

# INTEREURO Conference, Brussels

The performance of EU associations and the strategic choices of national interest groups  
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# Structure of the presentation

- Interest group functions
- Exit and voice strategies
- Empirical analysis
- Conclusion

## Functions of EU level interest groups

- Information for members
- Platform for political participation
- Aggregation of members' interests
- Definition of common position
- Representation of that position to EU institutions
- Coordination of members' strategies

## Responses to performance failures: loyalty, exit and voice

- Loyalty: my organization right or wrong...
- Exit and partial exit
  - Individual gathering of information
  - Individual representation of interests
  - Hiring consultancies, law firms
  - Build coalitions
  - Joining other groups
- Voice
  - Increased presence in decision-making bodies
  - Reform of organizational structures or processes
  - Change of staff

## Empirical analysis 1

- Interview data from British, Dutch, German, Slovenian and Swedish groups
- Binary and ordered regression analyses
- EU level groups' performance on three functions:
  - Information flow
  - Leadership (in defining the common position)
  - Interest aggregation

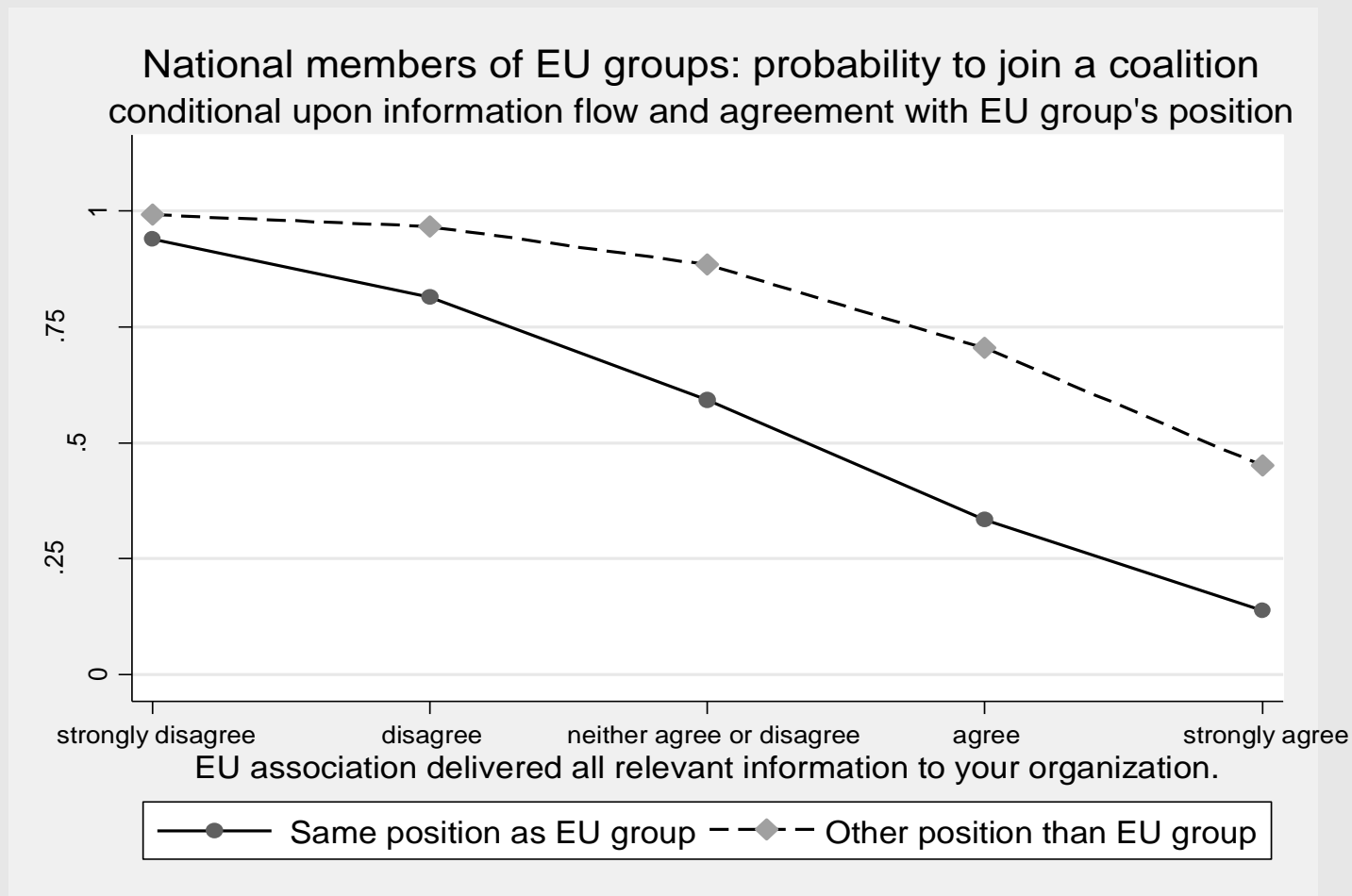
Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Information flow	70	4.29	0.82	1	5
Leadership	65	~0.00	1.04	-2.85	3.28
Interest aggregation	60	0.47	0.50	0	1

