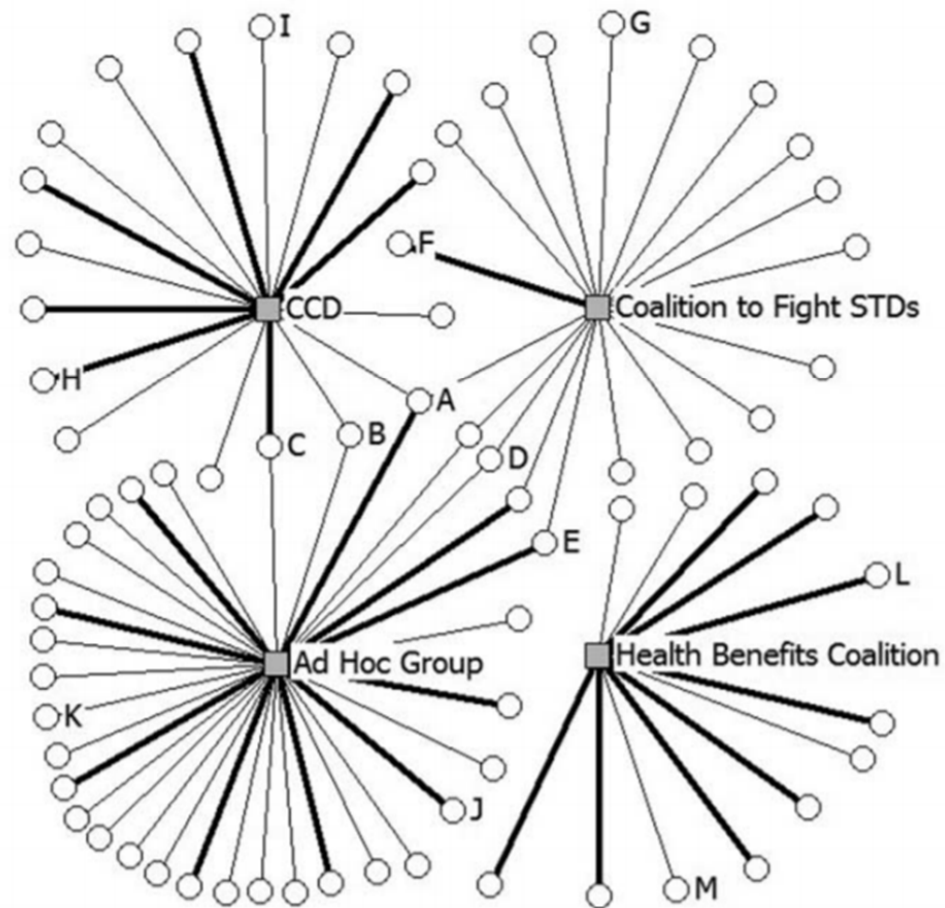


Figure 1. Two-mode network with structural zeros

Conclusions & Directions for Future Research

7) Outlook by Michael and Wiebke

Zoom out: Implications of work on lobbying coalitions

Lobbying is a collaborative exercise

Methodological

- Challenges underlying assumptions with which we approach power/agency
- Ignoring collaboration might lead to misleading conclusions
- Outlook: interdependence, division of labour (across issues), transformative power of coalitions

Normative

- Fears of policy capture and negative effects of lobbying on democracy
Easing? less resourceful actors can unite/team up
Worrying? issues with low salience; link to citizens?

Practical

- Results highlight concrete conditions under which cooperation pays off
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Wrap-up: Lobbying coalitions

- Different approaches to coalitions
- Advocates face strategic choice of working alone or actively together
- Affected by competing incentives: survival, reputation, influence...
- Incentives to build coalitions and the effects of cooperation may vary depending on the issue, context and advocates



Literature

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