## Empirical analysis

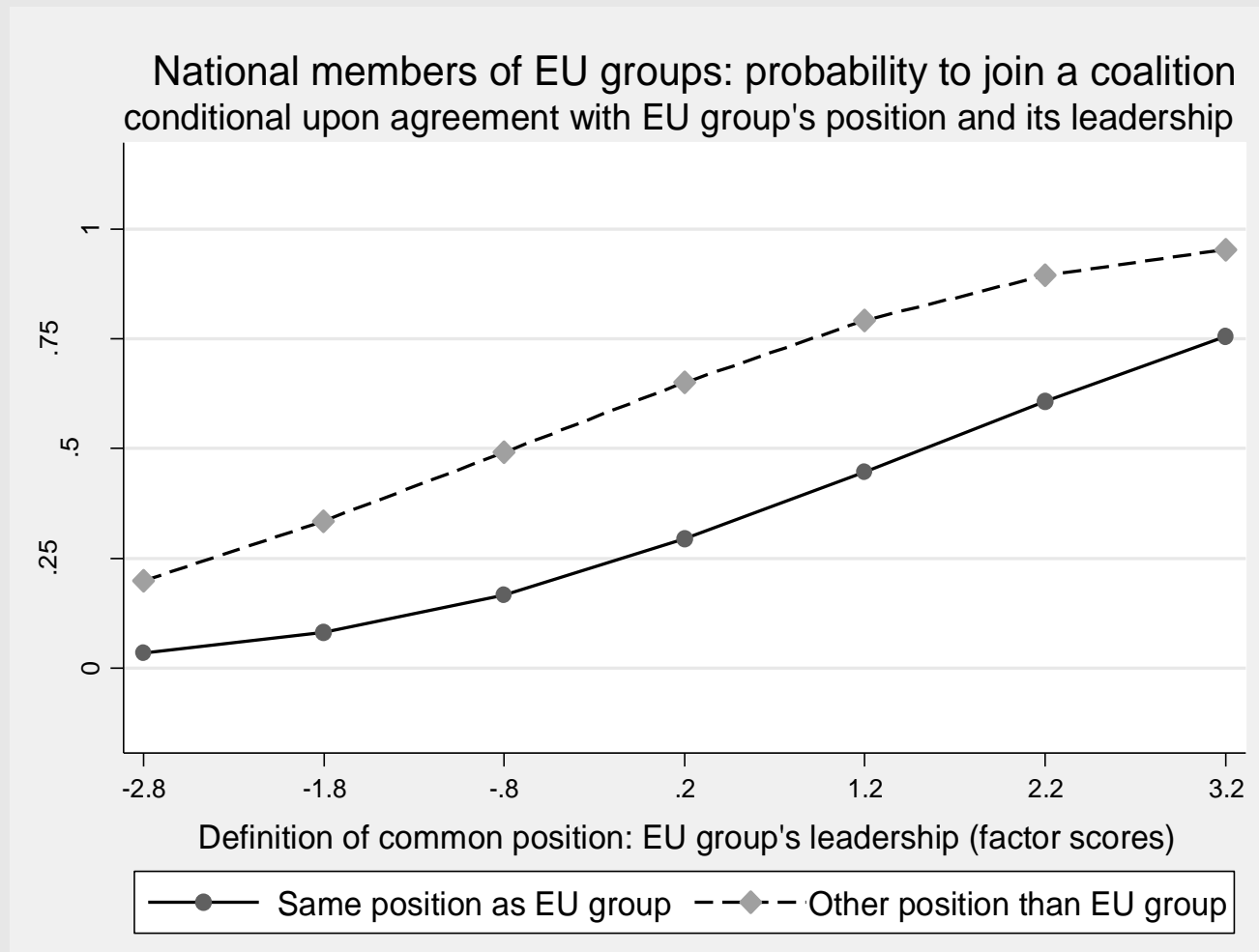
- Impact on national members' exit and voice strategies:
  - Joining or forming a coalition
  - Presence in delegation of EU level group to EU institutions
  - Direct access to European Commission

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Coalition	100	0.41	0.49	0	1
Member in delegation	68	0.31	0.47	0	1
Access to Commission	100	1.98	1.36	1	5

# Empirical findings 1: joining a coalition



## Empirical findings 2: joining a coalition (cont.)





## Empirical findings 3: direct access to Commission and member of a delegation to EU institutions

- The better the information flow from the EU level group, the more frequent is the information exchange with the European Commission → no exit strategy
- The more important an issue is for a group, the more likely it is that it joins a delegation to the EU institutions. Voice in delegations depends on preference intensity but not on performance of EU group.

## Conclusion

- The performance of EU level groups impacts on the strategies of national groups. Notably, joining a coalition is partly an exit strategy of national groups, and partly concerted action by EU level groups.
- Implications: avoid negative repercussions on EU level groups:
  - Increase responsiveness to members' interests.
  - Raise quality of information flow
  - Organize coalitions at EU level
- Caveat: small sample (~ 50 national groups)

# Appendix Table 1 Definition of variables

Concept	Variable definition
Country	Three dummy variables for Dutch, British and Slovenian interest groups (reference category: Swedish and German interest groups)
Information flow	EU association delivered all relevant information (1=fully disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neither disagree nor agree, 4=agree, 5=fully agree)
Interest aggregation	0=EU level group's position was identical to position of national member's initial position, 1= EU level group's position differed from national member's initial position.
Leadership	Factor scores derived from a principal component analysis. Factor indicates the extent to which the EU group's leadership and staff identified the common ground of their members' interests and pro-actively defined the common position that was represented to the EU institutions
Position on issue	-1=support of issue, 0=issue was not important, 1=change or blocking of issue
Importance of issue to organization	0=Not important, 1=Less important than other issues, 2=Equally important as other issues, 3=More important than other issues
Dominance of leading members in EU group	Position was formulated by leading members in EU group. 1=fully disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither disagree nor agree, 4=agree, 5= fully agree.
Information provision to European Commission	Organization provided information to leading Directorate General of European Commission on an issue. 1=never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4=frequently, 5=very frequently.
Member in EU group's delegation	Membership in EU group's delegation to EU institutions. 0=no, 1=yes.
Coalition	0=not member of a coalition, 1=member of a coalition

## Appendix Table 2 Logit regression outcomes

	Information to DG	Joining a coalition	Member in EU delegation
Interest aggregation by EU group	0.049	2.206**	0.550
	(0.652)	(0.960)	(0.798)
Information flow from EU group	0.970**	-1.51**	-0.348
	(0.481)	(-0.672)	(0.493)
Leadership by EU group	-0.012	0.969**	-0.276
	(0.286)	(0.463)	(0.359)
Dominance of leading members in EU group	0.344	-0.737*	-0.127
	(0.284)	(-0.439)	(0.324)
Issue salience for national group	0.868*	0.754	1.280**
	(0.464)	0.619	(0.595)
National group's position on issue	-0.055	-0.113	0.087
	(0.404)	(-0.529)	(0.432)
Dutch groups	-0.143	0.811	-1.628
	(0.904)	(-1.211)	(1.146)
British groups	1.334	-1.071	-1.063
	(0.939)	(1.262)	(1.133)
Slovenian groups	-2.475**	0.091	-1.928*
	(1.180)	(1.226)	(1.133)

## Appendix Table 2 Logit regression outcomes

	Information to DG	Joining a coalition	Member in EU group's delegation
Constant / Cut off point 1	6.878	5.716	-0.772
	(2.606)	(3.038)	(2.413)
Cut off point 2	7.559		
	(2.636)		
Cut off point 3	9.172		
	(2.755)		
Cut off point 4	10.926		
	(2.878)		
N	51	51	50
LL Constant	-70.205	-34.869	-33.203
LL Full model	-57.932	-23.422	-28.242
Chi <sup>2</sup>	24.546	22.892	9.922
P	0.004	0.006	0.357
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.175	0.328	0.149
AIK	2.782	1.395	1.530